

Identifying Strategies to Promote Equity in School Discipline



Training Guide for Using Data to Promote Equity in School Discipline Series

This series includes

- Introduction: Planning and Facilitating Work Sessions to Improve School Discipline
- Work Session: Revising School Discipline Policies and Procedures to Promote Equity
- Work Session: Using School Discipline Data to Pinpoint Concerns and Track Progress
- Work Session: Using Reflection Groups to Learn How Families and Educators View Their School or District
- Work Session: Identifying Strategies to Promote Equity in School Discipline

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Agenda



- 1** Introductions
- 2** School and classroom practices
- 3** Root-cause analysis
- 4** Intervention planning
- 5** Next steps

Objectives

- Learn what the research says about school or classroom discipline practices that are associated with lower rates of school discipline.
- Identify potential root causes that contribute to the school discipline concern.
- Choose a school or district discipline practice that will be the focus of your intervention and identify strategies that your district or school could implement to improve school discipline practices.

Find a Partner

Name and position

What do you hope to learn today?

What is one success that you had this week?

Be prepared to share highlights of your discussion



Why improving school discipline is important

Suspensions are costly for students



- They remove students from classroom instruction
- They weaken academic achievement
- They contribute to dropout and delinquency

(Balfanz, Byrnes, & Fox, 2015; Fabelo et al., 2011; Hinze-Pifer & Sartain, 2018; Noltemeyer, Ward, & Mcloughlin, 2015)

Discipline issues are costly for the educator workforce

- In a 2013 national survey, 55 percent of former teachers said they left the profession due to overall dissatisfaction
- Discipline issues were one of the top five reasons teachers were dissatisfied
- More teachers were dissatisfied with discipline issues than with large class sizes

(Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016)

Promoting equity means striving to reach every student

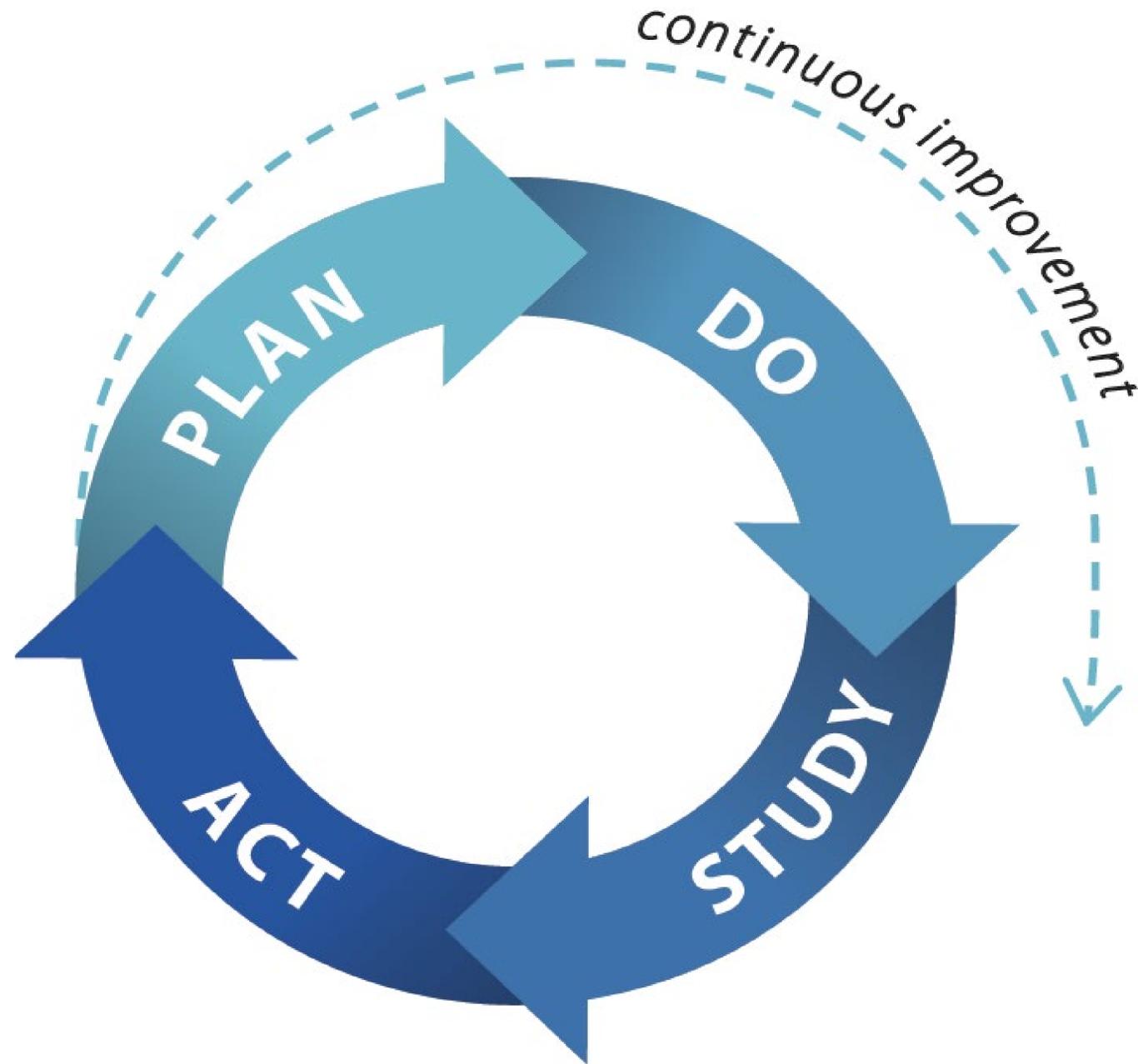
Think about your current discipline policies and practices:

