

National Heritage Academies

Southside Academy Charter School 2026-2027 School Improvement Plan

May 2026

1.0 Overview Continuous School Improvement Plan and Team Process

The school has created this schoolwide plan in order to outline and direct its schoolwide improvement efforts for the 2026-2027 school year and beyond. By evaluating and updating this plan, along with completing their assigned school improvement-related OnBase grants compliance tasks (see Appendix A), the school will meet state and federal requirements pertaining to schoolwide planning each year.

2.0 Program Evaluation Overview (ESSA [Section 1114(b)(1)(A) of Title I])

ESSA requires that schools must annually complete a formal Program Evaluation with a team consisting of a variety of stakeholders that includes:

- Evaluation of the implementation of and results achieved for grant-funded programs, strategies, and initiatives;
- Determining the effectiveness of the programs in increasing achievement of students in meeting state academic standards;
- Revising their continuous school improvement plan as necessary, based on the results of the evaluation, to ensure the ongoing continuous improvement of student achievement.
- A school-specific Program Evaluation spreadsheet template will be sent via email to the school principal in early January of each year. Once completed, the Program Evaluation spreadsheet template is uploaded by the school to the Grants Compliance (GC-Program Evaluation) OnBase task.

3.0 Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) Overview (ESSA [Section 1114(b)(1)(A) of Title I])

As part of the school's annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), the school's identified Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) completes a data-driven review of demographic, process, perception, academic, non-academic, and systems data that includes all students and subgroups in the school. The CNA identifies the school's strengths and challenges in key areas that affect student achievement. The CNA, when conducted thoroughly, provides both targeted and schoolwide schools with identified strengths and weaknesses and through completion of a root cause analysis, specifies priorities for addressing whole-child needs. The CNA is critical to developing a schoolwide program, as it reveals the priority areas on which the program will focus.

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Together the CNA, along with the Program Evaluation, guides the development of the comprehensive schoolwide plan.

Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) The school has a Continuous Improvement Team that is responsible for the school improvement efforts of the school. Its job is to conduct the school's comprehensive needs assessment and program evaluation by analyzing student and other data in order to establish appropriate goals and strategies to reduce achievement gaps as identified in both a root cause and gap analysis and adequate yearly progress reviews.

The CIT also reviews and assists in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the following school improvement components:

- Annual review of the Building Mission Statement;
- Building goals, strategies, and assessments based on academic standards for all students;
- Curriculum alignment with State Standards and Benchmarks, NHA Curriculum, and Core Knowledge objectives;
- Monitor and evaluate the process for the building continuous school improvement plan;
- Building professional learning plans consistent with student academic performance needs;
- Participatory decision-making process;
- Identifying community resources that enhance instructor and student learning;
- Utilization of community resources and volunteers.

The CIT meets regularly (at least quarterly) to assess progress on and accomplishment of goals and implementation of the various components of the Schoolwide Plan, including evidence-based strategies and adult-led activities.

The CNA template is found within the OnBase Instructions for the task. Most data needed to complete the Comprehensive Needs Assessment can be found on InSite within the [Continuous Improvement Data Hub](#). If you need additional data please reach out to your school's designated Service Center Accountability Analyst. Once completed, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) template is uploaded by the school to the Grants Compliance (GC-Comprehensive Needs Assessment-CNA) OnBase task.

Decision-Making Process

Decision-making authority within the school lies with the school's leadership team, although the school values and considers the input and perspective of staff and stakeholders as decisions are made. Decisions support the vision and purpose of the school, National Heritage Academies, and also the best practices of school

improvement research and effective teaching strategies. Staff members and various stakeholders, including parents, board, and community partners, participate as appropriate in Continuous Improvement Team meetings and activities.

4.0 School Community Partnerships

The school utilizes a variety of partnerships to support staff, students, and parents. The school employs an Admissions Representative who works in partnership with the community to organize events, fundraisers, and charity events, as well as to inform the media and local community of school events. Additionally, the school partners with area organizations or community members in order to promote a symbiotic relationship between itself and the community.

Please complete the table below for each partnership that your school has developed. Include specific details about the benefits of that partnership. A minimum of three partnerships is required.

Name of partnership organization	Approximate number of years in partnership	Details regarding the benefits of partnership
Syracuse Mets	1	Most improved student. Students receive free admission, families discounted tickets.
Wegmans	1	Nutrition program/CP dinner
JCC	1	Fitness/Dance program
Elevate	1	Fitness/Dance program
Champs Pizzeria	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Child Time	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Dave and Busters	1	Family tickets to boost attendance
Love Handles	1	Family tickets to boost attendance
MOST	1	Family tickets to boost attendance
Zoo	1	Family tickets to boost attendance
Tiny Tunes Daycare	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
TSL Kids Crew	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Little Lukes	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.

