

Developing and Implementing Quality District Strategic and School Renewal Plans

ESSA Academy

Innovation & Support Team

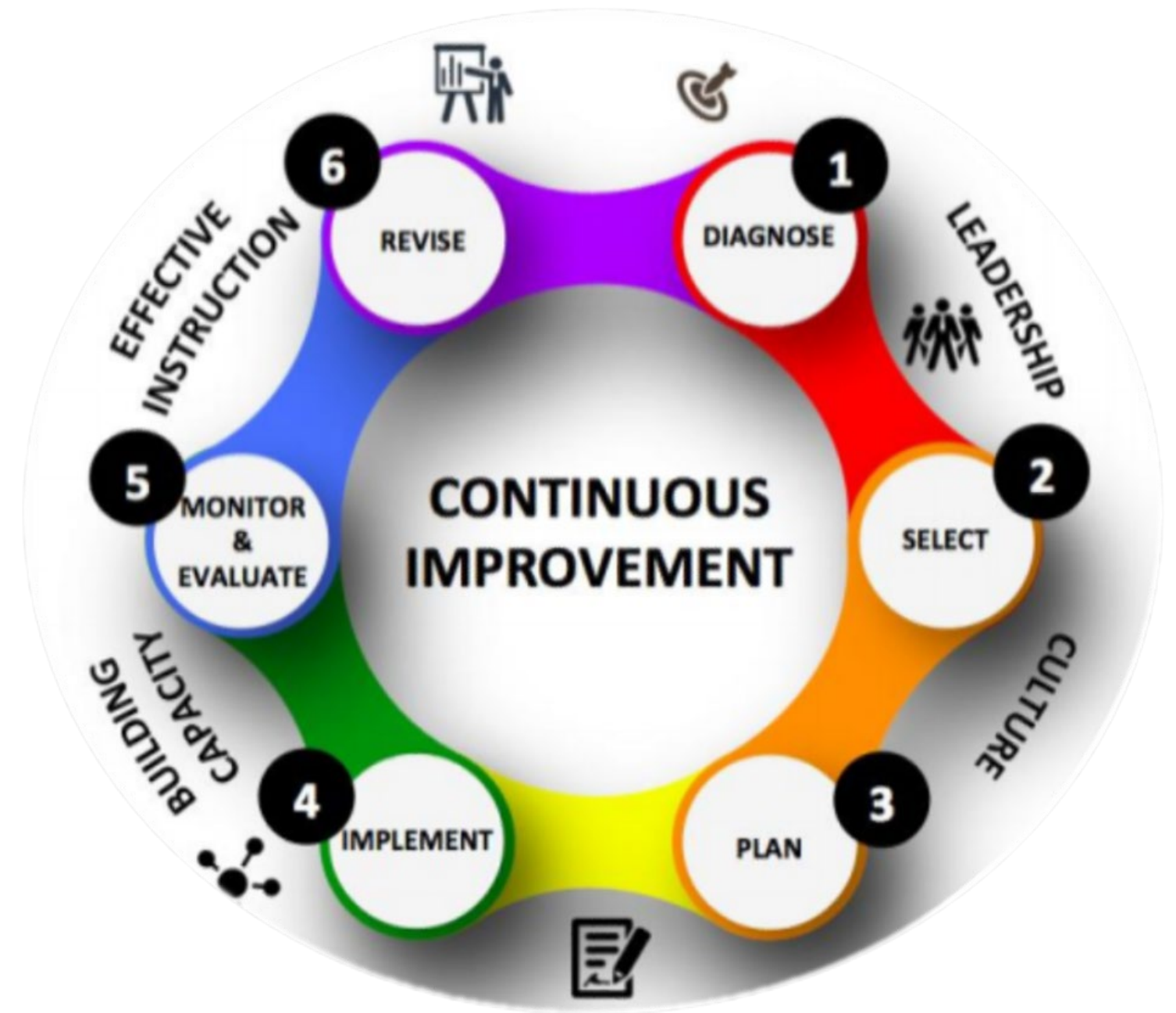
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SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

School Improvement Model

- School improvement must be viewed as an organizational **strategy**, rather than an exercise in compliance.
- Improvement cycle gives districts a template for focused and intentional actions that lead to continuous improvement.



