

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

13.2 *The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.*

I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?

Benchmark 13.2 is about leadership, supervision, accountability, enrollment data and students. This requires data and knowledge of how to collect data on enrollment, how to measure and analyze the data, and more importantly how to plan based on the data analysis. The governing body holds the leadership team accountable for providing the data and the governing body reviews, analyzes, and advises with support. The leadership team works with an analytical team that is continuously measuring enrollment data and patterns based on very specific criteria for the measurement of the data that is based on enrollment management research and best practices, and found in professional publications and professional development opportunities.

II. As a review team member, what evidence do I look for?

Here are some fundamental guiding questions which will help frame this item:

- Does this plan reflect the mission, with a focus on who the school serves as well as why the school exists?
- Is there a formal communication agreement between the board, leadership team and enrollment management team?
- How do they communicate, how frequently, when, why, and what are the results? Is there evidence of this collaboration?
- Who leads and how is the collaboration fostered for the creation of strategy etc.?
- Are there guides to measurement, timing of measures and how measures are used?
- Are there guidelines regarding where and when data is collected?

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

13.2 *The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.*

- Do data sources include multiple audiences such as: current school populations, alumni, those who chose not to attend the school, realtors, shop owners, donors, and opinion leaders in the community?
- What data is collected and how is it used?
- Who is gathering the data and using it to analyze retention?
- What challenges are listed as needing to be addressed?

III. What are the key differences between the levels of the rubric?

At level **3-Fully Meets Benchmark**,

the plan reflects a serious articulation of the mission with a strong focus on WHO the school serves and a plan to target that population. The review team sees and reviews the plan and the schedule used by the governing body to review the leadership team and supervise annual measurement and analysis. The work is focused on both enrollment (including all pertinent variables and their measures) and retention, and includes demonstrated use of pattern and prediction analysis – for example, statements like “If X continues then we can expect Y” should be common. The assessment is timely and is executed on schedule, and those in charge are accountable to deliver the data for timely decision making by the board and the leadership team. All decisions regarding tuition, tuition assistance, development/marketing strategies and community outreach and involvement are informed intentionally by this data.

At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the above listed items are enhanced by a more focused and analytical approach. For example: Where are the students the mission statement claims are served by the school? Are these students represented and where might one find more? All operations planning – including technology, physical plant, etc... - are informed by the data. The governing body reviews the data and actively assists with the development of data and its analysis. Reviewers should find evidence of this in documents provided by the board, including board meeting minutes, committee assignments, plans, and

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

13.2 *The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.*

implementation strategies. State of the art techniques are used to gather past and current demographic data and this data informs future predictions for the parish, community, diocese, and any “benchmark” schools with which one competes. Any diocesan planning or policies for planning are carefully reviewed and related to the work. Most importantly, the review team finds data in the evidence that demonstrates serious and sustained analysis, which is integrated and continually generates new questions, which drive new analyses. All of this work is based on the school’s mission.

At level 2-Partially Meets Benchmark,

the plan exists but is not fully articulated or vetted by the community and is not completely informed by the mission. Recruitment strategies are based on “needing to increase the numbers” rather than on the school’s mission. Data collection and analysis are not planned and there is no evidence of professional data collection or analysis. The limited data gathered is used by a few leaders in the school, and there would be evidence of this in planning documents provided by those few staff who use the “numbers” provided.

At level 1-Does Not Meet Benchmark,

there is no plan and no clearly defined measures for developing criteria for measurement, analysis or planning. No one is accountable to the governing body or the school leadership team and there is no understanding of the critical role such a plan fulfills for the operational sustainability of a school. Strong indicators may include: low enrollment (or a recent negative change in enrollment that is not well-understood by school leaders) and low morale. Leadership behavior has become membership driven (that is, focused on keeping current families happy and enrolled regardless of how this impacts the school’s mission). The community has accepted lower curriculum standards or lowered requirements for entry into the school.

NOTE: It is very important for all involved in the development of a recruitment and retention plan to start with the “who” in the school’s mission statement. If the statement is long, not clear or confusing, it must be redone before there can be an effective enrollment, recruiting or retention plan.

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

13.2 The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.

IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

In general, for any of these areas,

- Use your assessment data based on the scoring above
- Delineate what you have to do (and what you can do)
- Carefully plan your steps to move forward.
- Do not try to do it all at once.
- Make these steps part of your strategic plan for change and transformation.

To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Review, with the leadership team and the governing board, the mission statement and be certain it is clear, concise and answers the questions “why” and “who”.
- Initiate the development of an enrollment and retention plan as well as listing the data necessary based on this review.
- Include in the process of developing an enrollment plan, a listing of the staff, students, families, donors and community leaders
- Address how the school will continue to keep each of these groups engaged beyond the initial planning development period and into the (much more difficult) data collection, analysis, integration and implementation phases.

To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Review the current enrollment/retention plan in light of the school’s mission statement and revise and reform as necessary. (Often, issues with implementation stem from a lack of clarity in the plan itself, or in a lack of alignment between the plan and the school’s mission.)
- Define the criteria and measurements that will be used to “mark” progress and status.
- Determine agreement among all stakeholders regarding the markers and the measures.
- Define a time line for improvement/execution, be clear about how much it will cost, and start simply.
- Delineate the two parts (retention and recruitment/enrollment) – both are essential and will require planning with the finance committee as well as those involved in student management and oversight.
- Include in the process a healthy discussion of the mission and how it drives the enrollment and retention strategies.

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

13.2 The enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.

To move from level 3 to 4,

- Verify that you have an overall operations plan. This is where the retention and enrollment recruitment planning has to become real.
- Work to educate everyone – board members as well as staff and faculty – regarding what a good enrollment and retention plan looks like. (This is both an art and a science)
- Hire a consultant or expert in this area to guide those in charge (consider reaching out to colleges and universities, whose internal admissions departments may contain or have access to such experts).
- Create a culture of continuous improvement for those involved in the planning and execution of the plan.
- Adhere to your measurement rules. Do not change the measures without careful consideration of how that will affect the data and long-term analysis (remember that changes may make comparisons to prior years unworkable).
- Stress analysis followed by decision-making based on that analysis.
- Show respect for the work and the numbers, even if involved persons do not like what they summarize.

IV. What are key terms for common understanding? (Refer to Glossary for the key terms listed below.)

Measurement
Analysis
Retention
Tuition
Cost per Child