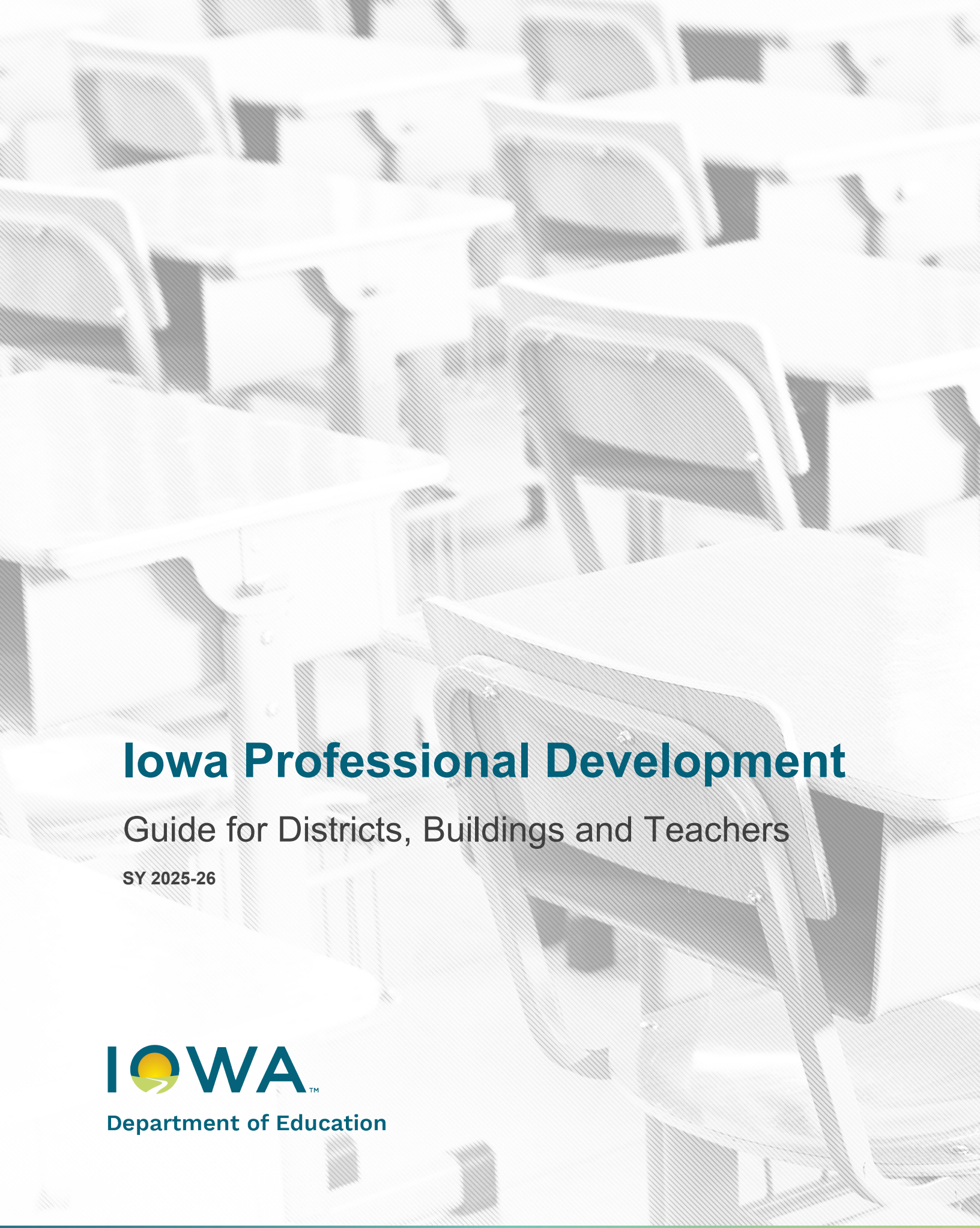

Iowa Professional Development

Guide for Districts, Buildings and Teachers

SY 2025-26

IOWA™

Department of Education

State of Iowa

Department of Education

Grimes State Office Building

400 E. 14th Street

Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

Administration

McKenzie Snow, Director

Tina Wahlert, PK-12 Division Administrator

Bureau of School Improvement

Corey Seymour, Bureau Chief

Heidi Anthony, Administrative Consultant

Greg Feldmann, Administrative Consultant

Eric Heitz, Administrative Consultant

Sarah Seney, Administrative Consultant

Tom Bredfield, Education Program Consultant

Buffy Campbell, Education Program Consultant

Mickolyn Clapper, Education Program Consultant

Andrea Danker, Education Program Consultant

Dennis McClain, Education Program Consultant

Sara Nickel, Education Program Consultant

Pam Spangler, Education Program Consultant

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Contents

Introduction 5
Iowa Professional Development Model Background 5
Stages of Implementation 6
Organization of Workbook 6
Transition to Continuous Improvement Model 6
Applying the Continuous Improvement Process to Professional Development 7
Getting Started 8
Pre-Requisite: Establish a Leadership Team 9
System Level: District / Building 9
Assemble a Leadership Team 9
STAGE 1: Collect and Analyze 11
Student Data System Level: District / Building / Teacher 11
Steps for Assessing Needs 11
STAGE 2: Prioritize and Set Goals 13
System Level: District / Building / Teacher 13
Steps for Prioritizing 13
Steps for Setting Goals 13
Steps to Set Goals that Align with Student Learning 14
STAGE 3: Plan and Design Professional Development 15
System Level: District / Building / Teacher 15
Steps for Prioritizing Professional Learning Goals 17
STAGE 4: Implement Professional Development 18
System Level: District / Building / Teacher 18
Steps for Implementation 18
STAGE 5: Evaluate Implementation 19
System Level: District / Building / Teacher 19
Steps for Program Evaluation 19
Data-Based Decision Making 20
Data-Informed Decision Making Table and Process Map 21
Appendix 1 22
Appendix 2 23
Appendix 3 24
Distributed Leadership 24
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Leadership Teams 24

Distributed Leadership Discussion Table....25
MTSS Leadership Team Members and Functions (SAMI)....28
Example First Meeting Team Notes Template....30
Meeting Agenda and Notes....30
References....31

Introduction

Iowa Professional Development Model Background

Iowa Code § 284.6 requires districts and buildings to develop and implement professional development plans for all staff and establish professional growth systems for teachers and administrators. This document is intended as a tool for district and building leadership teams to facilitate the development of a comprehensive plan regarding continuous school improvement through professional development. It will support the development of district, building, and individual teacher professional development plans, ensuring alignment with district goals for student achievement.

In alignment with the Iowa Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)and Iowa Department of Education technical assistance in the fields of school improvement and professional development, the following are the most effective ways to improve student achievement:

- Data used to drive school improvement and student achievement goals
- Assessment aligned with curriculum and instruction
- Learning for professional staff that includes high-quality design and evidence-based content
- Focus over time with an emphasis on continuous improvement in instruction
- Communities in which teachers collaborate, study what is effective, and implement new knowledge and skills
- Study of the implementation fidelity of intended change
- Evaluation, both formative and summative, of planned change for its impact on student learning
- Guidance of strong leaders—teachers, principals, central office staff, superintendents, and school boards—operating collectively and collaboratively to govern the professional development/school improvement system

The following document outlines a process that comprises individual, sequential modules with a specific focus, designed to facilitate rich conversations at each phase. Its goal is to assist in creating a professional development plan that aligns with district and building goals and provides teachers and support staff with quality professional learning opportunities. Within the modules, explicit connections are made to the various components of Iowa ESSA, including the Resource Allocation Review (RAR), the Iowa School Performance Profile Data Review, the Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAMI), Action Plan, as well as data from other sources including the Iowa School Performance Profiles (ISPP), early literacy data, Education Visualization and Analytics Solution (EVAAS), and district financial and staffing reports included in state reporting elements. Many of these and other helpful resources can be found in Appendix 2.