- Who do they advantage?
- Who do they disadvantage?

Plan-Do-Study-Act

Using data to pinpoint concerns

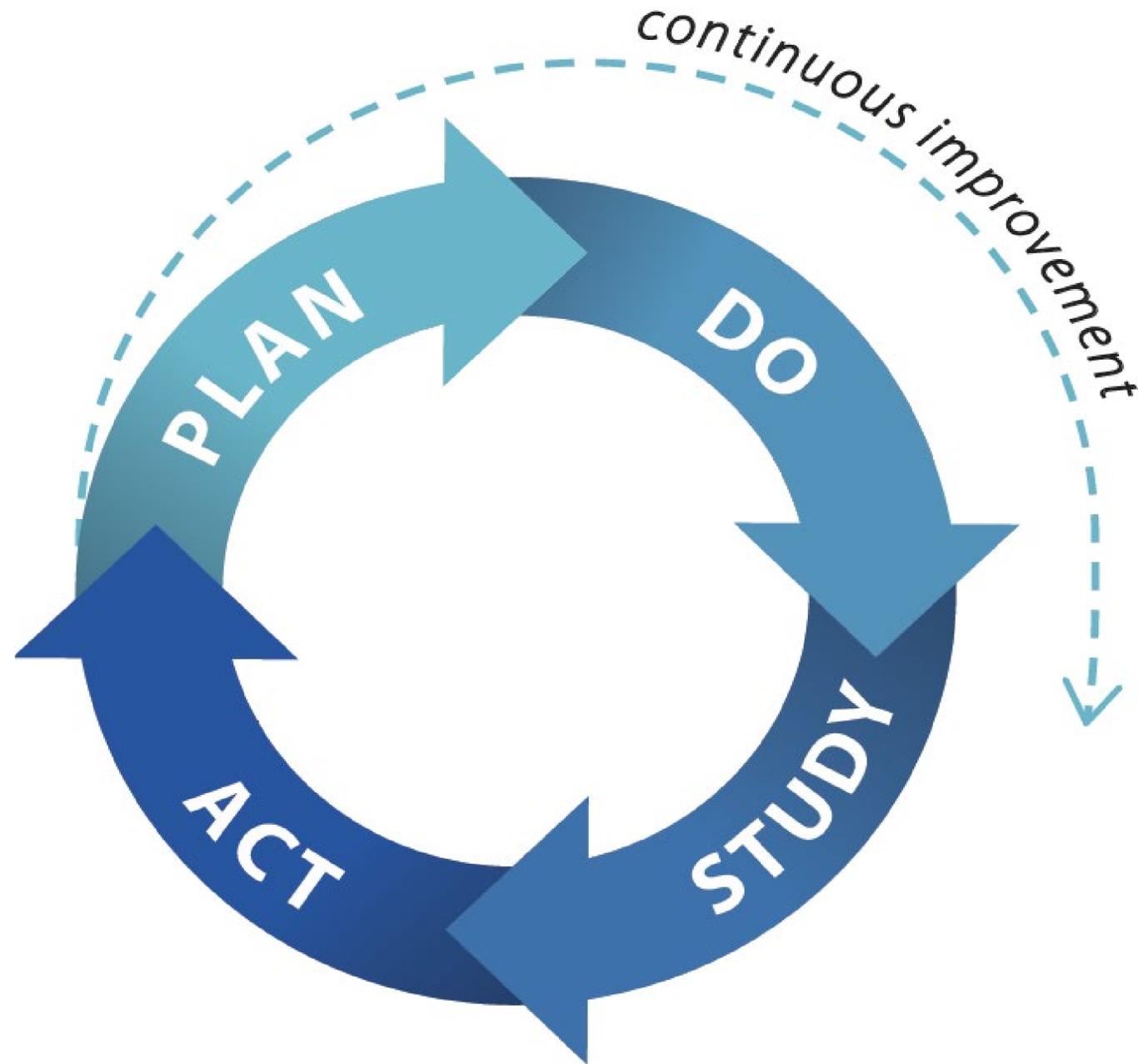
Plan-Do-Study-Act



- Plan** Pinpoint concerns, identify root causes, develop goals, create an action plan, and choose indicators to track progress
- Do** Implement the action plan and collect indicator data to monitor the fidelity of implementation and track progress
- Study** Evaluate progress, review what you learned, and determine what adjustments, if any, are needed
- Act** Adjust the action plan if needed

(Deming, 1987; Nishioka et al., 2017)

