

## Living Into Continuous Improvement: Off the Shelf and Into the Classroom

What **culture, structure, practice, or supports** enables taking the continuous improvement plan off the shelf and into the classroom?

For many years, district and school improvement plans were the outcome of an annual exercise, resulting in documents that were put on the shelf and not seen until a year later when the exercise was repeated. Using the new continuous improvement process, districts and schools are developing integrated plans that identify the work they should be doing on a daily basis to improve student outcomes. Conference presenters are asked to address the question, “What **culture, structure, practice, or supports** enables taking the continuous improvement plan off the shelf and into the classroom?”

This document contains ideas and questions that presentations could address regarding this key question. Proposals addressing these or similar questions are more likely to be considered for conference presentations.

### **Continuous Improvement Culture**

- How do we encourage/support a cultural shift in continuous improvement thinking from compliance to focusing on what we are doing every day in our classrooms to improve outcomes for students? What barriers can inhibit these efforts and how can we address these barriers?
- How do we keep from drifting back to the funds-plans-needs formula rather than maintaining the MICIP structure of needs-plans-funds? When grant or other funding opportunities come intermittently throughout the year, how can we be strategic about which ones we choose and which ones we ignore?
- What does equity mean in a continuous improvement context? How can we know whether continuous improvement efforts reflect equity in environments, opportunities and supports on a daily basis?

### **Continuous Improvement Structure**

- What makes a high-quality continuous improvement team? In what practices does such a team engage and how does the team engage the entire school/district into the continuous improvement process to make it come alive in their setting?
- What is the relationship between strategic planning and continuous improvement planning? How can we develop a seamless process that aligns all improvement efforts throughout a district and reflects the real work in schools and classrooms?
- What are the benefits of addressing systems through a continuous improvement plan? How do we identify issues with systems rather than simply identifying issues with students? What are best practices in writing systems goals that impact continuous improvement efforts on a daily basis?

### **Continuous Improvement Practice**

- What is a high-quality, comprehensive data story? How can a school use data to live into continuous improvement so the staff knows whether they are really improving outcomes for students?
- How do we identify the root cause of educational challenges so that our plans address the real issues affecting student growth and not just symptoms?

- How does a continuous improvement team choose the “right” strategies to address school/student needs? What regular practices lead to high-quality implementation of such strategies on a daily basis that will lead to positive outcomes for students?
- How should we define fidelity/integrity? How will we know whether we are implementing the continuous improvement plan with fidelity/integrity?
- What are the essential components of high-quality monitoring practices, and how should we implement them to ensure that the continuous improvement plan is getting the intended results in the classroom?
- How might we use the blending and braiding processes and the Resource Allocation Review to ensure that funds are equitably providing resources to support a plan for its duration?
- How do we know whether/when we should adjust the continuous improvement plan, and how do we know what to adjust? How do we ensure that adjustments don’t negatively affect certain students/groups?

### **Continuous Improvement Supports**

- How would ISDs/ESAs or MDE support schools and districts with achieving a continuous improvement culture, structure, and practice?