South Carolina School Improvement Model

Strategic Plan

Formal Definition

- A **dynamic** process that formalizes and communicates the school district's mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives, and the **actions** needed to achieve those goals and objectives.



Quality Strategic Planning: *Essential Elements*

- **Needs Assessment**
- **Differentiated Interventions**
- **Focused Improvement**



Quality Strategic Planning:

Essential Elements

- **Structure/Strategy** - Strategy sets the direction and focus, elaborates plans and the environment for educators to understand the organization's goals.
- An organization must be able to efficiently execute that strategy to achieve its performance improvement goals.



Quality Strategic Planning: *Essential Elements*

Culture

- Building and sustaining an organizational **culture** that facilitates and accelerates change (Collaboration & Distributive Leadership) - **Relationships!**

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." African Proverb

- Fostering a sense of personal **accountability** for strategy execution and ownership at every level (High Expectations) - **People will only follow you as deeply as they trust you.**

"Do not expect changes in student outcomes before you have changes in adult practices."



District Strategic and School Renewal Plans

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

- All districts and schools are required to have a District Strategic Plan/School Renewal Plan
- The plans are on a five-year cycle with annual updates
- Submissions are due by April 30th each year
- The purpose of the Plans is to coordinate and align improvement initiatives

<https://www.ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/district-strategic-and-school-renewal-plans/>



District Strategic and School Renewal Plan Components

- ✓ Assurances
- ✓ Stakeholder Involvement
- ✓ Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- ✓ Needs Assessment Executive Summary
- ✓ Performance Goals
- ✓ Interim Performance Goals
- ✓ Strategies and Action Plans
- ✓ Evaluation of the Strategies



Gifted & Talented Plan

- Two GT SMART Goals in the District Strategic Plan
- Policies and Practices
- Scope and Sequence
- Grades of Academic Service
- Grades of Artistic Service
- Screening and Identification Notification



Waivers & Proficiency-Based System

- Waivers and the Proficiency-Based System Plan should not be included in this stage of the DSSR.
- Waivers should not be submitted until after the DSSR Plan is approved.
- After approval, use the [Formstack](#) to submit a waiver, a Proficiency-Based System Plan, or a Proficiency-Based System Evaluation.



District Strategic and School Renewal Plans

Performance Goals

DISTRICT

- Each district must complete at least one goal for
 - Student Achievement
 - Teacher/Administrator Quality
 - School Climate
 - Gifted and Talented

SCHOOLS

- Each school must complete at least one goal for
 - Student Achievement
 - Teacher/Administrator Quality
 - School Climate



A primary reason for our lack of success is...

...our addiction to excess!



The result of your needs assessment must be a focused plan that allows you to prioritize on a limited number of strategic goals.