As each module is completed, the resulting information and decisions are interconnected to create a single continuous improvement process grounded in the essential elements of a sound MTSS system, including the leadership and infrastructure needed for successful implementation. The resulting work products will include a comprehensive district-level action plan linked to building-level and staff individual development plans, as well as the deployment of professional development to address identified needs and promote growth.

Stages of Implementation

- Pre-Requisite: Establishing a Leadership Team
- Stage 1: Assessing Needs
- Stage 2: Prioritizing
- Stage 3: Goal Setting
- Stage 4: Action Planning
- Stage 5: Implementation & Program Evaluation

Organization of Workbook

Each section of this guide provides:

- A description of the professional development implementation stage
- Action steps for leadership teams
- Guiding questions to focus leadership teams' discussions
- Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAMI) anchors to assist in visualizing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
- A model template, the Working PD Plan Workbook Template, that leadership teams can complete, which will yield a full professional development plan as a result

Note: Suggested guidance tools are provided to assist leadership teams in developing complete and compliant professional development plans at the district and building levels. These resources are described and linked in Appendix 2.

Transition to Continuous Improvement Model

In his 2011 book, *Visible Learning for Teachers*, John Hattie asserts that educators do not become experts by relying on specific teaching strategies; instead, their success as teachers arises from continuous self-assessment and the small improvements they make every day in their classrooms. Effective professional development is well-structured professional learning that changes teaching practices and enhances student learning outcomes. To identify the key features of effective professional development, the Learning Policy Institute reviewed 35 studies from the past three decades to identify the elements of successful professional development models.

In school districts, personnel are the most crucial form of capital. According to recent research (e.g., Fullan, 2016; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016; Fullan, Rincon-Gallardo, & Hargreaves, 2015; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018), school districts rely on the combination of three types of capital: human, social and decisional. These three forms of capital (collectively called "professional capital") enable districts to build the capacity needed for improvement. The research of Fullan and Quinn (2016) identified four key strategies that are non-negotiable components of professional development:

- Promotion of system-wide learning
- Prioritization of the improvement of teaching and learning
- Building of capacity through support and development
- Creation and sustainability of a culture of collaboration

Collectively, these are the essential elements of the professional development cycle that contribute to the success and health of the local educational system. They are interdependent, focusing the district on building a sustainable, growth-oriented framework through collective purpose, collaborative culture, deep learning, and accountability to provide an optimal learning environment for students.

Applying the Continuous Improvement Process to Professional Development

Iowa's 5-Step Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), shown in Figure 1, is embedded in the Iowa Framework and Process to Support Schools as a process that supports teams in a system to understand current needs, identify goals, and prioritize evidence-based ways to improve, develop, implement, and evaluate a plan of action in a continuous cycle.

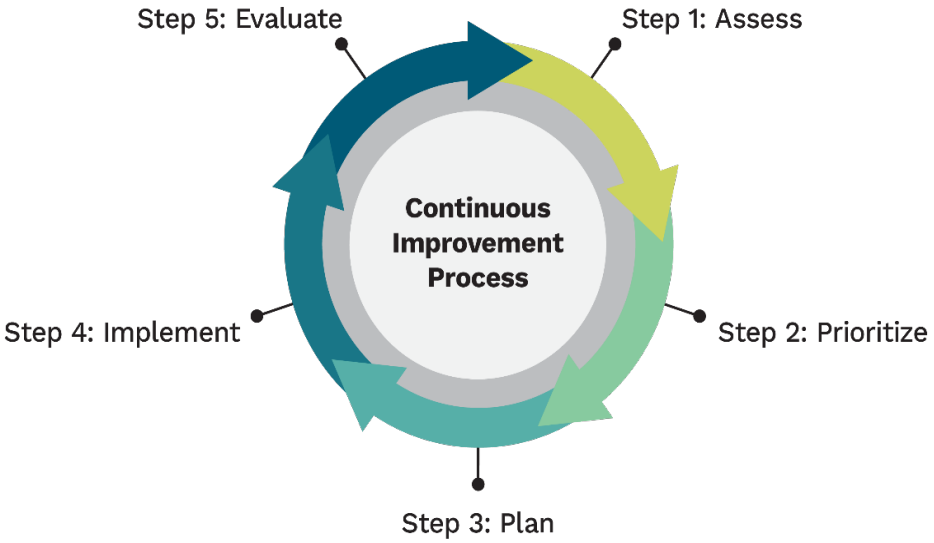


Figure 1 Iowa's 5-Step Continuous Improvement Process

In an intentional effort to align processes, the Department has taken the opportunity to update the previous visual representation of the *Iowa Professional Development Model* introduced in 2009 (Figure 2) with the *Applying Iowa's Continuous Improvement Model to Professional Development* (Figure 3, page 7). The updated model illustrates the Department's commitment to continuous improvement, as embodied in Iowa's ESSA Plan, by applying its cyclical process to professional development.

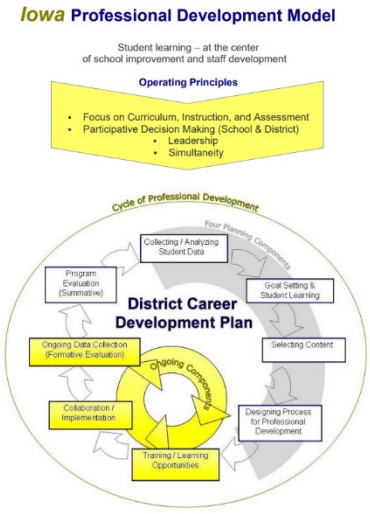


Figure 2 Iowa Professional Development Model, 2009

Both the original and the updated models intentionally center student learning at the core of professional development and school improvement. However, the updated model (Figure 3, page 7) expands outward from students to teachers, the building, and finally, the district. The intentional layering moves from the individuals and systems that most directly impact student learning outward towards those necessary for building support and fostering a collaborative culture (Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

The outermost layer simplifies the eight steps from the original document into five by aligning the specific professional development processes with *Iowa's 5-Step Continuous Improvement Process* (Figure 1). The original four planning components became "Collect & Analyze Student Data," "Prioritize & Set Goals," and "Plan & Design Professional Development." Next, the professional development graphic simplifies steps 4-7 from the original into a single step: "Implement Professional Learning." The final step mirrors the original model by concluding with "Evaluate Implementation." The final change is the innermost layer surrounding the student at the center, which

embeds the Professional Learning Community (PLC) inquiry cycle—an essential piece in improving teaching and learning.

While the *Iowa Professional Development Model* (Figure 2, page 6) presents a conceptual framework focused on professional development and continuous improvement principles, the new model (Figure 3, larger image found in Appendix 1) aims to deepen this framework by applying the continuous improvement process within a systems-level approach.

