



مدرسة الإتقان الأمريكية
ALITQAN AMERICAN SCHOOL

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT POLICY

POLICY INTENT

This policy intends to systematically guide staff in its improvement journey practices.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. School Leadership Development Plan for Licensure in the UAE: Cultivating Educational Leadership
2. Ministry Inspection Handbook 2015
3. School Self-Evaluation For Improvement Planning

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented along with the policies of the school. The policy implementation date is January 2019. All stakeholders must adhere to this policy with complete fidelity.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed periodically and not less frequently than once a year.

Date of Completion:	10 January 2019
Date of Current version:	25 January 2022
Date of Next Review:	10 September 2022

Section A. Responsibilities

School Improvement is the responsibility of all the school's stakeholders. Specifically the planning team takes the following role:

- Attend all meetings of the team.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities at an Orientation Meeting
- Prepare for each meeting by reading materials aligned to each agenda
- Conduct a data analysis of the school by reviewing key data indicators and measures to determine what are the school's strengths and opportunities for improvement at a Data Retreat.
- Develop a shared understanding of the needs of stakeholder groups through review of an environmental scan or system assessment at a Data Retreat.
- Explore educational, demographic, economic, social, and technological impacts on the future of the school at a Vision Retreat.
- Explore research-based continuous improvement best practice of high performing schools at a Vision Retreat.
- Review and revise the school's shared mission, vision, values/commitments and goals at a Vision Retreat.
- Provide suggestions for the indicators and measures that align to monitoring and reporting school success to achieving its long-range goals at a Setting Direction Retreat.
- Identify key strategy gaps to focus the school's work that are aligned to the data opportunities for improvement and the environment scan and/or system assessment (internal audit)
- Present a draft of the plan for stakeholder review and input.
- Revise the draft of the plan based on stakeholder review and input.
- Recommend to the Governing Board the strategic plan.
- Learn about the responsibilities to live the plan.

To guarantee the commitment of the school, the following are tasked to serve core group for the implementation of this policy.

- **Principal.** The Principal is primarily responsible for overseeing the implementation of the improvement policy of the school. She leads and empowers the team to identify national and relevant international criteria for institutional review (2.2.1.2.); national and relevant international attainments standards (2.2.1.1.) and to engage in comprehensive and systematic review of the school's performance taking into account the views of key stakeholders, including learners. She analyzes with the leadership team information against criteria to evaluate the performance of the school; plans for schoolwide development and improvement to optimize learner's achievement and facilitate change and innovation for continuous school Improvement.

1. **Vice Principal.** The VP supports the Principal in leading the organizational review process. He organizes the teams' committee and meeting structures intended for organizational review.
2. **Middle Level Administrators.** The administrators are responsible to analyze information against the criteria to evaluate the performance of the school and facilitate change and innovation for continuous school improvement. They should also ensure that their action plans are aligned with the school-wide plan.

Section B. Guiding Principles of the Improvement and Strategic Planning Processes

1. Planning must include stakeholder participation to ensure ownership.
2. Planning must be done in the context of the current reality of the school. It must be continuous e. g.
 - Build on Strengths
 - Reflect upon Opportunities for Improvement
3. Planning must consider new requirements e. g.
 - New knowledge
 - Changes in both the internal and external environment
4. Planning must set a clear direction with measures to monitor and track progress.
5. Planning must be strategic. It must set expectations for operational planning.

Section B. Strategic Plan Policy

1. The school long term plan is called "AIAS Strategic Plan". The period of the strategic plan should not be less than a year and the periods can be defined by the senior leadership whatever is reasonable.
2. The team who is developing the strategic plan is called "Strategic Visioning Team". The team should comprises of administrators, family and student representatives, senior leadership team, community leaders and a member of the governing board. Parents, students and administrative members of the SVT should at least have one full year experience with the school and are committed to share their time and commitment to be eligible.
3. The strategic plan should comprise of the following components: Shared mission, Shared Vision, Shared Values / Collective Commitments; Long and short range Goals and Key Indicators of Success and Key Strategies.

4. The strategic planning process is made up of four steps as identified herein

a. Determine Strategic Position.