School Improvement Model- Diagnose

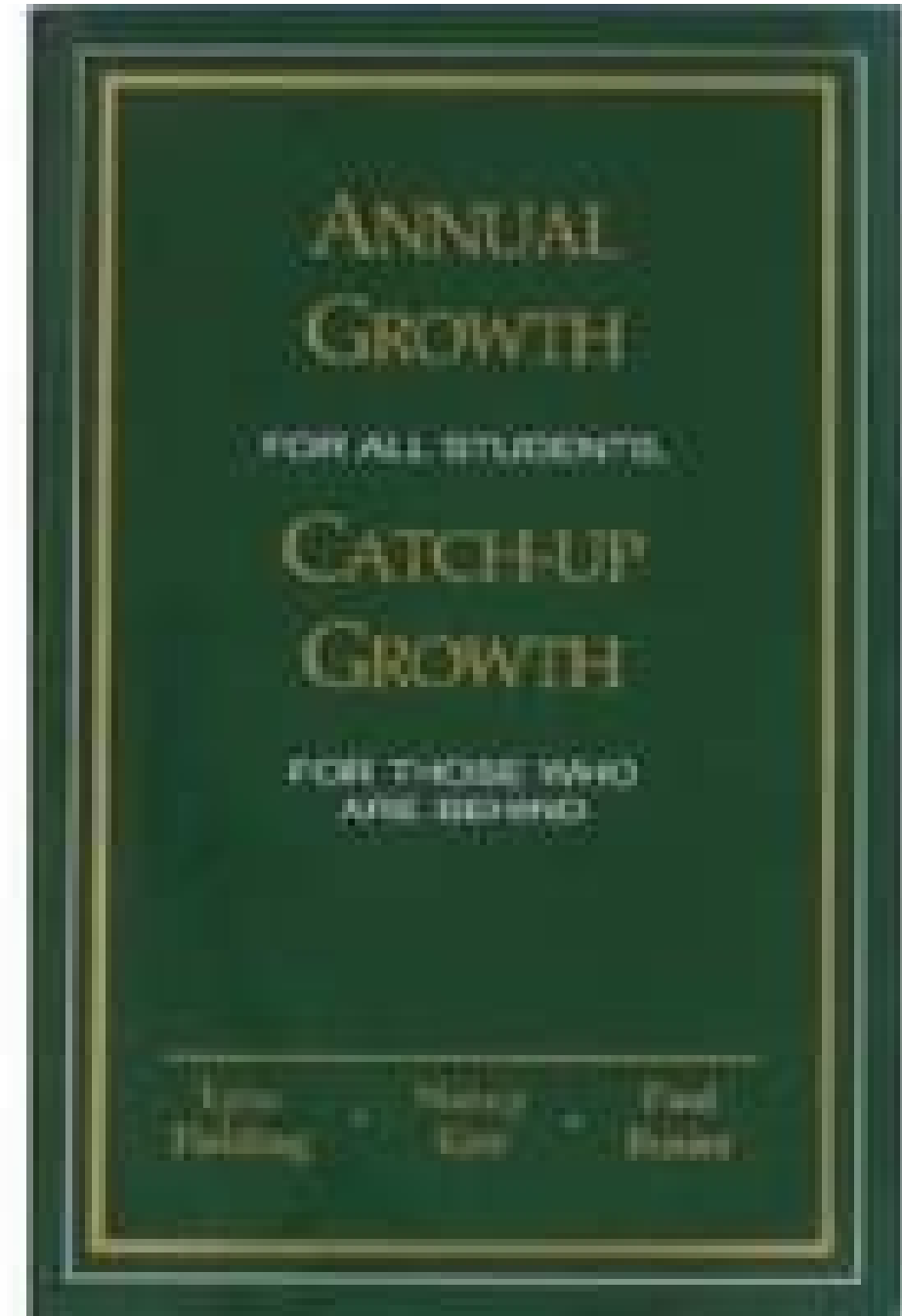
Diagnose-Consult many sources to help determine the critical needs in the district's current operations.

- Plan and prepare for the process
- Collect and analyze data
- Use Needs Assessment Rubric to identify needs
- Prioritize the most strategic and overarching challenges
- Conduct a root cause analysis



Annual Growth...Catch Up Growth

- Kennewick School district (15,000 students) established a 90% 3rd grade reading goal, moving from 57% of students at standard in 1996 to 89.6% in 2006 and 89.3% in 2007.