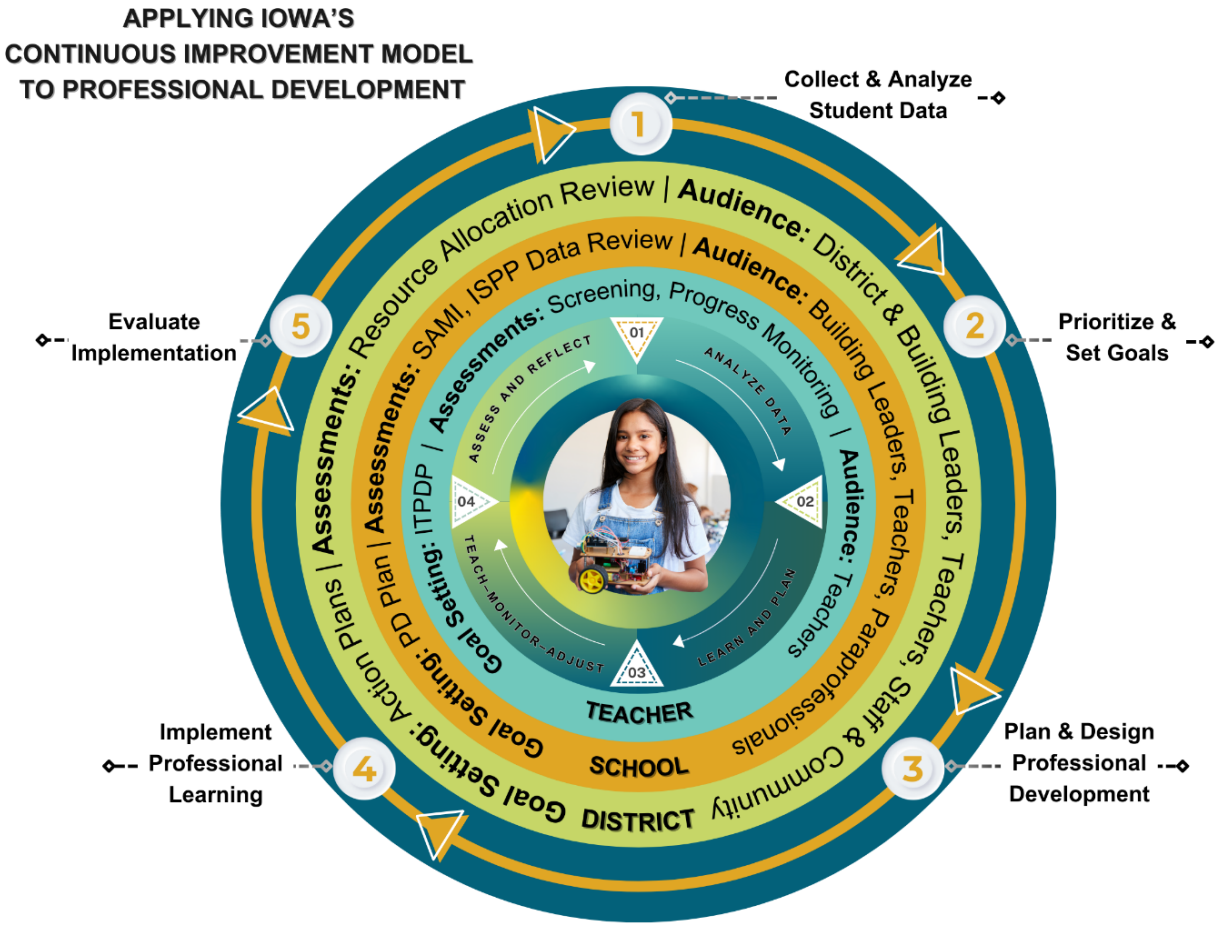


Figure 3 Applying Iowa's Continuous Improvement Model to Professional Development, 2025

Getting Started

Strong leaders are essential for the implementation of all continuous improvement efforts. While administrators establish vision within a system, a leadership team transforms a vision into reality. A leadership team will facilitate the engagement of all teaching and support staff responsible for instruction, address time and resource issues, and balance the shared accountability and support needed to prioritize professional development efforts. Collective professional development, aligned with student achievement goals, requires focused leadership distributed among teachers and administrators. Establishing professional development leadership teams at both the district and building levels is the most effective way to achieve authentic distributed leadership. While the following is considered best practice for all, buildings with an ESSA designation have specific requirements that must be fulfilled; other buildings may engage in this work optionally.

Pre-Requisite: Establish a Leadership Team

System Level: District / Building

Leadership focuses on practices and behaviors that support continued improvement in the system, instruction, and student outcomes. The key features of the leadership team include the following:

- **Distribution:** Establish a leadership team with equal representation and defined roles and responsibilities.
- **Competencies:** Ensure the leadership team acquires and applies the necessary knowledge and skills to solve complex problems and effectively support both new and existing personnel. Ensure membership includes individuals skilled in coaching and collaboration.
- **Practices:** Establish priorities and goals. Align resources with priorities and support staff in understanding and engaging in school improvement.
- **Planning:** Develop and implement professional development aligned to district and building-level action plans that include the following components: Communication, Professional Learning, and Evaluation of implementation and impact.
- **Support:** Support for leadership teams to establish and engage in ongoing continuous improvement (this includes supporting the SAMI and related action plan development/implementation).

Pre-Requisite: Guiding Questions

1. Does the district currently have a leadership team to plan, implement, and/or evaluate professional development at the district, building, and/or individual levels?
2. What are the intentional membership selection criteria that are/will be used to form this team?
    a. What is the process for rotating membership when necessary or ensuring representation of all staff?
    b. How will membership be aligned to identified needs in an ongoing manner?
3. Is there an established meeting time/process/ procedure for leadership meetings?
    a. What components are consistent at each meeting?
4. What components can change at each meeting? What communication protocols will be utilized internally and externally regarding professional development?

Assemble a Leadership Team

Collective action requires a democratic process. When professional development decisions affect a group, members must participate in making those decisions. The district leadership team (DLT) and building leadership team (BLT) represent staff willing to lead, implement, support and sustain professional development efforts to improve student outcome data. The team can be documented in the Working PD Plan Workbook Template.

Members

Districts are encouraged to include the following individuals:

- ☐ Teachers representing various grade levels, content areas and role groups (i.e., elementary, middle school, high school, special education, reading and math support/specialists, gifted and talented, teacher librarians, and general education) *
- ☐ Individuals with specific expertise in content, collecting and analyzing data, assessment, professional development, MTSS, etc.
  - Principal *
  - Central Office/School Leaders (i.e., directors of curriculum, professional development, technology, and school improvement) *
  - Professional development provider/consultant(s)
  - Teacher Leaders and Instructional Coaches
- ☐ Parent involvement where it makes sense and applies in the local context, such as in a larger discussion about parent engagement and community involvement*
- ☐ Community partners where it makes sense and applies in the local context

[indicates an ESSA requirement if Comprehensive or Targeted School]*

Suggested Purposes and Processes for the Leadership Team

Suggested PURPOSES of the Leadership Team	Suggested PROCESSES of the Leadership Team
☐ Organize, support, and lead various professional development functions collaboratively. ☐ Engage in an effective collaborative inquiry approach to lead the implementation of professional development supports. ☐ Assist principals in maintaining a focus on instruction and ensuring professional development activities continue. ☐ Distribute leadership and responsibility across the organization.	☐ Clarify team roles, such as data collection and analysis; facilitate meetings between learning sessions; collect and organize implementation data; demonstrate strategies; support the formation of collaborative teams. ☐ Establish a protocol for meeting routines and a framework for agendas. ☐ Articulate the leadership team member orientation and rotation. ☐ Establish communication structures for the team, building, and district to promote transparency and build staff consensus. ☐ Shape team norms and vision for the work. ☐ Collect meeting artifacts such as meeting agendas and minutes.

STAGE 1: Collect and Analyze

Student Data System Level: District / Building / Teacher

Identifying student needs is crucial to designing effective professional development that enhances student learning. Collecting and analyzing information about student performance in priority content areas enables a district and/or school to set priorities. If professional development is to have an impact on student learning, it must precisely align with student needs. Be sure to analyze and discuss trends, patterns, and implications. Keep the focus on student learning, and set high expectations that all students can learn at high levels.

