



Coaching Improvement Teams Using the Indistar® Web-based Planning Tool

Division- and school-level leadership teams served by the Office of School Improvement (OSI) are often assigned the responsibility of working with a central office or VDOE-appointed coach who:

- **Assists** with development of team norms;
- **Provides** guidance regarding development of tasks associated with specific indicators;
- **Monitors** team function and fosters positive interactions;
- **Provides** technical assistance with implementation of tasks; and
- **Suggests** resources aligned with specific tasks.

Coaching comments are an excellent vehicle for assisting school- and division-level teams with developing, implementing, and monitoring improvement plans.

Coaching comments are meant to be specific comments and/or suggestions in relation to an indicator or area of leadership team planning (i.e., team meetings, forms, updates). In addition, the comments **must include** specific guidance to the school- or division-level team regarding the sub-group(s) or proficiency gap group(s) missing an annual measurable objective (AMO).

For focus schools and Title I schools required to develop an improvement plan, the assigned school- or division-level coach will be required to enter **monthly** coaching comments regarding each step of the improvement planning process. Sample questions for coaches to consider when making coaching comments are included below:

- **Assessment of indicators**
 - Did the improvement team select the appropriate indicators to assess?
 - Was the level of implementation selected accurate and based on the Wise Ways® research brief?
 - Were the priority and opportunity scores accurate? Should the division leadership team be consulted regarding the assessment of indicators?
 - Are the 3 required indicators (TA01, TA02, and TA03) assessed as “no development or implementation” or “limited implementation”?
 - Does description of current level of implementation explain the level of implementation chosen? Does it indicate the gap between what is being done now and what needs to be done? Hint: if not, review *Wise Ways*.
 - How will the school improvement team involve the entire staff in the selection of indicators that address the needs of the school?
 - What data were used to determine the needs of the school?
 - How was consensus reached regarding the indicators that were ultimately selected?
- **Development of tasks**
 - Is description of “how it will look when fully implemented” in the form of a SMART goal?
 - Does the plan include a data point for at least one task per indicator?
 - Do all tasks describe “**who**” will do “**what**”, and “**when**” it will occur?

- **Required indicator TA01:**
 - What reading and/or mathematics assessment will be used to identify intervention students?
 - How and when will teachers be trained to administer the assessments?
 - What is the timeline for administering the assessments?
 - How and when will teachers be trained to analyze the data gleaned from the assessments?
- **Required indicator TA02:**
 - What are the tiered, differentiated intervention options available to assist the identified students in reading and mathematics?
 - What are the tiered, differentiated intervention options available to address the proficiency gap group(s) causing the school to be identified as a:
 - **Focus school?**
 - **Title I school required to create an improvement plan?**
 - How will the school implement a research-based, tiered, differentiated intervention process for identified students?
 - When will identified students receive the tiered, differentiated intervention?
 - In addition to the classroom teacher, who will be involved in providing the tiered, differentiated interventions to identified students?
 - What type of professional development will be provided to teachers to assist them with implementing tiered, differentiated interventions for identified students?
- **Required indicator TA03:**
 - How will teachers monitor the tiered, differentiated intervention process for identified students?
 - What type of professional development will teachers receive regarding procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of tiered, differentiated interventions?
 - How will the division staff person assigned to the team be involved in the monitoring?
 - What data will be used on a quarterly basis to determine the effectiveness of the interventions provided to the identified students?
 - How will the school team ensure that tasks are directly associated with strategies to help the school address identified areas of need?
 - Describe the process that the school team used to determine the appropriate tasks needed to accomplish each objective (indicator).
 - How did the school team decide who would manage or be responsible for task attainment?
 - How and when will task managers report to the school team? Entire faculty?
 - How is the continual review of data, for possible plan revision, built into the planning process?

- **Monitoring of tasks**

- Are the school indicators and the resulting tasks included as integral components of staff meeting agendas?
- Describe how the online monitoring tool will be used during staff meetings as well as grade-level/content area team meetings.
- What steps have been developed to monitor the school plan?
- If there is no evidence of progress on a task(s), does the plan describe the barriers and how they will overcome them?
- Does the Comments section under “Monitor the Plan” include real-time narrative on progress?

Process for Entering Coaching Comments

To begin the process of entering coaching comments, coaches should log-in to Indistar® (www.indistar.org).

The screenshot shows the Indistar dashboard with a navigation bar at the top. The 'Coaching Comments' icon is circled in red. Below the navigation bar is a workflow diagram with three boxes: 'Assess' (Team Assesses Indicators, Last Update: Progress: 0 of 117), 'Monitor' (Team Monitors Progress, Last Update: Progress: 0 of 0), and 'Create' (Team Creates & Revises Objective Plans, Last Update: Progress: 0 of 0). Arrows indicate a clockwise cycle between these three steps. To the right of the diagram is a 'Snapshot' box containing login information, a 'Close Toolbar' button, and user details for the Principal and Process Manager.

The coach may create a new coaching comment by clicking-on the “Create New Coaching Comment” button.