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Rothschild Early Childhood Center	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Fairmount Community Library	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
All About Me Childcare Center	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
PEACE Head Start	1	CP dinner and Apps/Leads. Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Park Hill School	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
RISE Refugee and Immigrant Self-Empowerment	1	CP dinner and Apps/Leads. Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Rockwell Head Start	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Barnes and Nobles	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.
Spanish Action League of Onondaga County	1	Southside Material & One on One interaction with parents.

5.0 Evaluation of Current School Improvement Efforts

ESSA requires that you evaluate the effectiveness of your school improvement efforts at least once annually. This data-based review provides an opportunity to evaluate progress toward your current year goals based on the school's implementation of their evidence-based strategies and activities.

Consider what was successful and what may need to be updated or adjusted for the upcoming school year and provide a summary by answering the following questions for each goal.

Current Year Goal #:1

Improve proficiency on Interim Assessments.

1. Fidelity: Were the strategies and activities identified in the goal implemented with fidelity? What is the evidence?

We implemented Pep Rally's to raise morale for testing, attendance incentives, intervention services, and after-school tutoring. Yes all staff worked diligently to prepare students for testing.

2. Scale/Reach: Did the plan reach the intended audience? What is the evidence?

Yes, the plan reached the students, and the scores were evidence of these improvements.

3. Capacity: Were sufficient resources (funds, staff, materials, time, etc.) allocated toward the implementation of the plan, and were they distributed equitably and used as intended? Were barriers addressed? What is the evidence?

Yes, sufficient resources were allocated to implement the test preparation plan effectively. Funding, instructional materials, staff support, and dedicated instructional time were provided and distributed based on student need to ensure equitable access. Barriers such as skill gaps and time constraints were addressed through differentiated instruction, small-group support, and progress monitoring. Evidence of implementation includes aligned lesson plans, intervention schedules, formative assessment data, and improved performance on practice assessments.

4. Impact: What was the impact of the implementation of the plan? Did it accomplish its goals? Why or why not? What is the evidence? Will the school continue this goal into the next year? What adjustments might be needed?

The implementation of the plan had a positive impact on student performance and overall test readiness. The majority of students demonstrated measurable growth in targeted skill areas, and performance on formative and practice assessments improved over the course of implementation. As a result, the plan largely accomplished its goals, particularly in increasing proficiency and closing identified skill gaps. Evidence includes benchmark assessment data, progress monitoring results, classroom performance trends, and comparison of pre- and post-assessment scores. The school plans to continue this goal into the next year to maintain momentum and further strengthen student outcomes. Adjustments may include refining intervention strategies, increasing targeted support for specific subgroups, enhancing progress monitoring practices, and providing additional professional development to ensure consistent implementation.

Current Year Goal #:2

Parent Satisfaction

1. Fidelity: Were the strategies and activities identified in the goal implemented with fidelity? What is the evidence?

Yes, the strategies and activities identified in the goal were implemented with fidelity, and this is reflected in parent feedback. Families consistently received scheduled communications, progress updates, and invitations to engagement activities as outlined in the plan. Parent workshops, conferences, and informational sessions were conducted according to the established timeline. Evidence includes communication logs, copies of newsletters and progress reports, attendance records from parent events, and survey results indicating that families felt informed and supported. This documentation confirms

that the planned strategies were carried out as intended and reached parents effectively.

2. Scale/Reach: Did the plan reach the intended audience? What is the evidence?

Yes, the plan reached the intended parent audience. Families were informed about the goals, expectations, and available support through newsletters, emails, parent meetings, and conferences. Opportunities were provided for parents to ask questions and receive guidance on supporting test preparation at home. Evidence includes parent communication logs, attendance records from informational sessions and conferences, survey results, and documented feedback indicating that families were aware of and engaged in the process. Overall, parent participation and feedback suggest that the intended audience was successfully reached.

3. Capacity: Were sufficient resources (funds, staff, materials, time, etc.) allocated toward the implementation of the plan, and were they distributed equitably and used as intended? Were barriers addressed? What is the evidence?

Yes, sufficient resources were allocated to support parent engagement, including staff time, informational materials, and multiple communication channels. Efforts were made to address barriers such as language, scheduling, and access to technology. Evidence includes communication logs, attendance records at parent events, survey results, and feedback forms, showing that resources were used effectively and contributed to parent satisfaction.

4. Impact: What was the impact of the implementation of the plan? Did it accomplish its goals? Why or why not? What is the evidence? Will the school continue this goal into the next year? What adjustments might be needed?