- **Orientation.** The purpose of this activity is to build the strategic planning team and clarify their roles in the planning process and orient them about the nature and importance of the strategic plan. The outcome of the session is the formulation of the strategic visioning team (SVT) and clarifying their roles and responsibilities. Members will also have a better understanding of the steps to be carried out in the entire strategic planning.
- **Data Retreat.** The purpose of this activity is to develop a shared responsibility of the current situation of the school as identified through the data. The outcome of the activity is SWOT Analysis. This will allow the team to identify what is working well, what is not working well, what are the possible areas of needs, and what are the potential impacts.

b. Develop Strategy

- **Vision Retreat.** The purpose of this meeting is to develop a shared understanding of the current mission, vision, values/beliefs/commitments, and goals of the school. The team reviews the components of a continuous improvement framework and looks at essential information to share the future vision. The outcome of the activity is to develop a future statement that will contain the mission, motto, vision and future vision for curriculum, assessment, instruction, grading practices, collaboration, parent/community engagement, technology, leadership and facilities etc.

c. Build the Plan

- **Setting Direction.** The purpose of this activity is to review the data discussed, and the future statements that was formulated and set the direction where the school organization wants to be. The outcome of the activity is to develop long term goals for (a) students' achievement, (b) supportive learning environment; (c) engaged families and communities; (d) quality staff; and (e) value added resources. Likewise, the team is developing the desired impacts (strategies) and the indicators for each impact.
- **Collecting Feedback of the Draft from the Stakeholders.** The purpose of this activity is to collect feedback of the strategic plan draft from the stakeholders and include their suggestions to formulate the final draft. The outcome of these meetings is feedback that could be used to revise or enhance the strategic plan before it is sent to the governing board for review and approval.

5. The final draft shall be approved by the Governing Board prior to the release and publication.
6. The following points should be considered after the approval by the governing board:
 - a. **Align the strategic plan with the school improvement plans.** AIAS should provide a 5-year outline plan of the implementation of the strategies as shown in the figure below. The agenda to meet the implementation must be structured across the five-year time frame. Likewise, the school should examine its data aligned to the key indicators and measures of the long-range goals of the strategic plan.

Figure 1: The 5-Year Plan Outline

Long Term Goals	Strategies	Agenda				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5

- b. **Align with performance evaluation systems.** The key indicators, measures and targets must be aligned the way administrators, teachers and other staff be evaluated.
- c. **Ensure a research-based action planning process for strategy action plans.** Use a Plan-Do-Study-Act process. The school must be certain that the plans within the school must be aligned with the strategic plan. The school must ascertain that those impacted by the action plans have opportunities to provide into input to their design and development.
- d. **Align the plan with important agenda.** The termly governing board and planning meetings should include an update on strategic plan implementation keeping the mission and vision at the forefront. It is imperative that everyone in the organization reflects continuously on the mission and vision of the school. The school should provide period reflection opportunities for all stakeholders to remind themselves of what has been identified as core values and commitments.

Section C. School Improvement Plan Policy

1. The plan for annual improvement of AIAS is called School Improvement Plan (SIP). This plan is derived from the improvement priorities of the evaluation report and the self-survey.

2. The SIP for the coming academic year should be developed towards the end of the previous academic year. This should be reviewed further by the SLT and approved by the governing board.
3. The following shall be the 5 iterative steps (SEF, 2015) for the development of the SIP.
 - a. Establish actions from self-evaluations
 - Devise key actions to bring about improvement from self-evaluation. Remember the school cannot do everything at once. The school might have limited resources; people, time, skills, and materials.
 - To ensure that change is managed effectively, include key personnel in the process so that initiatives are embedded in practice.
 - Actions are flexible and can change. They can have different starting and ending points.
 - b. Set objectives and success criteria for each section
 - Objectives are important because they give clarity of purpose; establish key tasks; provide guidelines for development, and set targets for performance through clear and measurable success criteria.
 - Objectives should indicate the results required and must be precise, realistic and measurable.
 - Objectives should take into account the proportion of students who should be at an improved level. Schools should use the quantitative terminology found in the UAE School Inspection Framework to help with this. For example: 'The majority (50-60%) of phase 2 students will perform above international expectations in vocabulary questions in international benchmark tests during this year'.
 - Objectives can be stated in a form of strategies / actions.
 - c. Set timescales, resources required and responsibilities
 - What are the time-scales for each action? How often will the school review the effect of each action?
 - What will be the cost for each action? Will staff development be needed?
 - Will other resources be required?
 - Who will be responsible for each action's overall implementation?
 - d. Monitor progress and review success
 - At prescribed times, there should be regular and rigorous monitoring of progress.
 - The review asks: 'Where are we now?', 'Were we successful?', 'Where do we go to next?'
 - Monitoring is about ensuring accountability; and all members of the learning community have a role in ensuring the school is held to account.
 - The school's SEF document guides schools in this process.

- e. Set clear and realistic targets for future improvements
 - At the end of the review, set new targets that are clear and realistic for further school improvements.
4. SIP is carefully developed from the school performance data. Strategies indicated therein is research-based derived from the analysis of school performance data.
5. The lead of each strategy in the SIP are expected to report the progress as per the identified success criteria once every term and give recommendations when needed to ascertain completion of the targets.

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