Steps for Assessing Needs

- ☐ Collect, organize and display data from multiple sources for all students/learners
- ☐ Determine the percentage of students who meet/exceed proficiency scores using the following sequence of comparisons: district, building, grade and student group
- ☐ Engage in discussion of additional data indicators to inform needs and continued best practice
    - Data analysis can and should be done at both the district/school leadership and additional stakeholder levels, including the School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) and parents/community
- ☐ Summarize the findings of the data analysis, adding to the Professional Development Plan in the Working PD Plan Workbook Template (specific relation to district, building, teacher, or student goals)

Stage 1: Guiding Questions

1. How are our students doing in relation to proficiency scores? Are student scores where we want them to be?
2. How are our student groups performing in relation to proficiency scores? Are student scores where we want them to be?
3. Does the data show patterns or trends in or among student groups (i.e., all students, individual subgroups, students in multiple groups)?
4. Are there areas of our data that need further investigation?
5. What other existing data sources might be helpful in identifying needs?
6. If we have multiple areas of need, how might we begin to prioritize our efforts and resources?
7. Does data indicate a/an:
    a. Different focal area for professional development?
    b. Existing concern that is currently addressed with professional development and support that should be continued?
    c. Concern that has been addressed through extensive professional development previously, which suggests implementation fidelity may be insufficient:
        i. Previously designed professional development supports were misaligned or insufficient (e.g., frequency, duration, coaching)
        ii. Implementation of the professional development surfaced other weaknesses in related infrastructure, suggesting other areas for growth and continued development

Required and Recommended Data for All Districts and Schools

Required Data for ALL Districts and Schools	ESSA Designated Schools*/ Recommended for ALL Schools
☐ Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) ☐ Early Literacy Screening Data	The following resources are linked in Appendix 2. ☐ ISPP Data Review ☐ Resource Allocation Review (CSI and TSI Years 1 & 2) ☐ SAMI (CSI and TSI Year 1 & 2) **For ESSA Support Requirements, please see Required Support for Schools in Need of CSI or TSI for more information.*

Additional Data for Consideration

Student Outcome Data	System Outputs
☐ Early Warning System Indicators (Panorama) ○ Grades ○ Attendance ○ Behavior ☐ EVAAS ☐ Panorama Student Surveys ☐ Other Subject Screenings ○ Math Screening Data ○ Behavioral Health Screening Data	☐ Implementation Data ☐ Use of Evidence-Based Practices and High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) ☐ Percentage of Students Receiving Interventions ○ Review of Intervention Inventory, including materials used for SDI, aligned to HQIM ○ Staff are adequately trained in intervention ☐ Percent of Students Being Progress Monitored ☐ Percent of Students on Attendance Plans

STAGE 2: Prioritize and Set Goals

System Level: District / Building / Teacher

After completing an assessment of needs from various data sets, the leadership team and/or the teacher must review the list of needs and begin prioritizing. The successful implementation of any improvement initiative depends on the intentional and ongoing commitment of focus and resources. Many teams and/or teachers attempt to address too many concerns simultaneously, thereby reducing focus on any particular area and limiting their ability to effect deep, impactful change. Prioritizing helps identify the most critical concerns, allowing proper emphasis on focused, intentional professional development and the implementation of the practice. Through prioritization, teaching staff gain the ability to learn deeply about a topic and take steps towards initial implementation or refinement. Staff can collaborate, receive coaching feedback, and respond, rather than constantly shifting to different topics.

Stage 2: Guiding Questions

1. What areas of concern have the greatest urgency?
2. What areas of concern are closest to influencing student learning?
3. Are any areas foundational for efficient and effective school functioning?

- **Building Leadership Teams:** Priorities should align with and support district-level priorities.
- **Individual Professional Development Plans:** Goals should align with and support building priorities.

The Working PD Plan Workbook Template provides a table to track and prioritize the identified needs and goals set in the following sections.

Steps for Prioritizing

Leadership Teams should understand that prioritizing does not signify any lesser importance to an area of concern identified during the needs assessment. Teams should consider the guiding questions above and label the identified needs using the following categories, prescribing them a priority score: Low priority (1 point), Medium priority (2 points), or High priority (3 Points).

Total the ratings per area of concern. The top 2-3 scores indicate the most significant concern(s) for the leadership team. With proper implementation support, these areas should be addressed first in the design of the professional development plan. The remaining needs should be revisited once improvement is observed in the current priority list.

Steps for Setting Goals

Quality goal setting is Specific, Measurable, Attainable and Actionable, Relevant and Results-based, and Time-bound (SMART), see SMART Goal and Action Planning Template (Appendix 2). It enables leadership teams and/or teachers to plan, develop, implement and monitor professional development in relation to ongoing learning and student achievement.

Professional Development Goals should be:

- Narrower than the broad district improvement goal(s).
    - *Example District Goal:* By May 2026, XYZ CSD will improve reading proficiency from 70% to 80% as measured by Iowa Student Assessment of Student Progress.
    - *Example Professional Development Goal:* By May 2026, core teachers will implement collaborative strategic reading (CSR) to improve students' reading comprehension proficiency by 10% as measured by district benchmark assessments, utilizing structured literacy resources and engaging in professional development provided by the district literacy coordinator, in alignment with the district's literacy improvement initiative.
- Professional development goals may be long- or short-term based upon the learning needs of students and the adults who work with them. While goals can be short-term in scope, their cumulative impact should have a positive effect on long-term student achievement.
- Ensure a narrowly aligned focus for professional development, managing multiple district initiatives to prioritize needs to support building individual teacher professional development plans (IPDP).
- Ensure alignment of goals at each system level reflects a continuum of actions focused on a collective outcome.

Additional Considerations

Building Leadership Teams

- Contextualize the district professional development goals for local school, staff and student needs.
- Provide support that promotes consistency and cohesion between the district and building, focusing on allowing the implementation of in-depth action steps.
- Identify local data sources that connect and correlate with the identified goals, beyond the district-identified sources (if applicable).
- Help teachers identify individual professional development goals that connect to and support the building-identified goals.

Individual Professional Development Plans:

- Connect and correlate individual professional learning goal(s) with the building-identified goals.
- Collaborate with colleagues and participate in existing teaming structures to help identify and establish professional learning goals.

Steps to Set Goals that Align with Student Learning

- ☐ Review the identified and prioritized needs (Student Learning Goals & Long-Range Goals) from the needs assessment to ensure tight coupling among the data, goals, and professional development.
- ☐ Record the district- or building-level goal(s) for professional development in the appropriate district or building version of the Working PD Plan Workbook Template.
- ☐ Disseminate goals and communicate decisions. Facilitate opportunities for faculty to process the links among student need, the district/building goal(s), and the professional development goals.

STAGE 3: Plan and Design Professional Development

System Level: District / Building / Teacher

The professional development or professional learning process must ensure that teachers have adequate opportunities to learn and implement new curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments. Teachers require sufficient support during workshops and in the workplace to develop a deep understanding of the theory underlying the strategy/model they are learning. The effective professional development design will build in time for teachers to learn together and collaborate. Students will benefit if professional development is based on powerful and proven content and implemented as designed.

- Ensure professional development meets the needs of all district and building staff.
- Assure schedules provide adequate time for training and coaching support for all staff.
- Ensure schedules provide adequate time for multiple tiers (universal, supplemental, intensive) of evidence-based instruction and intervention to occur.

Professional development is a continuous process rather than a one-time event. To transfer new learning into the classroom, teachers need multiple opportunities to observe demonstrations, plan together, work through problems, rehearse new lessons, develop materials, engage in peer coaching, and observe one another. The collaborative routines supporting these actions must be planned for, supported, and monitored. What staff developers learn from the study of implementation will inform decisions about future training, the need for support, and adjustments in the learning opportunities. If new content is to be learned and implemented in classrooms so that students benefit, teachers need ongoing training, collaboration with peers in planning and developing lessons and materials, and interim measures to assess the success of their efforts.

Stage 3: Guiding Questions

1. How are learning opportunities being intentionally designed to provide actionable steps for instructional change?
2. Is the learning grounded in evidence?
3. Is the learning designed for active participation?
4. How will leaders ensure teachers leave with the tools they need for implementation?
5. How will leaders ensure teachers have the opportunity for practice and collaboration with peers and instructional coaches around their learning and implementation?
6. How will data be collected, organized and discussed to measure implementation fidelity and impact on learning?
7. How will feedback loops be intentionally planned and prioritized (i.e., PLC planning to implementation, coordination across leadership teams)?
8. When will training occur?
    a. How often will teachers engage in learning opportunities to ensure sustained distribution year-long?
    b. Will training occur during or outside the workday? If there is a plan for staffing classrooms during the workday while teachers are attending, is it in place?
    c. Has the Teacher Quality Committee discussed the design and compensation?
9. Have parents and community members been involved and informed so they understand the purposes of the plan and how teachers' time will be used for important learning?

The professional development design process will not always follow a linear sequence. The order in which actions are addressed may vary based on the local context. The Planning and Design step prepares for the implementation of the professional development. Review the considerations below before starting the planning and design work.

