

Selecting Improvement Strategies:

When selecting Major Improvement Strategies, it is recommended that schools and districts consider a range of factors. The goal of these considerations is to identify strategies that have a high level of evidence supporting their implementation and can be implemented effectively within the context of the school and district. An intervention may be listed as a strategy or a strategy may encompass multiple interventions within it.

Selecting the Best Intervention or Strategy

Is the strategy **clearly defined** and supported by **high-quality research**?

Does the strategy address **needs** and **align to staff skills** and **competencies**?

Is there **leadership support**, **resources**, and **necessary time** for implementation?

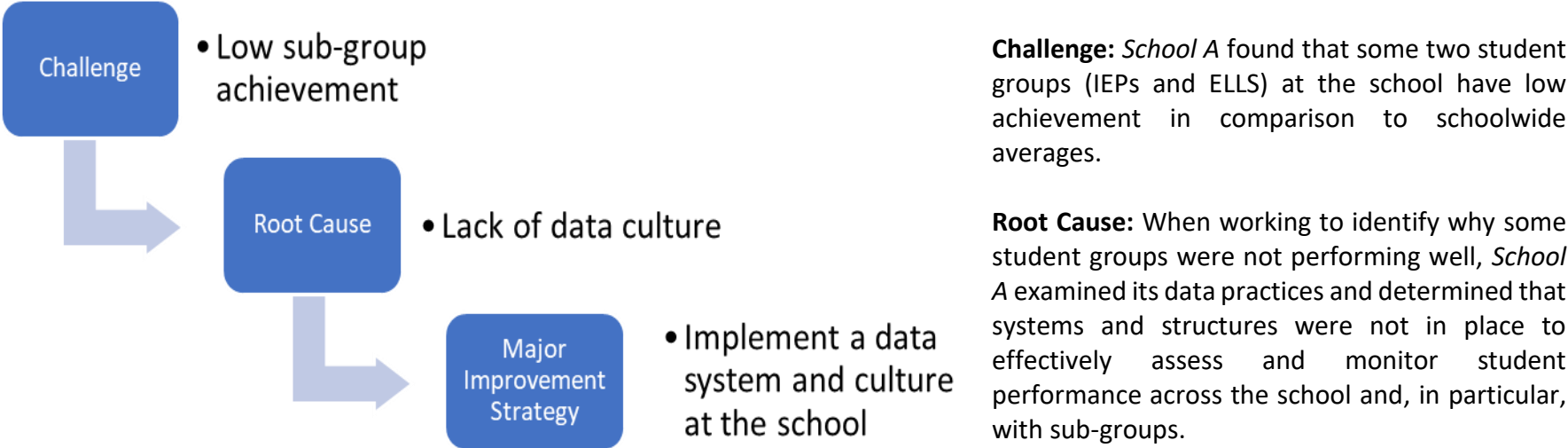
Purpose of document

This document is intended to provide a tool that can be used for two primary purposes.

- **Selection of strategy:** The strategy on the following page was a common strategy within Unified Improvement Plans during the 2017-18 year and has research supporting its effectiveness. The example can be used to inform the decision process about selecting strategies or can be used, with local contextual information, to help ensure that selected strategies have a likelihood of success. An example of the type of language that can be used in the UIP is included on page 2 under “Evidence supporting this strategy.”
- **Analysis and critique of current strategy:** If the strategy identified on page 2 has already been selected and implemented, this document can be used to evaluate its implementation and to identify any areas for ongoing development or focus. Specific action plans could be identified based on this review.
 - **For example:** School A identified that they were implementing 4 of the 6 components of the strategy well but that collaborative time was not being used effectively. Two of the action steps they identified based on this were:
 - Create the 2018-19 meeting schedule so that all content teams have planning time at least 2 times per week (Principal)
 - Develop a protocol and sample agendas that content teams can use for team meetings (teacher leads)

Four Domains for School Improvement			
Culture of Performance	Academic Systems	Turnaround Leadership	Talent

Sample Strategy: Assessment System and Culture of Data Use



Major Improvement Strategies: In order to improve sub-group achievement, *School A* elected to implement a robust data system and culture in order to ensure that the school has a sound understanding of student performance and that the school utilizes the data collected to adjust instruction, monitor academic growth, and make necessary adjustments to the instructional program.

