

Key Tasks of the Data Wise Improvement Process

PREPARE PHASE

Step 1: Organize for Collaborative Work

Key Task 1.1: Adopt an improvement process

Staff members use a shared process for improving instruction.

Key Task 1.2: Build a strong system of teams

Teacher teams work in a coordinated way with the leadership team to support improvement in learning and teaching.

Key Task 1.3: Make time for collaborative work

Teacher teams meet at least two hours a month to work collaboratively to improve learning and teaching.

Key Task 1.4: Set expectations for effective meetings

Staff members use a school-wide format for structuring meetings that includes: (1) clear meeting objectives and time-allocations, (2) a strategy for capturing team learning and next steps, and (3) dedicated time to discuss how to make the next meeting even better.

Key Task 1.5 Set norms for collaborative work

Staff members know the norms for collaborative work, employ strategies for holding colleagues accountable for following norms, and revisit and revise the norms as needed.

Key Task 1.6: Acknowledge work style preferences

Staff members are aware of the roles that they and their colleagues typically play in groups (including attending to details, clarifying the big picture, moving to action, ensuring multiple perspectives) and use this knowledge to support collaborative work.

Key Task 1.7: Create a data inventory

The leadership team keeps track of available data sources and reflects on the extent to which those data sources are being used to improve learning and teaching.

Key Task 1.8 Create an inventory of instructional initiatives

The leadership team keeps track of the instructional programs and policies that are being implemented in the school and reflects on the extent to which those initiatives support teaching and learning in a coherent way.

Step 2: Build Assessment Literacy

Key Task 2.1: Review skills tested

Staff members discuss how the skills and knowledge measured on assessments compare to the broader domain of skills and knowledge that students need to master.

Key Task 2.2: Study how results are reported

Staff members understand and can explain to others how results are reported for the assessments their students take.

Key Task 2.3: Learn principles of responsible data use

Staff members know the principles of responsible data use and use a common language when discussing the kinds of inferences that can be made from different assessments.

INQUIRE PHASE

Step 3: Create Data Overview

Key Task 3.1: Choose a focus area

The leadership team narrows the scope of inquiry by identifying a focus area for school-wide instructional improvement.

Key Task 3.2: Analyze data and find the story

The leadership team analyzes data related to the focus area and identifies a story that is important for staff members to think about.

Key Task 3.3: Display the data

The leadership team displays data pertaining to the focus area in a few well-designed charts that make it easy for staff members to see the story.

Key Task 3.4 Allow staff members to make sense of the data and identify a priority question

The leadership team creates an opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively to (1) make sense of data charts and (2) identify questions arising from the data that they are interested in exploring.

Step 4: Dig into Student Data

Key Task 4.1: Examine a wide range of student data

Teacher teams *look* at student work samples (including class work, homework, group projects, and benchmark assessments), *observe* students as they work, and *ask* students questions about their learning.

Key Task 4.2: Come to a shared understanding of what student data show

Teacher teams work together to make sense of student data, using strategies to ensure that all team members contribute to the conversation.

Key Task 4.3: Identify a learner-centered problem

Teacher teams identify a common learning challenge among students that is specific, small, within teachers' control, based on evidence, and directly connected to a question that matters to them.

Step 5: Examine Instruction

Key Task 5.1: Examine a wide range of instructional data

Teacher teams look at teacher-generated materials (including lesson plans, assignments, and assessments), observe teaching and learning in classrooms, and ask teachers questions about their practice.

Key Task 5.2: Get clear about the purpose of observation

Teacher teams observe teaching practice for the non-evaluative purposes of (1) developing a shared understanding of what current practice looks like across teachers and (2) generating ideas about what effective practice could look like.

Key Task 5.3: Come to a shared understanding of what is happening in classrooms

Teacher teams work together to make sense of instructional data, using strategies to ensure that all team members contribute to the conversation.

Key Task 5.4: Identify a problem of practice

Teacher teams identify a common teaching challenge that is specific, small, within teachers' control, based on evidence, and directly connected to the learning challenge that they identified when looking at student data.

ACT PHASE

Step 6: Develop Action Plan

Key Task 6.1: Decide on an instructional strategy

Teacher teams collaboratively select a research-based instructional strategy for addressing their problem of practice.

Key Task 6.2: Agree on what the plan will look like in classrooms

Teacher teams collaboratively identify indicators that describe what students and teachers will be doing and saying when they are using the instructional strategy in their classrooms.

Key Task 6.3: Put the plan in writing

Teacher teams create an action plan that concisely captures the specific problems of learning and teaching that they will address, the instructional strategy they selected, and the list of tasks to be done (including who is responsible for doing them and by when they will be completed).

Step 7: Plan to Assess Progress

Key Task 7.1: Choose assessments to measure progress

Teacher teams work collaboratively to identify or develop short- medium- and long-term data sources that they will use to evaluate the impact of the action plan on student learning.

Key Task 7.2: Set student learning goals

Teacher teams set goals for student proficiency and/or growth that they will measure using short-, medium-, and long-term data sources.

Step 8: Act and Assess

Key Task 8.1: Implement the action plan

Teacher team members complete the tasks assigned to them in the action plan, including implementing the instructional strategy in their classrooms.

Key Task 8.2: Assess implementation

Teacher teams assess their completion of action plan tasks and determine the extent to which what is happening across classrooms matches what they expected to see when they developed the plan.

Key Task 8.3: Assess student learning

Teacher teams collect and analyze data from their short- and medium- and long-term data sources and determine the extent to which student learning goals are being met.

Key Task 8.4: Adjust the action plan

Teacher teams adjust the action plan based on based on evidence collect about implementation and student learning.

Key Task 8.5: Celebrate success!

Teacher teams and the leadership team make a point of documenting, learning from, and celebrating improvements in learning and teaching.