Additional Considerations

Building Leadership Teams

- What unique structures and times are available to the building for professional learning beyond the district offerings?
- How will the action steps meet the diverse needs of staff?
- What ongoing support will be intentionally designed to support professional learning?
- Are the identified coaches, administrators, and other leaders adequately prepared/trained to provide the ongoing support?
- How will learning time and ongoing coaching be protected?

Individual Professional Development Plans

- How can existing teaming structures be used to support the identified goals?
    - What coaching opportunities are available to staff?
    - What are realistic time frames to monitor the actions towards the goals

SPECIAL NOTE: PARAEDUCATOR

It is critical that the role of paraeducators not be overlooked in the planning phase of continuous improvement. While schedules, training, and ongoing coaching support can present planning challenges for districts and building leadership teams, paraeducators should be included in professional development and implementation action steps. Consider the following:

- What foundation knowledge needs to be understood by all appropriate paraeducator staff?
- What current training opportunities exist that can be utilized by paraeducator staff?
    - If none, what opportunities can be planned and offered?
- What specific aspects of the implementation plan can be supported by the paraeducator staff?
- Who will serve as a point of contact for paraeducator staff in case of questions?
- How will paraeducator staff be included in fidelity measurements done at the district and building levels?
    - What coaching structures can be extended to include paraeducators?
    - If none, how will paraeducators receive feedback and coaching support?

Steps for Prioritizing Professional Learning Goals

- ☐ Use needs assessment to determine area(s) of professional learning needs
- ☐ Select appropriate, evidence-based curriculum, programs, or practices for implementation
- ☐ Determine the needed organizational support
    - Determine how adult learning theory, demonstration, and teacher practice opportunities in the workshop will occur.
    - Consider how support will be provided and delivered. The initiative must have built-in follow-up, support, and technical assistance. Determine how the LEA, AEA, or other approved providers will deliver ongoing technical assistance.
    - Establish a process with trainer/external experts to discuss data and determine how adjustments will be made to future learning opportunities to respond to what is learned from ongoing data analysis.
    - Organize the summative evaluation and establish procedures for collecting data.
- ☐ Determine intended student learning outcomes and educator implementation expectations leading to increased effectiveness.
    - Communicate with all stakeholders
- ☐ Plan the optimal professional learning activities (See the Professional Development Design Criteria and Indicators for reference.)
    - Set up a communication process for interacting with colleagues, trainers, and other technical assistance providers.
    - Use research foundations for strategies/models and past trainer experience
    - Design a schedule for professional development and collaboration
    - Set up a calendar for learning events and collaboration when teachers engage in common training/learning opportunities.
    - Record the Design for Learning Opportunities in the Working PD Plan Workbook Template.

STAGE 4: Implement Professional Development

System Level: District / Building / Teacher

Any educational professional development plan would be incomplete without consideration for implementation. At the school district level, when designing professional development plans for the year, intentionality and consideration must be given to the support mechanisms that will be implemented to effect the desired changes requested of staff. Put simply, implementation refers to the actions designed to put a specific initiative into practice.

Regardless of the particular details of an implementation initiative, success primarily depends on consistent changes in adult actions over time. When a district implements a program, many behavioral changes often accompany it, affecting even those outside the target audience. District leadership teams aim to influence changes in their administrative staff, who, in turn, seek to influence changes in the practice of teachers and instructional coaches, ultimately aiming to improve student outcomes. In these diverse communities, preparation, support, feedback loops, and input in decision-making are essential, but also require time and a continual commitment. Successful implementation relies on careful monitoring and multi-layered strategies to support the desired changes. Determine a plan of implementation in the Working PD Plan Workbook Template.

Steps for Implementation

- ☐ Create the pattern of use expected for the new skills/strategies, curricula, and other learning experiences being acquired in the professional development program.
- ☐ Engage staff in a dialogue about the effective use of the new strategies.
- ☐ Design implementation logs or documentation protocol based on the Implementation Plan.
- ☐ Establish a schedule for collaborative teams to collect and analyze implementation and student performance data as described in the Implementation Plan.
- ☐ Analyze implementation data from each collaborative team and report to the whole faculty. Identify and make provisions for any support staff that may need to implement the selected professional development target effectively.

Stage 4: Guiding Questions

1. Do we have the resources and infrastructure to support this, or are there too many current initiatives, and prioritization is needed?
2. How will staff be trained over the course of the entire year?
   a. What diversified support will be designed for onboarding new staff, long-term substitutes, etc.?
3. What level of implementation is realistic?
   a. What is the non-negotiable versus non-mandatory expectation?
4. Can the expected change be implemented to the desired depth in the time allotted for training, coaching, and feedback support?
5. Who will support coaching, and how will those staff members be prepared?
6. What data will be collected, and how will it be analyzed to determine if sufficient implementation support was provided?

STAGE 5: Evaluate Implementation

System Level: District / Building / Teacher

Student learning outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of professional development. Determining the success of a professional development program depends on two factors: whether the content was implemented as planned and whether students gained the desired knowledge, skills, and behaviors. This evaluation relies on both formative and summative evaluation data. The quality of the evaluation depends on clearly defined goals focused on improving student performance. A professional development program is successful when it meets its student learning objectives.

Steps for Program Evaluation

- ☐ Organize and display formative and summative data.
  - Include teacher implementation data and student performance data.
- ☐ Analyze data to determine findings. Engage staff in interpreting the results from the collected data. Utilize staff input to form decision statements (include justification).
- ☐ Summarize findings. Answer the questions established in the Data Collection and Goal-Setting stages. (Was progress made on indicators?)
- ☐ Facilitate discussion by the leadership team to determine the status of the initiative.
- ☐ Communicate the decisions to all stakeholders. Record a summary. Disseminate the results of the professional development initiative through various user-friendly venues, including school board meetings, School Improvement Advisory Committee meetings, “State of the District” presentations, the website, letters to parents, news releases, and other relevant platforms.
- ☐ Summative data leads to a new cycle. Completing one full cycle, from initial goal setting and content selection to accomplishing the goal, may take more than one school year. Data informs the decision to start a new goal, rather than being dictated by the school calendar. Add summative data to the Action Plan (e.g., CSIP) and track it in the Working PD Plan Workbook Template.

Stage 5: Guiding Questions

1. What patterns/trends can be observed in the district-level data?
   a. Was the goal for student learning accomplished?
   b. Did student data indicate students responded to changes in teachers’ practices related to the professional development priorities?
   c. Did teachers fully implement the strategies/model?
   d. Did all intended student groups show growth?
   e. What additional questions do these data generate?
2. What are the implications for instructional practices and the district-level professional development plan for the next cycle?
3. What summary statements can be made about student or staff performance based on the data?

Data Sources for Evaluation

Below are common data sources. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list.

- Walkthrough
- Implementation Fidelity
- Teacher Reflection
- Student Formative Assessments
- ISASP
- Early Literacy
- ISPP Data Review

Data-Based Decision Making

Learner Progress and Implementation Fidelity

Implementation fidelity refers to the degree to which a practice, in this case a practice from professional development, is delivered as intended. High levels of implementation fidelity are crucial because they ensure that students receive the full benefits of the practice, which can positively influence their progress. When educators adhere closely to the designed strategies, it increases the likelihood that students will achieve their learning objectives and demonstrate significant growth. Figure 4 provides a quick reference to each of the four quadrants of implantation fidelity and the relationship to student progress.