The implementation of the plan had a positive impact on parent satisfaction. Families reported feeling more informed, supported, and engaged in their child's learning and test preparation. The plan largely accomplished its goals by improving communication, providing clear resources, and offering opportunities for parent involvement. Evidence includes parent survey results, attendance at workshops and conferences, and feedback from communications and meetings. The school plans to continue this goal next year, with adjustments such as more frequent updates, additional workshops, and expanded support for families needing extra guidance.

6.0 School Improvement Goals Best Practice Guidelines

Writing a Smart Goal: Goals provide a sense of direction, motivation, and a clear focus for improvement. They create a target for those implementing a plan. Focusing improvement efforts by setting goals increases the likelihood that improvement will take place.

Define A Measurable (SMART) Goal: Identify the components of the Goal, ensuring that it is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, Time-bound) and name the goal. The measurement component of a SMART goal should align to the data considered during the CNA process. A SMART Goal can have more than one measure.

- Specific: Clearly define what you want to achieve, the reasons for it and who is involved.
- Measurable: Establish how you will track progress and determine when the goal has been met. What data will be used to measure?
- Achievable: Ensure the goal is realistic and attainable with your current skills, knowledge, and resources.
- Relevant: Confirm that the goal aligns with broader organizational priorities and that the outcome is meaningful.
- Time-bound: Set a specific, realistic deadline for completing the goal to create a sense of urgency and manage the timeline.

Examples of SMART Goal Statements:

- Increase reading comprehension scores in grades K-3 by x% as measured by State Assessment and NWEA by Spring, 20xx.
- Decrease student absenteeism in grades 6-8 from x% to x% as measured by attendance reports by June 20xx.

Selecting Evidence Based Programs, Strategies and Initiatives: Strategies are the roadmap to achieving measurable goals. The team should focus on selecting a strategy that is tightly aligned to the outcome you want to achieve with your goal.

Things to consider when identifying an evidence-based strategy for implementation

- Evidence: The strength of the strategy's evidence in achieving intended outcomes when implemented well through research and or evaluation work. How will you consider the ESSA Tiers of Evidence in your selection of a strategy [1]
- Fit: The extent to which the strategy aligns with the district's current priorities, existing initiatives, and values.
- Need: The extent to which the strategy has demonstrated meeting the identified need of the target population through research and/or evaluation with a comparable population.
- Supports: The strength of the foundation available to support implementation, including resources for building the competency of staff (staff selection, training, coaching, fidelity) and organizational practice (data system and use support, policies and procedures, and stakeholder engagement).

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- Usability: The extent to which the strategy's principles, values, and core components are measurable and observable.
- Capacity: The strength of the district's qualified workforce, financial supports, technology support, and administrative supports needed to implement and sustain the strategy with fidelity.

[1] Emphasis of the use of evidence-based strategies, programs and initiatives is required for ESSA grant-funded programs. ESSA defines the term “evidence-based: when used with respect to an LEA, as an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on the following identified levels.

- Tier 1 Strong - At least one well designed and well-implemented experimental study (randomized, control trial). Studies that meet What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservation
- Tier 2 – Moderate - At least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study. Studies that meet What Works Clearinghouse standards with reservation
- Tier 3 - Promising - At least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias
- Tier 4 – Demonstrates a Rationale - Supported by well-specified logic model supported by research and evaluation

EXAMPLES:

Strategy, Program or Initiative	ESAA Level of Evidence (1-4)	Evidence Based Citation
Academic Intervention Coaches	1-Strong Evidence	https://www.evidenceforessa.org/program/content-focused-coaching-whole-class/
aimsweb Plus	3- Moderate Evidence	https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/one-dot-com/one-dot-com/global/Files/efficacy-and-research/reports/efficacy-assessment-reports/aimsweb-Plus-research-report.pdf
Corrective Reading	3- Promising Evidence	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/120

Identifying the Root Cause: There are many tools available to assist in completing a Root Cause Analysis including the “Five Why’s” and “Fishbone Diagram”. Click on the link to access resources and templates for these tools. [Root Cause Analysis Guidelines and Templates](#)

Root Cause Best Practices:

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A cause is a “Root Cause” if:

- The problem would not have occurred if the cause had not happened
- The problem would not reoccur if the cause were corrected or dissolved, and
- Correction or dissolution of the cause would not lead to the same or similar problems

A Root Cause should be:

- Within the control of the school (a practice or system)
- Connected to the identified priority need
- Fit your improvement strategy (if one has already been decided)

A Root Cause should NOT be:

- Identified as a person
- Something you cannot control

Example of identifying a Root Cause using the Five Why's:

Problem statement: Parents do not feel that they receive timely and relevant communication from the school.

1. Why? Parents do not regularly check our school website.
2. Why? They might not know the information is there.
3. Why? We have not told parents that the information is there.
4. Why? We have not had the time to meet with parents or prepare any materials to share with parents about the website.
5. Why? It is not something we normally plan time for.