Diagnose: Comprehensive Needs Assessment

A needs assessment:

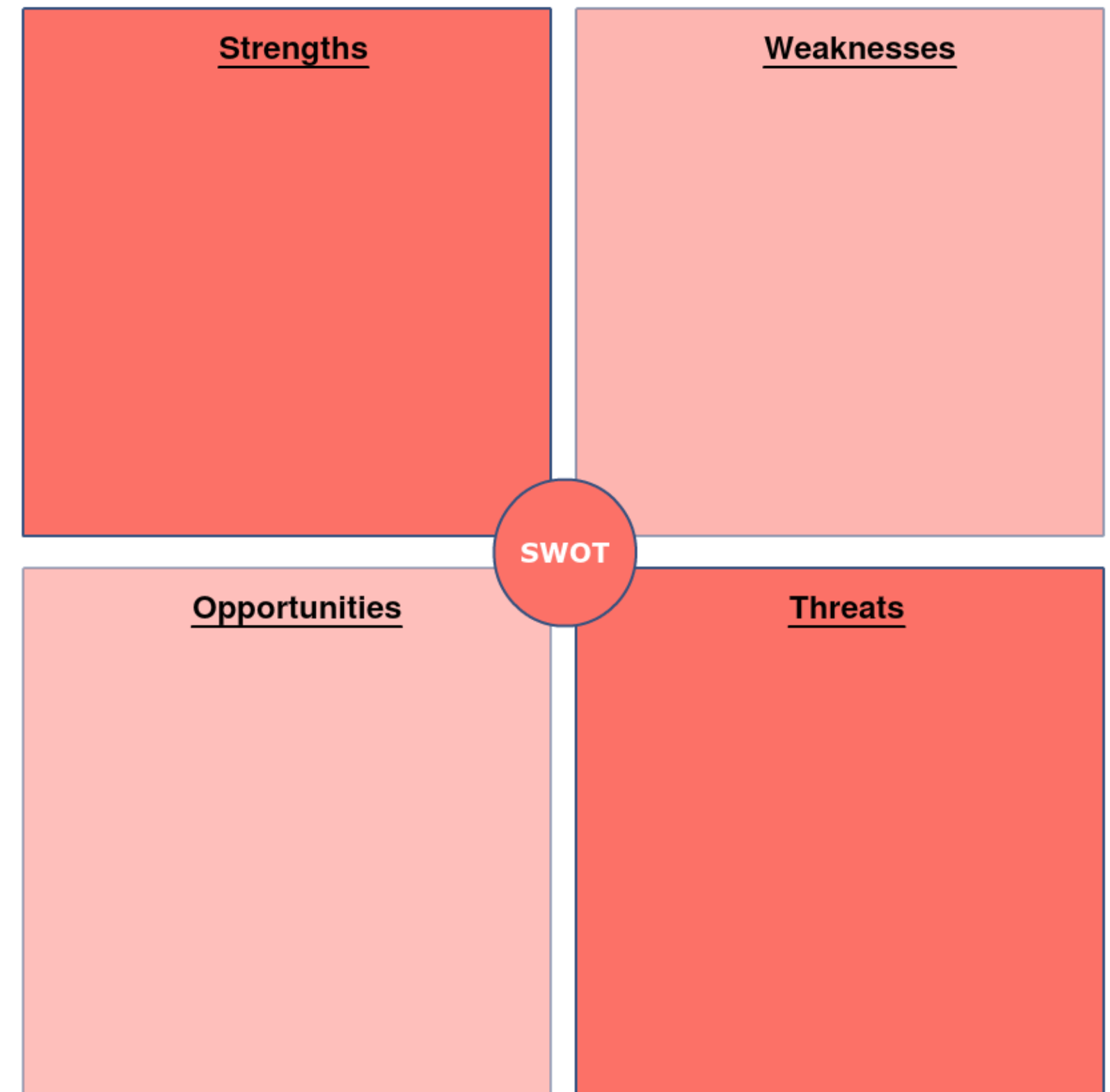
- Requires an inclusive team approach
- Requires gathering and analyzing data
- Informs identification of primary needs, root causes, need statements, and desired outcomes



SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a technique for assessing aspects of your organization.