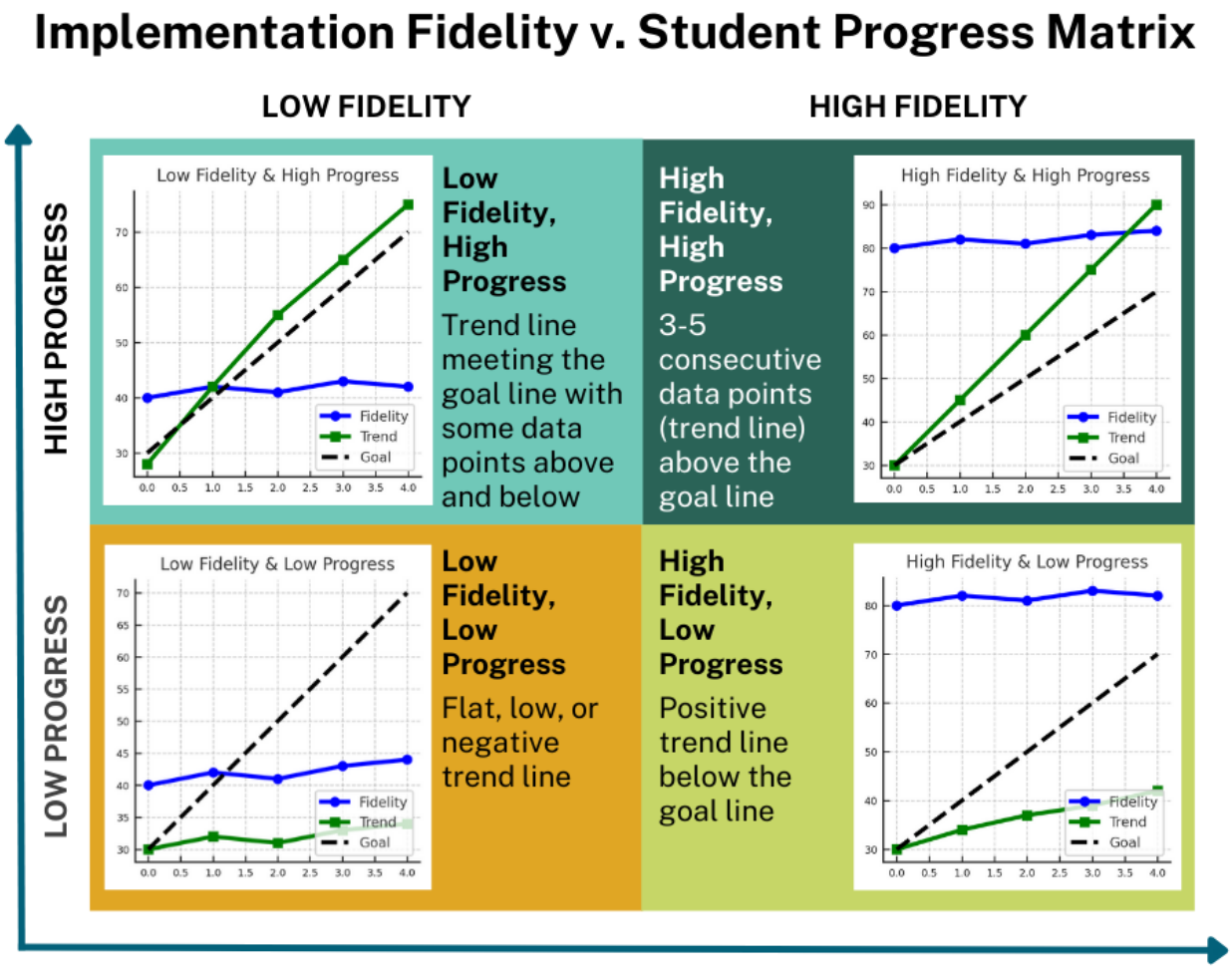


Figure 4 Implementation Fidelity v. Student Progress Matrix

Data-Informed Decision Making Table and Process Map

Use the following table (Table 1) or the process map (Figure 5) below to determine the next steps for the instructional practice. (See Appendix 2 for a Data Worksheet and Action Planning)

Table 1 Data-Informed Decision Making

	Low, Low	High, Low	High, "Some" or Low	High or Low, High
Implementation Fidelity	Low Implementation Fidelity	High Implementation Fidelity	High Implementation Fidelity	High or Low Implementation
Student Progress	Low Student Progress	Low Student Progress	Some or Low Student Progress	High Student Progress
Enhanced Instructional Practices	Improve delivery of instructional practice; additional professional development.	Consider intensifying the delivery of instructional practice and continued coaching.	Consider intensifying the delivery of instructional practice and continued coaching.	Maintain and ensure high implementation fidelity.

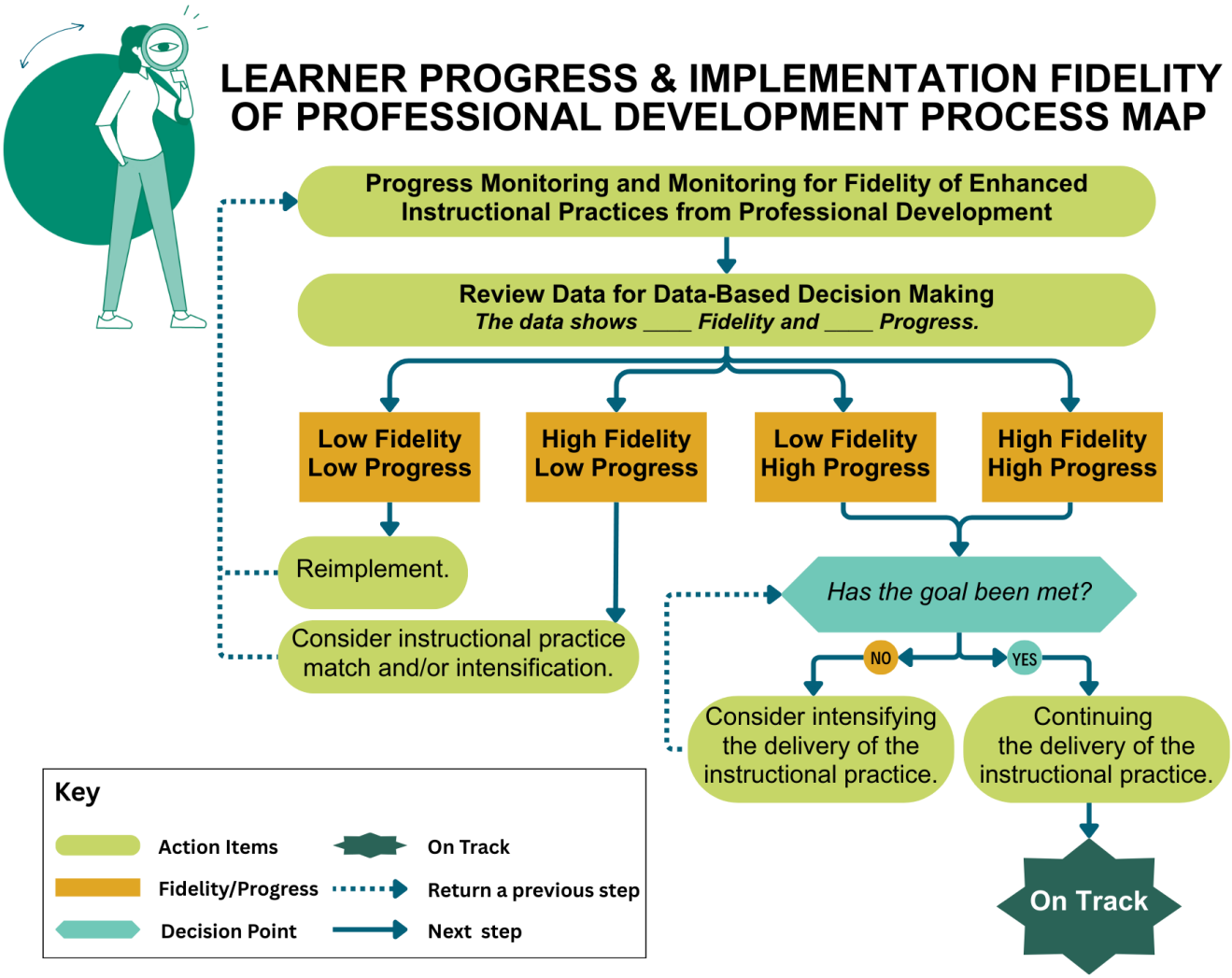
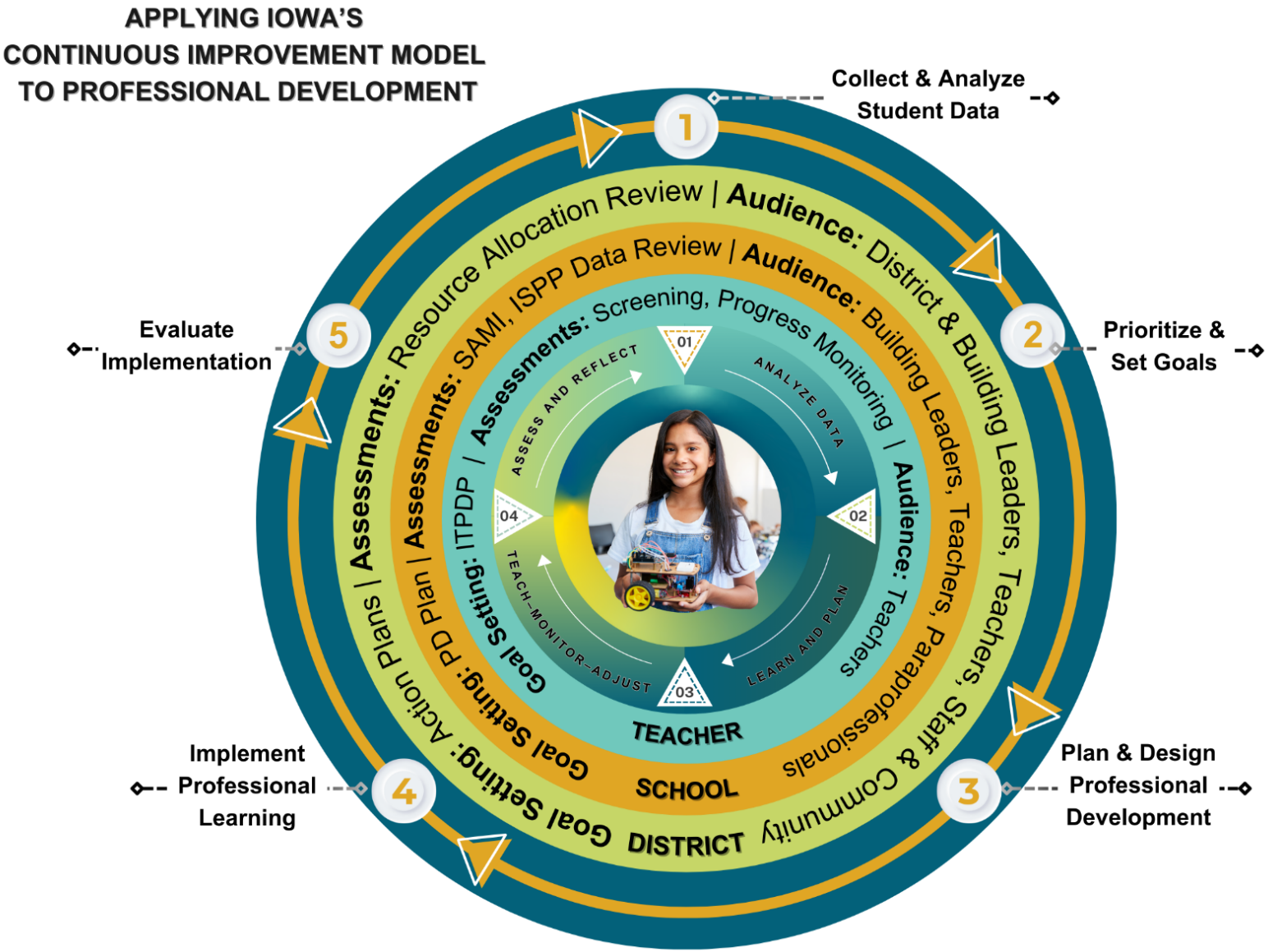