Plan-Do-Study-Act



PLAN

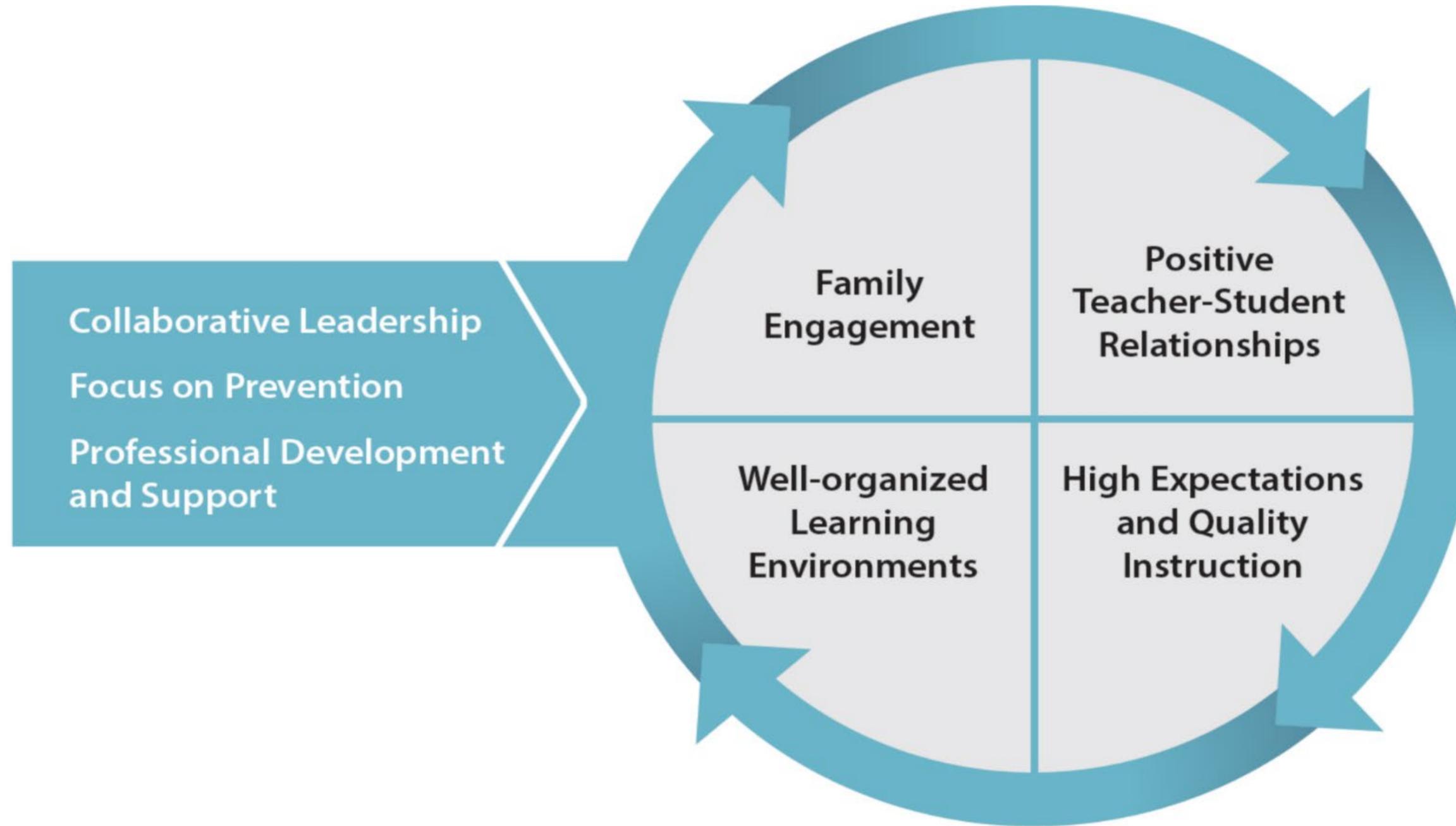
Choose indicators to track progress

Pinpoint concerns, identify root causes, **develop goals, and identify an intervention**

(Deming, 1987; Nishioka et al., 2017)

School and classroom strategies

Use research to guide your work



1

Strong leadership

Lead through collaboration and by example

(Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Mukuria, 2002)

2

Focus on prevention

Focus on prevention and building a welcoming, caring school climate

Implement clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and responses to discipline concerns

Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement

Success may require adults to change

(Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011; Murkuria, 2002; Raffaele Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Way, 2011)

3

Professional development and support

- Provide support to students
 - Provide additional academic support
 - Teach social and emotional skills
- Provide teachers and other education professionals with:
 - Professional development
 - Coaching and technical support

School and classroom strategies

- Read and discuss the research on the school or classroom practice that was assigned to your group
- Discuss the questions below
 - What are some strategies that could improve this practice in your school?
 - Describe the benefits and challenges of planning and implementing improvements in this practice?
- Please be prepared to share what the research says, as well as the highlights of your group discussion

4

Positive teacher-student relationships

- Show an interest in the welfare of students