- What challenges arose during the past school year/s that have not yet been resolved?
- What challenges do we expect might arise during 2025-2026?
- What processes and programs are helping us innovate and transform?
- How can we leverage these opportunities?
- Who are the people who have stepped up to the challenges?



Reflective Questions

Stakeholders will use these questions to drive discussions and use consensus to determine the current reality:

Our district....

- Engages and supports all schools in systematic processes for curriculum design to align instruction and assessments with the required standards.
- Guides, supports, and evaluates the implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessments
- Uses a collaborative, data-driven planning process at the district and school levels for improving student learning.
- Ensures that professional learning is relevant and addresses adult and student needs
- Fosters, within the district and broader community, a culture of trust, collaboration, and joint responsibility for improving learning and teaching.

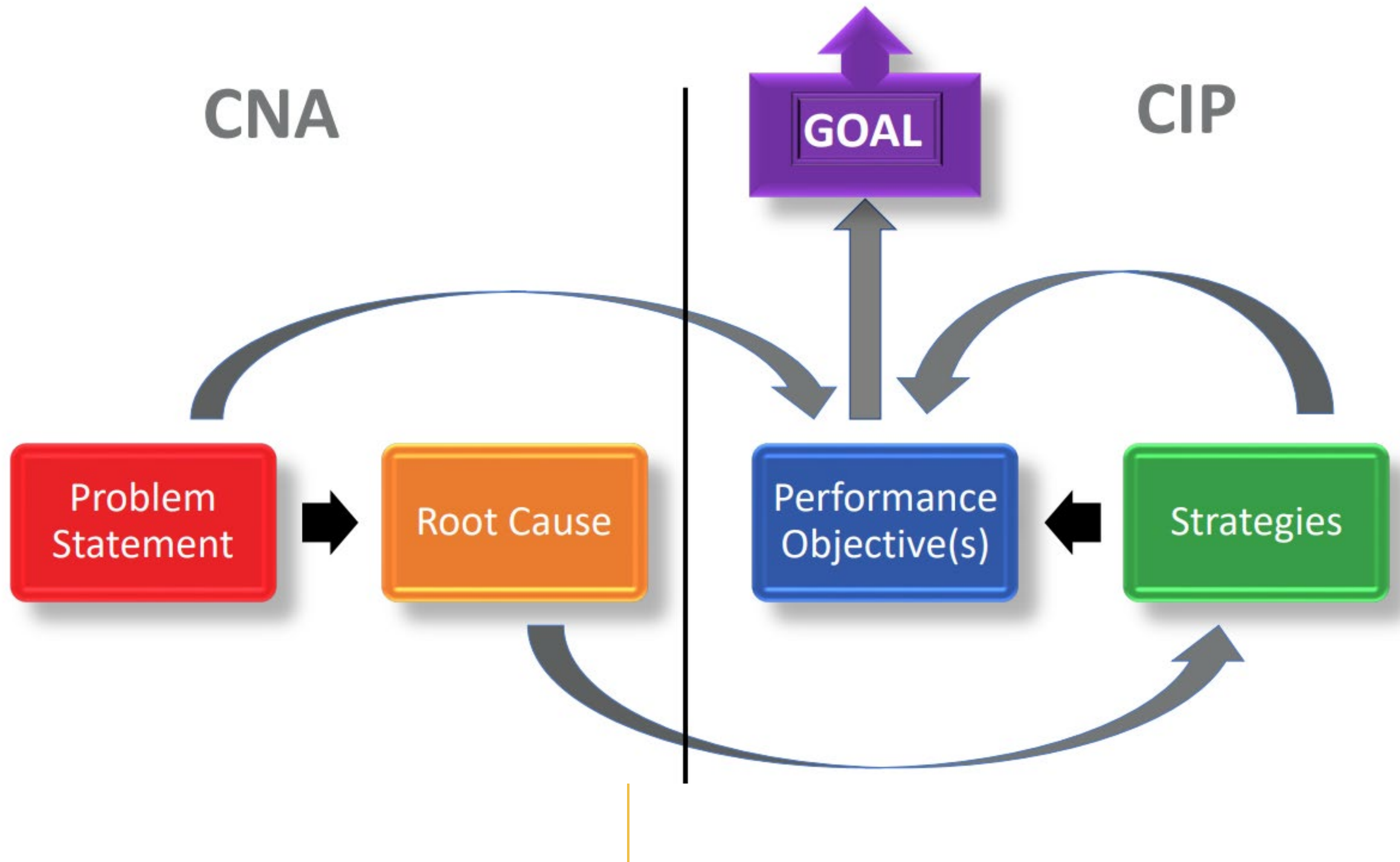


Diagnose: Examine Educational Factors

The data analysis should include educational factors that matter for student learning:

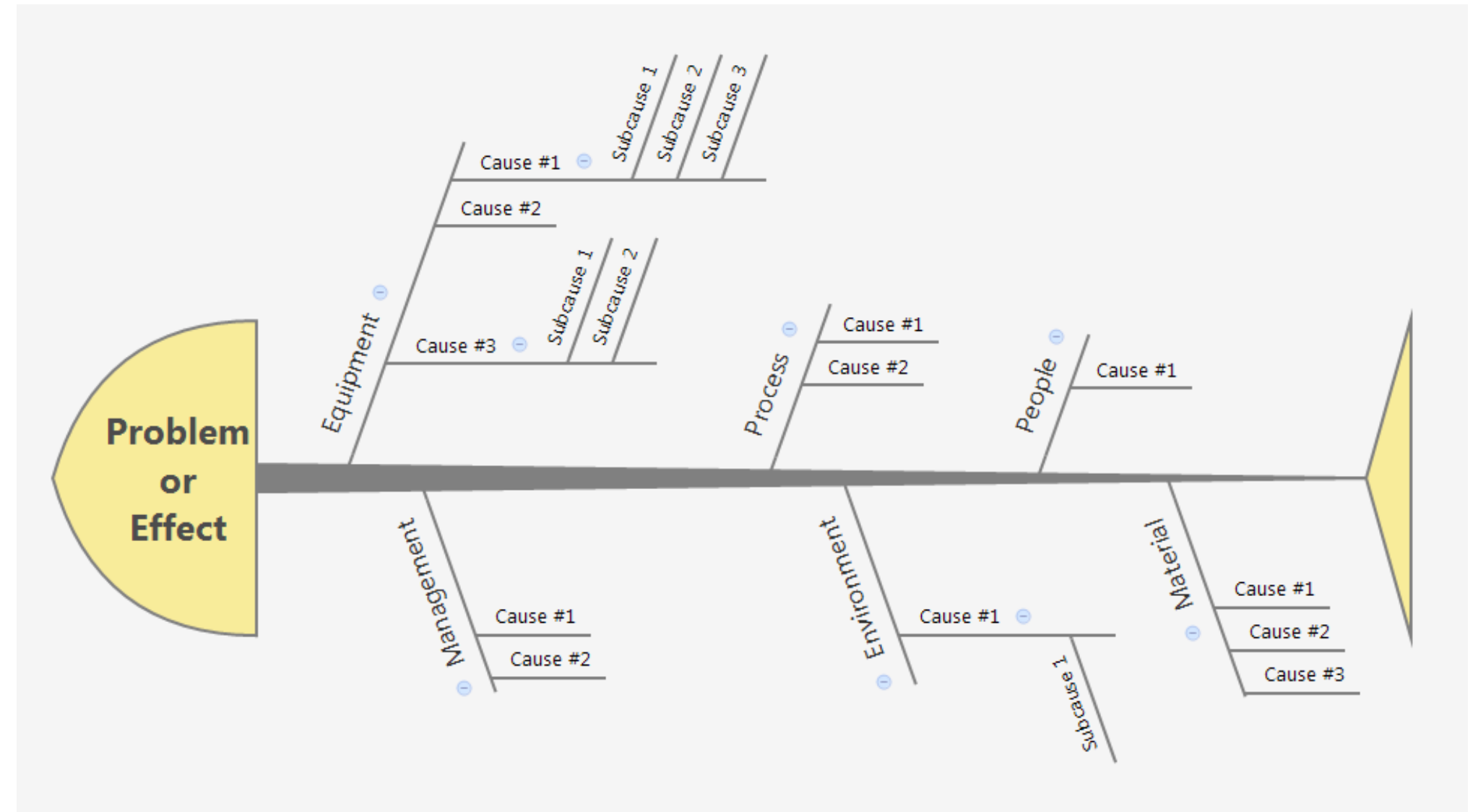
- Aligned Curriculum & Assessments
- Effective Instruction
- Quality of Leadership
- Supports for Students and Teachers
- A Safe and Positive Climate
- Family and Community Engagement
- Equitable Access to Resources