The screenshot shows the 'Coaching Comments' page for Happy Hills Public Schools Virginia. It includes a 'Back to Main Menu' button, a 'Help' icon, and a paragraph of instructions. A red circle highlights the 'Create New Coaching Comment' button. Below the instructions is a table with one row of data.

All new Coaching Comments and Reviews, as well as any previous comments and subsequent responses are listed below. To respond to a Coaching Comment, click on the "Reply" or "Read More/Reply" link. This will open a new window where you will enter your response. Click "Save Coaching Comments" when you're finished.

To create a new comment, click the "Create New Coaching Comment" button below.

Sender	Added	Added By	Reference	Indicator	Comments
Coach	08/06/13	Yetta Doe	Monitor	IA13	I reviewed the status comments regarding the monthly data reviews. How is the division team planning to address the needed professional development in data analysis? Let's consider adding this as an agenda item for the upcoming meeting. Reply

The coach will enter information in reference to:

- General information
- Demographic information
- Team members
- Assessment of indicators
- Planning tasks
- Monitoring tasks

Add a New Coaching Comment

Name:

Reference: General

Indicator: (if applicable)

Comments:

Tips for Writing Coaching Comments

Note: Coaching comments must include specific guidance to the school- or division-level team regarding the sub-group(s) or proficiency gap group(s) missing an annual measurable objective (AMO).

Step 1: The designated coach will review the school/division improvement plan, and enter detailed comments about the areas of strength (“glows”).

Examples:

- *Your improvement team did a great job developing a school-specific matrix for identifying students at each tier. This will ensure consistency throughout the building. I am looking forward to our upcoming meeting to discuss students representing proficiency gap group 2 who have been identified for Tier 2 and 3 interventions in reading.*
- *I have reviewed the status comments for tasks associated with indicator TA03. It appears that the Student Intervention Team process is quite successful based on the movement of 15% of your students from a Tier 3 intervention level to a Tier 2 intervention level in reading.*

Step 2: The designated school/division coach will ask probing questions about the series of tasks or status comments.

Examples:

- *How is your division leadership team planning to provide support to Happy Town ES regarding implementation of extended planning time for each grade-level? This task was recently added to their school improvement plan. Have you considered the possibility of adding a task to the division's improvement plan regarding this?*
- *Based on the low attendance at the Happy Hills After-School Tutorial Program as reported in your status comments for task 3 (TA02), what alternatives have your team members discussed? Would you like to add this as an agenda item for next week's meeting?*

Step 3: The designated school/division coach will include detailed information about areas for improvement ("grows").

Examples:

- *During the quarterly data review meetings with schools, it would be helpful to have a copy of the division's improvement plan available. This will assist your division team with ensuring that tasks are evaluated and revised based on student performance data.*
- *While reviewing the school improvement plan tasks for indicator TA02, I noted that tasks associated with interventions for students only included references to programs. Your team may want to consider adding a task regarding professional development for teachers to assist them with providing Tier 2 interventions. This will build their capacity.*

Step 4: The designated school/division coach will suggest next steps for the improvement team to complete.

Examples:

- *Prior to our upcoming meeting, please review with your staff members the status of tasks for indicator IF08. Based on the monitoring comments, there appears to be a need for additional professional development regarding use of virtual manipulatives. You may enter comments relative to the discussion into the monitoring component of your plan. Jane Doe is scheduled to join us for the meeting in an effort to provide additional math support to your teachers.*
- *It appears that your improvement team has completed all tasks associated with indicator IA13. Please revisit the "Create Division Plan" component and determine whether the description entered under "How will it look when fully implemented?" accurately describes the current state of implementation.*

Reminders

- Office of School Improvement (OSI) contractors and central office personnel associated with focus schools or Title I schools required to develop an improvement plan are required to enter **monthly coaching comments** via Indistar®. Within **one week** of receiving the coaching comments, the school- and division-level teams will respond to their respective coaches.
- Per the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), all coaching comments and responses are subject to public release.

- School- or division-level teams will receive notification that coaching comments have been entered by their respective coaches when they log-in to Indistar®. The Main Menu will contain a notification statement that a coaching comment has been received.

Virginia Indistar - Support for School Improvement
Main Menu

Navigation Toolbar

Enter & keep your school information current
Enter & keep your school team information current

VA-Practice School - Happy Hills Public Schools Virginia SIP - School Indicators (RI)
Happy Hills Public Schools, VA

Assess
Team Assesses Indicators

Last Update:
Progress: 0 of 117

Monitor
Team Monitors Progress

Last Update:
Progress: 0 of 0

Create
Team Creates & Revises Objective Plans

Last Update:
Progress: 0 of 0

Snapshot

Last login:	10/10/2012
Last coaching comment received:	10/01/2013
Last Leadership Team Meeting:	-
Last Indicator assessed:	-
Last Task added:	-
Number of Objectives past due:	0 (view)
Number of Tasks past due:	0 (view)
Where are we now Report	-

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 A Coaching Comment was added on 10/1/2013