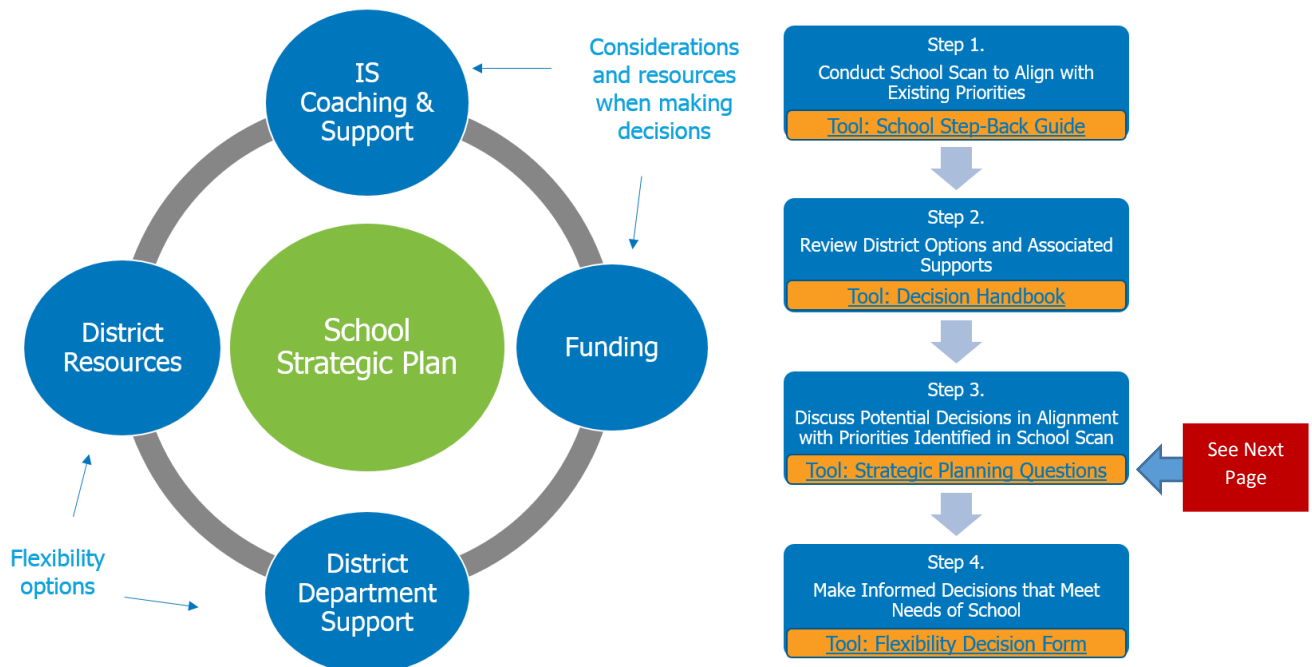


Strategic Planning Support: Informed and Engaged Decision-Making

This document has been created to provide school leaders with additional support in thinking through the impacts of flexible, school-based decision-making in their buildings. To learn more about the decision-making process or the Menu of Options, visit flexibility.dpsk12.org or read the [2017-18 Flexibility Decision Handbook](#).

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility decisions should be made in alignment with the school’s strategic plan to ensure consistency with the school’s broader context. School leaders are advised to review their strategic plans, as well as other existing planning documents (UIP, innovation plans, intensive school snapshots, etc.) and evaluate in what ways the district options do or do not support the priorities that have been identified. The School Step-Back Decision Guide is available to support school leaders in conducting a school scan, in which they reflect on data trends to determine if these support the school’s priorities and adjust accordingly. After reviewing and, if needed, revising their schools’ priorities, school leaders should engage their instructional leadership teams around flexibility decisions to identify student needs and carefully consider the school’s leadership and staff capacity. Additionally, school leaders should review their enrollment projections as well as their budget. All of these crucial strategic planning components should then infuse discussions among an instructional leadership team as it makes flexibility decisions.



Strategic Plan: School Improvement Levers

Below we have laid out several key questions, organized by the key school improvement levers identified by the district, that you may want to consider when deciding whether to opt-in or decline to opt-in to district-supported resources. One important area to consider is the implications of decisions on district-provided supports. In order to offer high-quality supports, the district does not have the ability to provide comprehensive supports beyond its recommended offerings in curriculum, assessment, and professional learning. As such, schools choosing to decline to opt-in to district options will receive more limited supports, and will subsequently have a greater level of school-based responsibility, than schools opting-in to the district options. Questions related to this are embedded below; more details on supports available depending on your decision can be found in the [Decision Handbook](#).

Lever	Key Questions	Potential Flexibility Implications
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the vision for learning in your school? • What is the current student and staff culture? • How will your flexibility decisions impact or integrate with other school improvement strategies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders should consider their school's vision, population, and current culture when making flexibility decisions. • In some cases, the district-adopted options may not be the best match for a school's unique culture, vision, or demographic. • Flexibility decisions should work as a lever in support of the school's existing school improvement strategies.
Instructional Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems, structures, and expertise are in place at your school to support the implementation of a new curricular or assessment resource? • What experience do you and your ILT have in selecting and implementing curriculum, assessment, or professional learning? If no previous, direct experience, are you clear about the guidance and expectations provided and the implications for the work in the school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school leaders should engage their instructional leadership teams. • If considering declining district-resources, the ILT should carefully consider its current capacity to implement and/or develop a resource without access to comprehensive supports from the district (see Chapter 2 of the Decision Handbook for details).
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will your flexibility decisions impact budget and staffing? • What is the level of teacher experience, expertise and knowledge of standards in your school? • What systems, structures, and resources do you have in place to support teachers in unit planning/lesson planning, scope and sequence design, etc.? • Does the school schedule for next year support your decisions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From an operational and financial standpoint, school leaders should be aware of the impacts of their flexibility decisions. School leaders should ensure that they factor in all related costs when assessing the purchasing power of the devolvement funds they receive. • Schools should consider systems and structures in place in terms of lesson and unit planning, should they decline the district curriculum.
Data Driven Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a data team and data cycle in place to inform instruction? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district-adopted assessment options include data training and coaching supports.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you currently use data to inform classroom decisions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school should consider the needs of its data culture in order to make decisions.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the Professional Development Plan and Planning approach for preparing teachers for implementing new curriculum and/or assessments by the start of school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders should consider their current capacity for scheduling, developing, and facilitating professional learning, including any costs for third-party vendors.
Observation Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems, structures, and schedule do you have in place to ensure regular walkthroughs with targeted feedback and coaching for teachers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools will continue to receive curriculum-agnostic supports, but only schools that opt-in to the district options will receive curriculum-specific supports.
Whole Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will flexibility decisions impact your most at-risk populations? • What interventions do you currently have in place to support your school's population? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility decisions should be made in alignment with the needs of the school's population, including any relevant legal requirements.
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems and structures do you have in place to ensure that families are engaged in student learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of flexibility decisions, all school leaders should notify their community of the resources they will be using.

Additional resources are available on our website at flexibility.dpsk12.org.