Diagnose: Root Cause Analysis

Root cause analysis is a structured team process. It allows the use of a strategic method to dig down into the primary need and determine causes and contributing factors. At the end of the root cause analysis, the major cause is discovered, and what needs to happen to remove the problem is determined. This is the time to discuss causes, not solutions.



School Improvement Model- Plan

Plan-Develop a team and plan to implement the solutions that are most promising and can be carried out at the school.

- Draft SMART goals defining implementation plans and timelines
- Identify roles and responsibilities of those implementing the intervention
- Develop a team that will deeply understand the intervention and planned implementation
- Identify resources and supports needed for the implementation of the intervention
- Develop a set of information to be reviewed to track the implementation



Plan: Goals, Strategies, & Action Plans

GOAL

- An observable and measurable outcome to be achieved with a fixed timeframe -- the end result toward which your efforts are directed.

ACTION PLAN

- A sequence of steps to be taken or activities to be performed for a goal to be achieved.



Plan: Performance Goal Area

Decide which performance goal area you plan to target:

- Student Achievement
- Teacher/Administrative Quality
- School Climate (Parent Involvement, Safe and Healthy Schools, etc.)
- District Priority



Plan:

High Quality Improvement Plans

Design high-quality school improvement plans informed by:

- Each school's assets (and how they're being used), needs (including but not limited to resources), and root causes of underperformance;
- Research on effective schools, successful school improvement efforts, and implementation science;
- Best available evidence of what interventions work, for whom, under which circumstances; and
- The science of learning and development, including the impact of poverty and adversity on learning.



Plan: Writing a Performance Goal

Goal Area: Student Achievement

Performance Goal: ABC School will increase the high school graduation rate from 75% to 90% by 2026.

Interim Performance Goal: ABC School will increase the high school graduation rate by 3% each year.

Data Sources: School Graduation Results



Plan: Effective Goals

Effective goals should be written in a SMART-C format.

1. Strategic/Specific
2. Measurable
3. Actionable
4. Relevant
5. Timely
6. Challenging



Common Challenges of Strategic Planning

- Lack of Time
- Insufficient Tools
- Asking the Wrong Questions- Are you asking the deep and “tough” questions?
- Jumping to Solutions- Leaders often jump to the task of brainstorming solutions before truly understanding the problems to be solved.
- Ineffective Implementation and Monitoring



Common Challenges of Strategic Planning

Executive Summary of Needs Assessment Challenges

- Not identifying a need as the basis of the plan
- Failure to make the appropriate correlations
- Failure to analyze data at a deep level

Any discrepancies in the following areas identified by the school and district report cards must be included in the plan:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Achievement | 5. Discipline |
| 2. Achievement by Subgroup | 6. Teacher/Administrator Quality |
| 3. Graduation Rate | 7. Other Priority Areas |
| 4. Attendance | |