Possible Root Cause: We need to schedule time to provide resources and tools for communicating with parents in a timely manner that they can readily access.

Identifying Activities: Activities are the details for implementing programs, strategies and initiatives.

Activities should be adult based actions and include a person(s) responsible and the start and end date of the activity. Some activities may be one-time events while other activities may be ongoing. Most, but not all activities should be tied to your budget requests for the upcoming year. A minimum of 3 activities per strategy, program or initiative should be included in your goal.

Examples of one-time event activities:

- Purchase supplies and materials for Math Parent Learning Event

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- Hold staff meeting to include training on building parent capacity and engagement
- Bringing in an outside vendor to provide Professional Learning related to the strategy

Examples of ongoing activities:

- Paraprofessionals providing Tier 2 supplemental instruction to the most at-risk students
- Weekly PLC meetings to review and analyze ELA data
- Yearly subscription renewal for a curricular or progress monitoring tool
- Instructional Coaches completing weekly observations to new teachers

7.0 Continuous School Improvement Goals for the Upcoming Year

Based on your Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), complete the tables below with your identified priorities and continuous school improvement goals for the upcoming year. A minimum of two goals is required. Additional goals may be added at the school's discretion based on their priority needs.

Best Practice: See OnBase Grants Compliance tasks for instructions and templates for completing your Program Evaluation and CNA, which must be completed prior to writing your Continuous School Improvement Goals.

Note: All Federal and State budget requests for the upcoming investment and consolidated application season must be tied back to your school improvement goals, strategies, activities, and/or your Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation.

Continuous Improvement Goals

Required Goal #1

1. SMART goal statement: [Improve Proficiency on Interim/State Assessments](#)
2. Area of need being addressed: [Academic](#)
3. Root Cause: [Attendance](#)
4. Baseline data (Where are you starting?): [31% in reading and 23% in math - proficiency](#)
5. End target measure (Where do you want to be?): [46% in reading and 51% in math - proficiency](#)

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Evidence-based programs, strategies, initiatives, and activities for implementation to meet the goal			
Name of Evidence-Based Program, Strategy, or Initiative #1	Reteaching Misconceptions		
Specific Adult-Based Activities/Actions (must have at least 3 activities per strategy)	Begin Date	End Date	Staff Responsible
Intervention	09/2026	06/2027	All Teaching Staff
Dreambox/Lexia	09/2026	06/2027	All Teaching Staff
After school Tutoring	09/2026	06/2027	All Teaching Staff

Required Goal #2

1. SMART goal statement: Implement reteaches with fidelity.
2. Area of need being addressed: Bridge the learning gap and transition bubble kids.
3. Root Cause: Low test scores, retention rate, learning gap
4. Baseline data (Where are you starting?): Fall Aimsweb, interims, numeracy, ORF
5. End target measure (Where do you want to be?): Spring Aimsweb, interims, numeracy, ORF

Evidence-based programs, strategies, initiatives, and activities for implementation to meet the goal			
Name of Evidence-Based Program, Strategy, or Initiative #1	Addition instructional coach		
Specific Adult-Based Activities/Actions (must have at least 3 activities per strategy)	Begin Date	End Date	Staff Responsible
Coaching and support for reteaches	09/2026	06/2027	Instructional coaches/intervention staff
More intervention staff	09/2026	06/2027	Instructional coaches/intervention staff
Planned reteaches	09/2026	06/27	Instructional coaches/intervention staff

Appendix A

Additional Required OnBase Continuous School Improvement Tasks (and Month Due)

Best Practice: Within the OnBase platform on myNHA, download the instructions for each task and use the templates and resources linked within the instructions to complete each task.

- Quarterly Monitoring and Adjusting of Continuous School Improvement Plan (August, November, January, and April)
- Title I Targeted and Schoolwide Program Requirements (January)
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) (February)
- Program Evaluation (February)
- Parent and Family Engagement Plan and Activities Calendar (March)
- Professional Learning Plan (March)
- Parent Continuous Improvement Collaboration (March)
- Staff Continuous Improvement Collaboration (March)
- Board Continuous Improvement Collaboration (March)
- Evaluation of Wellness Plan and Goals (March)
- School Improvement Plan Implementation Ready for Upcoming Year and CIT Roster (April)
- NY Only - Stakeholder Consultation and Collaboration Form

Resources

Questions?

- Email the Program Accountability Advisor Team at PAA@nhaschools.com
- Attend PAA weekly Open Office Hour every Thursday from 1-2 PM ET to Office <https://meet.google.com/vws-qpxn-dxt>
- School Finance Resources tile on myNHA <https://sites.google.com/nhaschools.com/schoolfinanceresources/home>. Your guide to all things School Finance, including Program Accountability, Grant Project Manager, and School Finance Partner resources