Figure 5 Learner Progress and Implementation Fidelity Process Map

Appendix 1


APPLYING IOWA'S
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL
TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Collect & Analyze Student Data
Prioritize & Set Goals
Plan & Design Professional Development
Implement Professional Learning
Evaluate Implementation
1
2
3
4
5
Assessments: Resource Allocation Review | Audience: District & Building Leaders, Teachers, Staff & Community
Assessments: SAMI, ISPP Data Review | Audience: Building Leaders, Teachers, Paraprofessionals
Assessments: Screening, Progress Monitoring | Audience: Teachers
Goal Setting: ITPDP | Assessments: PD Plan | Assessments: Action Plans
Goal Setting
Goal Setting
DISTRICT
SCHOOL
TEACHER
01
02
03
04
ANALYZE DATA
LEARN AND PLAN
TEACH–MONITOR–ADJUST
ASSESS AND REFLECT

Appendix 2

Resources	Pre-req	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Distributed Leadership Discussion Table: Helps establish team membership, roles and responsibilities.	×					
First Meeting Agenda Example: Suggests a meeting agenda for the first team meeting to establish team norms, purpose, and communication structures.	×					
Iowa School Performance Profile (ISPP): Provides performance reports for districts, schools, and the State.		×	×	×		×
ISPP Data Review Table: Provides a structured worksheet to capture ISPP data.		×	×	×		×
ISPP User Guide: Guides user navigation of the ISPP site and its learning indicators.		×	×			
List of Definitions and Acronyms: Lists commonly used definitions and acronyms used across the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, and Iowa School Districts.	×	×	×	×	×	×
MTSS Leadership Team Members and Functions (SAMI): Outlines the intent of different teams, membership and function.	×					
Professional Development Design Criteria and Indicators: Outlines key criteria and indicators for effective professional development design.		×	×	×	×	×
Professional Development Implementation Fidelity: Enables the review of implementation fidelity to help teams make informed decisions.						×
SAMI: A tool for leadership teams to assess MTSS implementation in schools, facilitating discussions to identify strengths and challenges.		×	×	×		×
SAMI Note Catcher: Captures discussions and evaluation of MTSS.		×	×	×		×
SMART Goal and Action Planning Template: Clarifies and focuses professional development priorities and student outcomes.			×	×	×	
Working PD Plan Workbook Template (Google Sheets): Spreadsheet to facilitate in-depth discussion with district-level/building-level data.			×	×		×

Appendix 3

Distributed Leadership

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Leadership Teams

MTSS Leadership Teams create the *enabling contexts*, action plans and support structures that enable *effective implementation* across buildings and lead and facilitate the work within the district. **EFFECTIVE INNOVATION × EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION × ENABLING CONTEXTS = POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

Table 2 MTSS Team Functions

Team	Unique Functions
District Leadership Team (DLT)	• Support implementation at the district level with a district's MTSS implementation plan and direct support to BLTs • Use district, building, grade and subgroup data to drive decisions
Building Leadership Team (BLT)	• Support implementation at the building level with a building's MTSS action plan and direct support to CLCs • Use building, grade and subgroup data to drive decisions
Collaborative Learning Communities (CLC)	• Use data to identify and align resources to learning priorities and goals, and support classrooms in improvement efforts • Support classrooms with the implementation of the building's MTSS implementation plan through regular data reviews, team consensus work, and development of knowledge and skills through professional learning • Support CLCs by prioritizing building needs • Use grade, class and subgroup data to drive instructional decisions
Classroom Functions	• Meet all learner needs by implementing evidence-based universal, supplemental and intensive supports • Support students to engage in accessible, evidence-based instruction • Use classroom and subgroup data to drive instructional decisions

Table 3 Common Functions of MTSS Teams

Teams	Common Functions
DLT & BLT	1. Acquire knowledge and skills in MTSS and key content areas to support solving complex problems 2. Use data in an ongoing process to: a. Develop/refine priorities and improvement goals b. Align resources to priorities c. Support implementing improvement efforts 3. Implement the MTSS plan that includes: a. Communicate with stakeholders b. Engage educators in professional development and coaching c. Evaluate implementation (measure, monitor, adjust) 4. Establish, lead and support a. Develop consensus and round implementation of MTSS b. Develop knowledge and skills around MTSS c. Use data in an ongoing process (measure, monitor, adjust)
CLC & Classroom	1. Acquire knowledge and skills in MTSS and key content areas to support student learning. 2. Implement the building MTSS plan that includes: a. Communicate with stakeholders b. Engage educators in professional development and coaching c. Evaluate implementation (measure, monitor, adjust) d. Assess implementation fidelity (universal and/or interventions) and adjust accordingly