- Tell students they can succeed
- Are aware of students' academic and social needs
- Respect student perspectives
- Give positive recognition

(Brackett et al., 2011; Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004; Gregory, Cornell, & Fan, 2011; Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Murkuria, 2002; Tobin & Vincent, 2011; Way, 2011)

“I think that you have to develop a relationship with each student. Every kid that you have has a different story, and if you show interest in what they’ve gone through, they’re going to show interest in what you’re trying to convey to them.”

(Milnore & Tenore, 2010, p. 578)

5

High expectations for students

- Set high expectations for each student
- Engage students in active learning
- Encourage higher order thinking
- Celebrate differences

(Brackett et al., 2011; Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Gregory, Cornell, & Fan, 2011; Murkuria, 2002; Way, 2011)

6

Structured learning environments

- Clear expectations for students
- Well-organized classroom routines
- Orderly transitions
- Positive recognition systems

(Murkuria, 2002; Raffaele Mendez et al., 2002; Tobin & Vincent, 2011)

7

Family and community engagement

Help develop schoolwide and classroom expectations

Provide a cultural lens on school and classroom improvement decisions

Discuss discipline concerns about their child, sooner than later

(Murkuria, 2002; Raffaele Mendez et al., 2002)

Questions? Comments?



Root-cause analysis

Why do a root cause analysis?

- When trying to identify possible causes of a problem

Root cause is the fundamental breakdown or failure of a process that, when resolved, prevents a recurrence of the problem.

