

ISBE Continuous Improvement and Rising Star Platform Frequently Asked Questions September 2014

1. What is continuous improvement?

Continuous improvement is the process of engaging community stakeholders to:

- Collect and analyze data;
- Define district or school goals;
- Identify management structures (e.g., leadership, data systems, resources, operations);
- Research and implement effective strategies and activities to meet those goals, and;
- Monitor and evaluate the success of that implementation.

2. Who has to engage in continuous improvement?

ISBE expects all Illinois districts and schools to engage in a process of continuous improvement.

3. Who must submit a plan to ISBE?

With the approval of Illinois' ESEA Flexibility Waiver on April 18, 2014, all district improvement plans and school improvement plans required under the No Child Left Behind Act were waived. Under this approved waiver, planning obligations remain for districts and schools identified for priority and focus services.

4. What are the requirements for districts and schools identified for priority services?

Districts are required to have their District Leadership Team (DLT) develop District Improvement Plans and schools must have transformation plans aligned to the seven federal turnaround principals.

5. What are the deadlines for submitting Transformation and Intervention Plans for priority schools and their districts?

At this time, districts with priority schools are using their District Leadership Teams who are working with the Illinois Center for School Improvement (Illinois CSI) to meet planning obligations due to this identification.

6. What are the requirements for districts and schools identified for focus services?

ISBE has not fully identified districts and schools for focus services. When the identification is made, Illinois CSI will work with those schools and districts regarding their plan submission requirements.

5. Will there still be Title I, Title III, and Response to Intervention (RtI) planning obligations and timelines for submitting plans?

If a district or school is required to submit a plan to ISBE for FY 15 in these areas, the Rising Star platform will be used. Please contact your specific program consultant with any questions.

6. Can a district or school continue to use the Rising Star Platform for planning?

The Illinois State Board of Education will continue to maintain the Rising Star platform for continuous improvement planning but there are no rules or requirements regarding the use or submission of plans as a result of Adequate Yearly Progress or Status under NCLB. Use of Rising Star is free to Illinois districts and schools electing to use the system.

7. Can a district or school not identified for priority or focus services use a different continuous improvement planning system?

Yes

8. If a school or district not identified for priority or focus services uses a different continuous improvement planning system, how would the plans be submitted?

There is no requirement to submit plans unless the district and/or school is required to by priority or focus identification or through program-specific requirements (see question 5 above).

9. Where can I find the results of the Rising Star survey and focus groups that were convened by ISBE last year?

The final report is available here <http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/rising-star-perspectives-rpt-0414.pdf>

10. Will resources and support still be available if my district or school chooses to continue to use the Rising Star platform for continuous improvement?

Yes. There are several online resources and archived webinars which can support ongoing efforts by districts and schools to use Rising Star. There are also trained providers in your local Regional Office of Education or Intermediate Service Centers to provide assistance or training if needed.