Common Challenges of Strategic Planning

Failure to Create a **Strategic** Performance Goal

- By 2025-2026, 60% of 3rd- 8th graders will score “Meets or Exceeds” on the ELA and Math benchmarks as measured by Spring MAP scores.
- Reduce class size for 4th and 5th grades to 18:1 by 2025-2026.
- Provide all teachers with 3 additional professional development opportunities per school year by 2025 **(or)** By 2027, 100% of the faculty/staff will receive appropriate schoolwide and area-specific professional development.
- By June of 2027, school report card surveys will show:
Parents satisfied with the learning environment will increase 1 percentage point each academic year from 95.9% to 99.9%.
(or)
Teachers satisfied with the learning environment will remain at 100% each academic year.



School Improvement Model- Implement

Implement

- Collect information to monitor the quality of supports being provided for the intervention
- Consider what additional information is needed to determine if intervention is working
- Assess the degree to which the implementation plan is being followed
- Identify ways to break down any barriers
- Build capacity of others to facilitate the improvement process now and in the future



Implement: Impediments to Improvement

Three drivers need to be in place for school improvement efforts to succeed, including ensuring fidelity of implementation and sustainable long-term results.

- **Human Capital (or Competency)**
- **Organization**
- **Leadership**

“Schools improve when leaders implement well.”



Implement: Human Capital

- Leaders make no decision of greater consequence than the educators selected to join the school's faculty. Selecting, developing, improving, and sustaining the school and its staff's ability to implement an intervention as intended in order to benefit students.



Implement: Organization

Tools include:

- Developing core processes (i.e. the school's own "playbook") for the key functional areas;
- Collecting, analyzing, and using data effectively; and
- Identifying and mitigating barriers that exist outside of the school as much as possible.



Implement: Leadership Skills

- Who the principal of a school is matters for outcomes beyond achievement.
- Studies show that some principals are more effective than others at reducing absenteeism and chronic absenteeism.
- Principals vary in their likelihood of meting out exclusionary discipline (e.g., suspensions).
- Some are more successful at retaining teachers, including more effective teachers.
- The overall impact of an effective principal can be linked to observable behaviors. That is, how principals approach school leadership directly affects schools' outcomes by **building capacity and creating culture**.



Thoughts about Leadership

Leading is Teaching

“If you can’t teach, you can’t lead.” - Dr. Jim Mahoney

Leaders are Servants

“You don’t have to be great to serve, but you have to serve to be a great leader.” - Jon Gordon

Dispositional vs Positional

“Leadership is an action, not a position.” - Donald McGannon

Collective Leadership (Leadership is Shared)

“True leaders don’t create more followers. They create more leaders” - Tom Peters

Leaders Develop Cultures

“Great leaders succeed because they bring out the greatness in others.” - Jon Gordon

Vision Oriented & Student-Centered

“There is nothing more demoralizing than a leader who can’t clearly articulate why we’re doing what we’re doing.” - James Kouzes & Barry Posner

Leaders are Responsible (Accountability)

“The lowest performing teacher in your building sets your standard for what is acceptable.” - Rich Hawkins



Implement: The Key Levers

The Key Three Levers for Improvement

1. Create and develop **instructional leadership teams** at the school level across the district.
2. Build an effective **instructional coaching** program for all educators.
3. Launch **professional learning communities** that work.



School Improvement Model- Monitor & Evaluate

Monitor & Evaluate- Determine whether the implementation of the solutions is meeting the originally identified needs of the school.



Monitor: Ongoing, Timely Review and Feedback

- The two things that matter most to instructional quality are what is being taught and how well.
- Many schools are plagued by “lots of change, but not much improvement.”
- Teachers must regularly analyze achievement data, set goals, and then meet to discuss the results.



Staffing/Organizational Chart



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