



Implement **the plan.**

Now that a plan is written, it is time to turn strategy into action with **plan implementation**. In this phase, evidence-based strategies that are aligned to the school's priority statements will be put into action by school-based implementation teams. These teams will carry out the action steps described in the school improvement plan in order to achieve the established measurable goals.

Implement the Plan

A thoughtfully developed school improvement plan describes the activities (i.e., evidence-based strategies and associated action steps) that the school will carry out to address identified priorities. Implementation is the process through which a school carries out the plan with fidelity. Only if the selected evidence-based strategies are implemented effectively can one expect the desired improvements in leadership, teaching and learning to be achieved.¹

So, what does it take to ensure effective implementation of the selected evidence-based strategies? Research on effective implementation of improvement strategies identifies the following conditions as necessary for successful implementation²:

Community readiness and *ownership*.

Securing Ownership

Research on effective implementation in educational settings suggest the following factors influence sustainability of high-quality implementation :

- **Genuine ownership on the part of all staff** – Empower staff to take ownership and responsibility of the process of school change;
- **Teachers' acceptance and commitment to improvement** – teachers are provided with professional development (including training, in-class coaching, and prompt feedback) that leads to proficiency;
- **Selected strategies are perceived by teachers as practical, useful, and beneficial to students;**
- **Administrative support and leadership** – the presence of a strong school leader/facilitator to support them as teachers acquire proficiency in implementation;
- **Schools and districts must agree to follow procedures** designed to ensure high-fidelity implementation and collect data on implementation and student outcomes.

Ensuring Implementation Readiness

The following checklist identifies key considerations for schools as they prepare for implementation of the evidence-based strategies and action steps detailed in the school improvement plan.

- ☐ Has the school sufficiently briefed all relevant stakeholders on the measurable goals, evidence-based strategies, and action plans highlighted in your school improvement plan? Does each stakeholder fully understand their role in the school's improvement efforts?
- ☐ Does the school have access to the materials, resources, and supports required to implement the evidence-based strategies and related action steps? If the school improvement plan requires access to support or resources from external parties, has the school completed the district-required processes for procurement of professional services/materials? Has the Board approved all required purchases and contracts?
- ☐ What needs to be done to ensure that the participants have the knowledge and skills to implement the evidence-based strategy with fidelity?
- ☐ Is the identified timeline still reasonable?
- ☐ Does the school have a detailed plan for collecting and analyzing the data/anticipated outputs outlined in the school improvement plan to ensure that implementation of the action steps is on track?
- ☐ Are the identified responsible person(s)/position(s) aware of their role and responsibilities for their assigned action steps?

Implementation Teams: Critical to Effective Implementation

Purposeful, active, and effective implementation of action plans (making it happen) is done by implementation teams. The make-up of these teams may vary from school to school. Implementation teams develop on site with support from groups outside the organization or system. Whatever the make-up, an implementation team is more than a name. The implementation team

¹Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Horner, R., & Sugai, G. (2009, February). Scaling-up evidence-based practices in education. Scaling-up Brief #1. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG, SISEP.

²Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M., & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network.

is accountable for making it happen, for implementing the improvement plan, and for assuring that effective interventions and effective implementation methods are used to produce intended outcomes for students.

An implementation team should consist of three to five people who promote effective, efficient, and sustainable implementation, organization change, and system transformation work. Implementation research shows that 80% of schools with implementation teams demonstrated effective implementation over a three-year period, while only 14% of schools were successful without implementation teams.

Implementation research shows that 80% of schools with implementation teams demonstrated effective implementation over a three-year period, while only 14% of schools were successful without implementation teams.²

Role of School Improvement Facilitators (SIFs)

SIFs support schools in the implementation of the School Improvement Plan by working with school systems and leaders to ensure implementation teams are well positioned to execute the plan. Facilitators help to organize systems that will provide a clear path for schools to monitor and adjust plans to reach their goals.

SIFs provide crucial implementation support to school leaders. In this role as an implementation support practitioner, SIFs conduct a range of activities to build school leader capacity.

In order to effectively serve in this role, it is important for a SIF to have an understanding of the competencies needed to support implementation, the stages of implementation, implementation drivers, and the importance of well-planned implementation teams.

A Technical Assistance (TA) plan is developed in collaboration with the LEA, School and Regional Improvement Team, and Content Support Members. Key areas included in the TA plan are:

- Support Strategy
- Responsible party
- LEA and School points of contact
- Timeline
- Materials/Resources
- Outcomes

Looking for more implementation guidance?

The [National Implementation Research Network](#) > provides numerous resources to assist with building the skills and knowledge of school improvement facilitators.

Role of Content Support Members

Content Support Members contribute to a Technical Assistance (TA) Plan outlining how they and the LEA will support the school in implementing the SIP. Content Support Members should not be identified as the responsible person but will be key members building school and LEA capacity by providing resources/materials/supports to implement the evidence-based strategies and action steps with fidelity:

- Coaching teacher leaders
- Modeling lessons
- Co-creating materials
- Supporting school leaders
- Connecting people
- Building on strengths
- Facilitating professional learning
- Providing evidence based resources
- Prioritizing for success
- Aligning curriculum, assessment and instruction

Interdisciplinary areas of support may include, but are not limited to: Math; ELA; Data-Informed systems/practices; Standards-aligned curriculum, assessment and instruction; PBIS; MTSS; Diversity/Equity/Inclusion; Climate/Culture; and Online/hybrid learning. Support needs are based on the school improvement plan or challenges preventing schools from making desired progress.

² Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M., & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network.