Table 4 MTSS Team Membership

	DLT	BLT	CLT	Classroom
Membership	• Superintendent • Associate/Assistant Superintendent • Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), Differentiated Accountability (DA), and/or School Improvement coordinator(s) • Equal representation across the district (e.g., building administration, content leader(s), age/grade representation, early childhood leaders) • Representation for applicable subgroups (e.g., English learners, special education, at-risk, advanced learners) • Board member(s), as applicable within the district context • Community partners, as applicable within the district context (e.g., AEA leadership, Head Start, community preschool, community mental-health partners)	• Principal* • School leaders* • Teachers* (staff that are representative of the school across grade and subject areas, e.g., general education, including teacher librarians, special education, English learners, early childhood, literacy, mathematics, behavioral health, etc.) • Parents* • *Recommended:* Community partners, instructional leader(s), mentor teachers, instructional coach(es), and/or professional learning leader(s) *ESSA required members	• Work-like teams of teachers identified based on building needs • *Recommended:* community partners, instructional leader(s), mentor teachers, instructional coach(es), AEA team member(s), and/or professional learning leader(s)	• Classroom teacher • Collaborating teachers (i.e., English learners, special education, advanced learners, and/or at-risk teachers) Students as the ultimate and core "members" of the classroom learning team

Distributed Leadership Discussion Table

Part 1: Current Reality - Reflect on current building-level teams and/or teams related to the building priority areas. List each team and indicate whether it is connected directly to the MTSS work. Then take time to describe its function, responsibilities, membership, and the communication structure used to keep everyone informed of the current status, needs, progress, and outcomes. Remember to consider Tier I, II, and III, as well as content (academics), behavioral health, and attendance.

Table 5 Current Building-Level Teams

Team Details	Team Name	Team Name	Team Name	Team Name
Connection to MTSS				
Function(s)				
Responsibilities				
Student Focus				
Data Analyzed				
Data Review Frequency/Duration				
Membership				
Communication				

Part 2: MTSS Functions - Review the key MTSS leadership functions that are essential for effective implementation. Determine which team(s), if any, are currently assigned that responsibility. If no team currently performs that function, identify which team it would make the most sense for to take on that role.

Table 6 Building Leadership Team Components

Key MTSS Leadership Function	Which team(s) currently have this function?	If no team has this function, which team should it be assigned to?
L - Develop and implement communication systems that ensure all necessary stakeholders are informed.		
IF - Use data to guide decisions about resource allocation and adjustments to the MTSS framework.		
IF - Provide professional development to staff on MTSS principles, best practices in universal instruction, data collection, intervention strategies, and progress monitoring.		
A- Collect and analyze all student data at the building, grade, class, and individual student level to identify trends and areas of need.		
A - Based on student data analysis, determine additional supports/resources to meet student needs.		
UT - Monitor the use of evidence-based instructional practices with grade-level content to ensure learning at high levels for all students.		
SIT - Support teachers in developing intervention plans.		

Reflection

1. Were there unassigned MTSS functions that do not align with the current leadership teams? Does a new leadership team need to be created?

2. Are there any leadership teams that could/should be combined? Are there any teams that are redundant and need to be eliminated?

3. Is this the team structure to utilize, or do changes still need to be made? If so, what changes?

Part 3: Final Leadership Team(s) Plan - Reflect on parts 1 and 2 to finalize your building leadership team(s) and their functions/responsibilities. Complete the table below with any changes you potentially made to represent the structure of your leadership teams moving forward that will be responsible for leading the MTSS work in your building.

Table 7 Final Building-Level Teams

Team Details	Team Name	Team Name	Team Name	Team Name
Connection to MTSS				
Function(s)				
Responsibilities				
Student Focus				
Data Analyzed				
Data Review Frequency/Duration				
Membership				
Communication				

MTSS Leadership Team Members and Functions (SAMI)

Part 1: Identify MTSS leadership roles - Review the key MTSS leadership roles that are essential for effective implementation. Determine which person, if any, is currently assigned that role. The same person might be responsible for multiple roles. Identify any additional positions that might be important in carrying out your building's MTSS vision.

Role	Function	Description
MTSS Lead	To lead MTSS implementation, building-wide	This role should work directly with the person(s) serving as the meeting facilitator to lead the work across the building. This includes the following: • Plan meetings with the meeting facilitator (e.g., meet before/after meetings; discuss implementation barriers and solutions) • Establish and facilitate leadership team meetings (using the meeting structure/processes agreed to within the team); • Coordinate and set building-wide expectations for all the MTSS Implementation Plan components (working directly with the team to do so); • Collaboratively lead and support MTSS implementation; • Support data-based decision-making; • Coordinate frequent and clear communication among teams and all stakeholders; and • Ensure team members' voices are present and honored.
Meeting Facilitator	To provide leadership and decision-making authority for the work	This role should have **decision-making authority** over fiscal and resource matters, or be able to ensure a quick turnaround time for this need within the BLT. In addition, this role should rally and lead communication that there is an urgent need for MTSS implementation across the building (e.g., rationale, evidence-based), and support the BLT in building capacity, using data-based decision-making and a collaborative inquiry approach to implementation and support. This person will co-facilitate the meetings with the MTSS Lead, following the agreed-upon agenda. S/he would manage the flow of the meeting by adhering to the agenda, prompting team members in problem-solving, and monitoring the implementation status of action items. This person will ensure that each meeting has a minute taker to organize meeting notes and someone responsible for organizing data for team review.
Minute Taker	To organize the information discussed in the meetings	This role is to collect agenda items from the meeting facilitator, take notes during the meeting, ask for clarification of tasks/decisions to be recorded on the notes form. This role would share the notes with the team and/or building within 24 hours
Data Analysts	To take the lead on the data	This role would compile the data prior to meetings, lead discussions on "did it work" monitoring, respond to team members' questions about data, and produce additional data upon request.

Role	Function	Description
Active Team Member	To actively participate as an essential part of the team	Active team members • Recommend agenda items to the Meeting Facilitator • Respond to agenda items • Analyze/interpret data to determine whether implemented action steps are working • Determine action steps with timelines • Report on implementation status • Suggest how the implementation of actions could be improved
Community Representative	To provide family, student, and community voice to support MTSS implementation, building-wide	This role is not only to provide voice/experiences from the family, student, and/or community perspectives, but also to bring back specific areas agreed upon by the BLT for input/feedback. Member(s) would not attend all BLT meetings; instead, attendance would be at specific meetings with content that requires building input/feedback or that requires the team to help problem-solve. Ideas: • Family representatives • Student representatives as applicable by age/grade level • Board members • Other community partners

Part 2: Determine who will be on your MTSS leadership teams - *If little to no changes have been made to your current team structure*, reflect on your current team membership. *If changes were made to your current team structure*, identify procedures for determining team membership. If needed, review district policy for assembling a team (TLC funds, TQ fund, voluntarily, etc.).

1. Are the team(s) of functional size with equitable representation across members who have the dedicated time to lead MTSS? If not, what changes to team membership might be needed?

2. Who will be on your MTSS leadership team(s)? (Assign team members to each of the MTSS leadership roles.)

3. How will you communicate the staff team structures and team membership? How will you ensure a sense of urgency for the work?

Example First Meeting Team Notes Template

Meeting Agenda and Notes

Meeting Components	Meeting Details
Date	
Member's Present	
Member's Absent & Plan for Follow-up	
Meeting Purpose	

Team Norms

-
-
-
-

Agenda Item *What?*	Discussion Notes *So what?*	Next Steps *Now what?*
Welcome and Introductions		
Review team vision and purpose		
Establish norms, including how we make decisions		
Establish meeting schedule		
Review leadership team(s) structures, functions, and responsibilities		
Determine a two-way communication plan for the staff on the purpose, roles, and responsibilities of the team (s)		

Next Meeting Date	Next Meeting Details

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