

Gateways Effective Practice Standards for Jewish Day Schools

PROGRAM REVIEW

Individually and collectively, the 48 Gateways Effective Practice Standards for Jewish day schools—spread across seven core areas of school operations—reflect a "Gold Standard" of inclusion, and they offer schools a vision of the educational and organizational practices that should be in place to enable a broad range of students, especially those with atypical social, behavioral, physical and/or cognitive development, to achieve academic and social success. Moreover, by improving to serve a more diverse student body, schools will improve education for all students, for quality education for atypical learners is quality education period.

To determine the degree to which a school meets each of the 48 Effective Practice Standards, experts from the Center for Professional Learning (CPL) at Gateways can administer a comprehensive review of a school's program and policies. The review is intended as an essential component of a school's cycle of continuous improvement by pinpointing strengths and areas for improvement. From this assessment, school leaders and educators can then develop the clear-eyed vision and the strategic design to extend its own brand of educational excellence to ever more Jewish students.

The Review Process

To undertake its assessment, the CPL team spends one full day at the school to conduct interviews, classroom observations, and collect other forms of information in order to develop a deep understanding of the educational and operational practices that comprise the school.

This understanding is rooted in an analysis of a school's level of implementation of the 48 Gateways Effective Practice Standards. More specifically, the CPL team considers how a school rates within the individual standards across the seven core areas of practice. (See p. 3 for a sample set of indicators within one of the core areas.)

These core areas are as follows:

1. *Content Learning* – Schools engage all students in robust content and implement strategies to help ensure content is accessible to all.
2. *Classroom Environment/Opportunity to Learn* – All classrooms are positive places to learn and take all appropriate steps to accommodate each student's academic and social needs.
3. *Academic/Other Supports* – The school ensures that all students who need supports beyond the typical classroom are provided appropriate, high-quality supports.
4. *Professional Learning* – All staff have the capacity to serve diverse learners and continually seek to improve.
5. *Leadership* – School leadership values efforts to serve diverse learners and ensures structures are in place to achieve this objective.
6. *School Culture/Community* – The school maintains a consistent message and system in place for how to serve diverse learners and all learners are valued.
7. *Continuous Improvement* – The school has systems in place to assess current practices and methods to improve upon them to better serve students and families.

In the days following the site visit, the CPL team will prepare a detailed written assessment of its findings, along with a series of recommendations for how to prioritize (and develop solutions to address) areas for improvement. The team will also hold a follow-up meeting (typically, by telephone) with the principal/head of school to discuss what the team learned, to review the recommendations, and to engage in planning for how to engage in concrete steps to boost a school’s capacity to educate diverse learners.

The Site Visit

During the visit, a team of two CPL professionals conduct the following eight data collection activities:

Activity	Total Number	Approximate Duration of Each (in minutes)
Interviews		
Principal/Head of School	1	60
Other administrator(s)	1 – 3	30
Core Academic Teacher	3	30
Intervention Teacher	1 - 2	30
Director of Support	1	30
Observations		
Core Academic Classroom	8 – 15*	15 – 20
Intervention/Acceleration	2	15 – 20
Teacher Collaboration Meeting (if applicable)	1 – 2	45 – 60

* Depends upon school size, number of grades served, classroom availability, and other scheduling needs. Ideally, site visitors will observe at least one class in each grade.

In each of these activities, site visitors will be gathering evidence that will help inform their rating of the indicators relevant to that setting. For example, in an observation of core academic class, the visitor will assess to what degree that session meets expectations in indicators related to the first two core areas (Content Learning and Classroom Environment), as well as to Effective Practice Standards that relate to school culture. Likewise, in interviews of all types, interview questions will be based entirely on the data needed to inform the range of relevant Effective Practice Standards.

These activities will take place throughout the day and visitors will try to observe a wide variety of classes and speak with many individuals so that their eventual assessment of your school’s progress is as fully informed as possible.

Cost

The day-long site visit, together with the generation of the report and follow-up meeting with school administrators, will require two full days of work for two CPL professionals. At a daily rate of \$1,200 per consultant, the total cost for a school program review is \$4,800.

Travel expenses are additional, but Gateways does make every effort to minimize these costs, including trying to schedule multiple school visits in a single region in the same week.

Sample Effective Practice Standards

To illustrate what schools can expect as part of the review the following list is excerpted from the sixth core area (School Culture/Community) that comprises Effective Practice Standards 38 – 44.

School Culture/Community <i>The school maintains a consistent message and system in place for how to serve diverse learners and all learners are valued.</i>
38. Faculty, administrators and staff demonstrate and articulate a consistent approach to instruction and differentiation across the school.
39. Faculty, administrators and staff demonstrate and articulate a consistent approach to and enforcement of behavior management across the school.
40. School develops a sophisticated system of new student intake to take into account developmental, social, and academic needs and includes planning aimed at ensuring that student will be best served by school's available resources and approach.
41. Inclusion is valued by all constituencies, and expressed as a Jewish value.
42. Parents are welcomed as partners in supporting diverse learners.
43. Parents are included as part of planning for how to support their own children.
44. The school actively promotes expectations to treat all students fairly and equally.