# Compact Tool 2-A: The Aligning Process

## **Overview**

When developing a new school-parent compact, you always want to consider: *do families, students, and teachers really understand the goals of the SIP?* The school-parent compact offers a great opportunity to explain those goals and decide what students, families, and teachers can do together to help reach them.

Yet, there’s one hitch: many school improvement goals are overly general and hard to understand. To fix this, the compact development team will need to rewrite school goals into more family-friendly language and then link those goals to specific strategies that can be implemented to help reach them. These goals and strategies will form the basis of the school-parent compact.

This tool lays out a step-by-step process for translating goals, linking them to students’ areas of challenge, and then identifying specific home learning strategies to help improve student achievement. A template and examples have also been provided.

**Step one:** What should the school or grade level instructional focus be? Pick one or two high priority goals from the SIP to focus on. What do the goals say? How can they be better explained to families?

**Step two:** Revise the wording so that it’s family friendly and clearly explains what should happen. Also consider using this wording for newsletters, flyers, and other communications about the school-parent compact.

**Step three:** As a grade level or content area, use data to identify the greatest challenges linked to your high priority goals. What skills does the data show that students need to strengthen most? Prioritize these by degree of need. What will help develop these skills in the long run? Which skills are building blocks for other skills? Select no more than two of these for the compact.

**Step four:** Identify and develop two or three “bang-for-your-buck” home learning strategies that are linked to the high priority goals and help address students’ greatest challenges. Remember, these are draft strategies to help start the conversation with families. Families should play an important role in finalizing the strategies that are ultimately put into the compact. When families have a voice in these strategies, they are much more likely to use them.

Before including any strategies in your new compact, be sure to share them with families and students for their feedback. After explaining what skills and knowledge students should be focusing on, give them time to ask questions and come up with ideas about what they can do. Be sure to ask families what information and support they will need from teachers to put the home learning strategies into action. How can we help you use these strategies? What information and materials do you need to use them effectively? Use this feedback to fine tune your suggested strategies.

# Compact Tool 2-B: Aligning Process Template

| **ACTION** | **Step one:**  Select 1-2 high priority goals from the school improvement plan | **Step two:**  Revise the wording to make the goals family friendly | **Step three:**  Link the goals to students’ areas of challenge | **Step four:**  Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals by addressing areas of challenge |
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| **WHO?** | School-parent compact committee | | School-parent compact committee and teachers in  grade level or content area groups | |
| **SUGGESTED RESOURCES** | School improvement plan | | School improvement plan & student achievement data | Teacher experience, family and student feedback, education websites, supporting information in adopted instructional materials |

# Compact Tool 2-B: Aligning Process Template

| **Step one:**  Select 1-2 high priority goals from the school improvement plan | **Step two:**  Revise the wording to make the goals family friendly | **Step three:**  Link the goals to students’ areas of challenge | **Step four:**  Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals by addressing areas of challenge |
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# Example 1: Elementary Reading Goal

| **Step one:**  Select 1-2 high priority goals from the school improvement plan | **Step two:**  Revise the wording to make the goals family friendly | **Step three:**  Link the goals to students’ areas of challenge | **Step four:**  Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals by addressing areas of challenge |
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| Student proficiency in ELA on TNReady will increase by 10%.  Not clear:   * Will all students improve by 10% or will 10% more students reach proficiency? * Where are students currently performing? | 1st Grade Example:  The percentage of first graders who score at benchmark on the reading portion of AimsWeb will move from \_\_\_% to \_\_\_%.  5th Grade Example:  The percentage of fifth graders who are proficient in English language arts on TNReady will move from \_\_\_% to \_\_\_%. | 1st Grade Example:  1st grade data show a weakness in sight word vocabulary and application of sight words to text passages.  5th Grade Example:  5th grade data show that students are having difficulty making connections from non-fiction passages to situations in real life. | 1st Grade Example:   * Teachers will focus on vocabulary development -- sight words and phonetic pronunciations. * Monthly word lists will be sent to each family. * The school web page/parent section will include the words of the month. * The literacy coach will hold three parent workshops per year on extending vocabulary development.   5th Grade Example:   * Teachers will focus on strengthening students’ ability to make text-to-self connections in non-fiction reading. * At back to school night, each classroom teacher will conduct a short lesson to explain text connecting and how families can continue this learning at home. * Samples of text connecting will be included in the monthly newsletter and on the website. * Two workshops per year will be provided to assist families in strengthening text connecting, with examples from TNReady as a foundation for each lesson. |

# Example 2: High School English Goal

| **Step one:**  Select 1-2 high priority goals from the school improvement plan | **Step two:**  Revise the wording to make the goals family friendly | **Step three:**  Link the goals to students’ areas of challenge | **Step four:**  Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals by addressing areas of challenge |
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| On the English I EOC, the grade level gain at or above proficiency will increase by 10% points in 2017-18.  Not clear:   * What is grade level gain? * Will all students’ scores improve 10% or will the percent of students who are proficient increase by 10%? * What percent of our students are at grade level now? | On the English I EOC, the number of students who score at Level 2 Satisfactory will increase by 15% over the next three years.  For example, the percent of students taking the English I EOC will increase from \_\_\_% to \_\_\_%. | The data shows a weakness in idea development in expository writing. | * Teachers will provide examples of strong idea development and provide families with probing questions to use to support idea development when students are working on content related writing assignments at home. * The campus will host one Writing Workshop per semester for families and students to engage in writing activities, highlight effective writing techniques, and showcase writing. * Teachers will feature writing tips on the school website. |