- When a team's thinking tends to fall into "ruts"

Steps 1 and 2

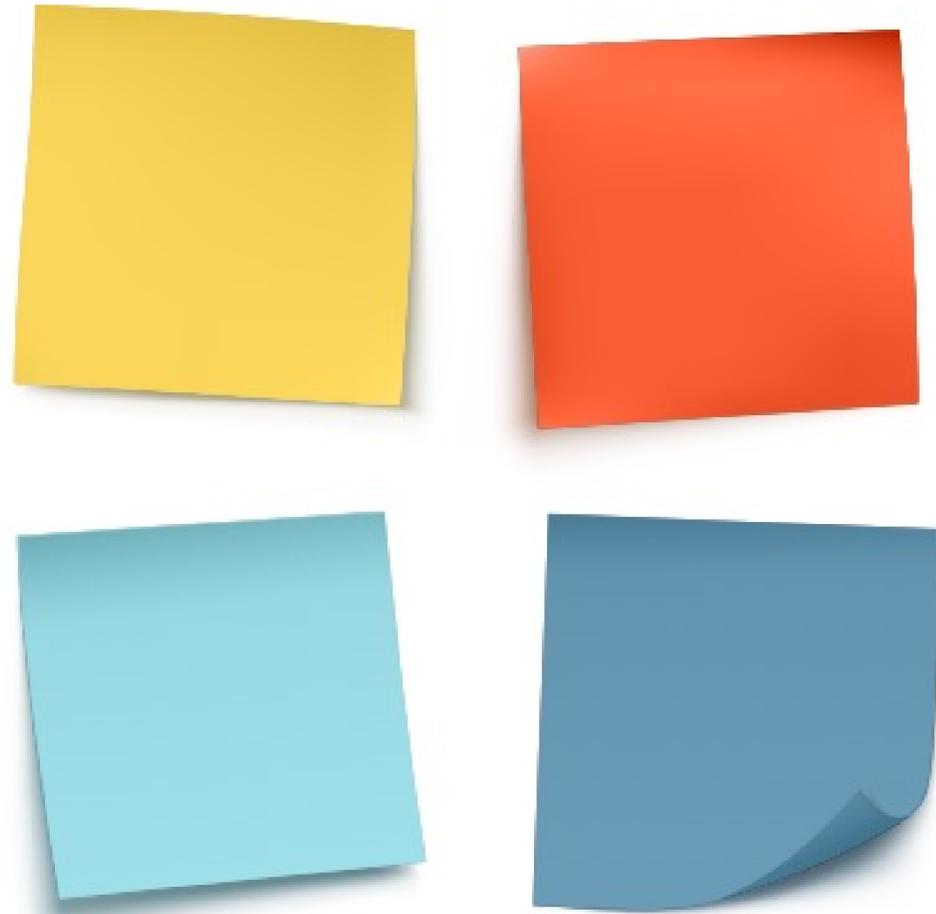
- Each team member brainstorms answers to four questions
- Members write one answer on a separate Post-It note
- Team organizes the Post-It notes into common themes
- Team discusses and agrees on one area of focus

Considerations for writing answers

Root causes should be actionable and within a school's control to change. Review the list below and identify "answers" that meet these criteria.

- Students have a bad attitude
- Placing garbage cans in one area of the cafeteria creates congestion during transition back to class
- Discipline policies mandate 10-day suspension for fighting regardless of circumstances
- Vandalism in lower hallway during lunch
- Teachers are giving bathroom passes to students during the last 10 minutes of class
- Students and their families live in poverty
- Large class sizes contribute to more discipline issues
- Many parents are not willing to discipline students for school issues

Root-cause analysis



- Divide the team into groups of 3 to 5 members
- Each team member needs a stack of Post-Its
- Write one answer on a separate Post-It
- Toss each answer into the center of the table

Family engagement

- What is working about the strategies your school uses to create strong family engagement?

Family engagement

- What is not working?

Well-organized learning environments

- What is working about the strategies your school uses to create well-organized learning environments?

Well-organized learning environments

- What is not working?

High expectations and quality instruction

- What is working about the strategies your school uses to create high expectations and quality instruction?

High expectations and quality instruction

- What is not working?

Positive teacher-student relationships

- What is working about the strategies your school uses to create strong teacher-student relationships?

Positive teacher-student relationships

- What is not working?