Evidence supporting this strategy: Research, including randomized control trials, have shown that building a data culture can have an impact on student outcomes. After reviewing findings from *Driven by Data* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, our school (*School A*) has created an action plan based on the key components that were outlined for effective systems to improve instruction.

What does an effective data system and culture look like?

Research has shown that the following components are necessary for an effective data system and data culture. It is important to note that while there is evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of each component (see research following each componentⁱ), these components are most effective when implemented together. For instance, if a school or district decides to implement collaborative structures for teachers but does not have a robust suite of assessments and does not have protocols to structure meetings to guide collaborative time, implementing collaborative structures will likely yield limited results. The following components are derived from various articles and research that articulate what a data culture should include.ⁱⁱ

1. **Implement a robust suite of assessments:** In order to implement a data culture, assessments must first be administered that will provide the right set of data to improve student performance. Employ a regular cycle of interim assessments to gather data on student performance.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - a. Determine what will be the best methods or assessments to gather the data you need (e.g., How often do you want the data? What subject areas?).
 - b. Be careful to not select too many assessments AND be strategic in your use of assessments. Administering more assessments and expecting teachers to analyze too many sets of data can often decrease the effectiveness of data use.
 - c. Also consider your intervention programs and their corresponding assessments. Work to ensure there is cohesion between all assessments.
2. **Ensure educators have access to the data:** “Data must be easily accessed, coordinated, filtered, and prepared in ways that allow educators to quickly and efficiently analyze and interpret data to answer key questions and address important teaching and learning issues.”^{iv} Ensure that data management software is user-friendly and that all educators understand the expectations for storing data.
3. **Ensure educators collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students’ progress:** Providing educators with protected time on a regular basis to analyze data is essential in creating a data culture.^v Meetings need to have a clear and persistent focus on improving student learning and achievement.^{vi}
4. **Ensure collaborative meetings and expectations for data use are clearly communicated and implemented:** Ensure meetings are structured and facilitated effectively by establishing group norms and using protocols to guide collaborative meetings.^{vii} Determine who will facilitate meetings, the norms teams by which will abide, the protocols to utilize, the expectations for what to bring and do during these meetings, and what the outcomes should be. When utilizing protocols, ensure that they are meaningful and do not become a compliance requirement for teachers.
5. **Provide ongoing professional development on data use:** Ensure all teachers receive professional development on data use. Differentiate professional development based on teacher experience and comfort utilizing data.^{viii}
6. **Monitor teachers’ use of data by conducting classroom observations:** In order to ensure teachers are adjusting instruction based on assessment results, routinely observe classrooms. Provide feedback to teachers individually and to collaborative teams, as needed, to ensure continuous improvement.^{ix}

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i The process for identifying this research began with finding literature and meta-analyses to ensure that the research cited is viewed as high-quality by others within the field; where there was not consensus that something was high quality but it received ample attention, judgment was used as to the type and quality of study approaches such as sample sizes, replication. Additionally, this research attempts to utilize studies published in peer-reviewed journals or by nationally recognized education research organizations/institutes/institutions of higher learning.

ii http://www.publicconsultinggroup.com/media/1266/data-driven-district_practical-ideas.pdf;

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015063.pdf; Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Boudett, K. P., City, E. A., & Murnane, R. J., 2005

iii Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012

iv https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015063.pdf; Cromey & Hanson, 2000; Foley et al., n.d.; Guskey, Roy & von Frank, 2014; Ingram, Louis, & Schroeder, 2004; Jimerson & Wayman, 2010; Lachat & Smith, 2005

v Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Berry, Daughtry, & Wieder, 2009; Cromey & Hanson, 2000; Datnow, Park, & Wohlstetter, 2007; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker & Many 2006; Halverson, 2010; Jimerson & Wayman, 2010; Lachat & Smith, 2005; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996;

vi Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010; Bolam et al., 2005; Cromey & Hanson, 2000; Datnow, Park, & Wohlstetter, 2007; Guskey, Roy & von Frank, 2014; Ingram, Louis, & Schroeder, 2004; Jimerson & Wayman, 2010; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996; Means et al., 2009; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008;

vii Aguilar, 2016; Carbaugh, Marzano & Toth, 2015; Cosner, 2011; Fullan, 2014; Leithwood, et. al, 2004; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Park & Datnow, 2009

viii Cromey & Hanson, 2000; Guskey, Roy & von Frank, 2014; Jimerson & Wayman, 2010; Park & Datnow, 2009

ix Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016; Knight, 2018