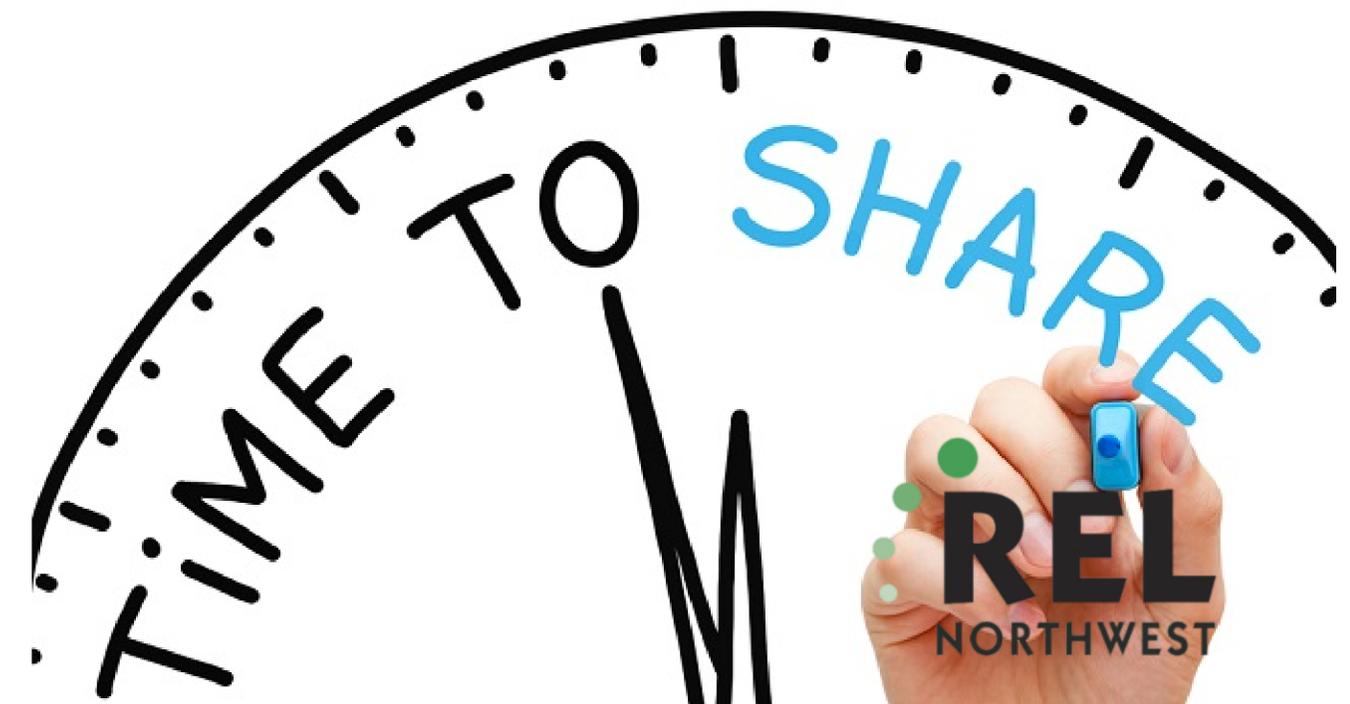
Summarizing your answers

- Take turns drawing Post-Its out of the middle of the table until all Post-Its are distributed among team members
- Working together, review each Post-It note and sort the answers into common themes
- Write a sentence or phrase to describe each theme

Teaming activity share out

Each group shares its identified themes

- Family engagement
- Well-organized learning environments
- High expectations and quality instruction
- Positive teacher-student relationships



Identifying evidence-based practices or innovations

Developing an action plan

- Think big—but start small
- Consider other data you may need
- Choose interventions that are ***actionable*** and ***within the school's control to change***
- Use team time to discuss what adults will do

Four guiding questions

1. What are we trying to accomplish?
2. What intervention or innovation could address this concern?
3. How will we know that a change is an improvement for all students?
4. If our intervention is not working, what change(s) can we make that will result in improvement for all students?

Additional thoughts?

- What has been one benefit of today's work session?
- What is a challenge you have encountered and how might you solve it?
- What is one step you can take to gather additional data or begin implementing improvement strategies?

Questions? Comments?



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