

# Needs Assessment & Developing the Plan

---





# Agenda

- Purpose of Planning
- Needs Assessment: Explore Data and Analyzing Needs
- Developing the Plan: Goals, Strategies, Action Steps
- Updates & Timelines



# Objectives

Participants will

- understand the purpose and cycle of planning
- deepen their understanding of theory of action
- refine planning components to strengthen their theories of action





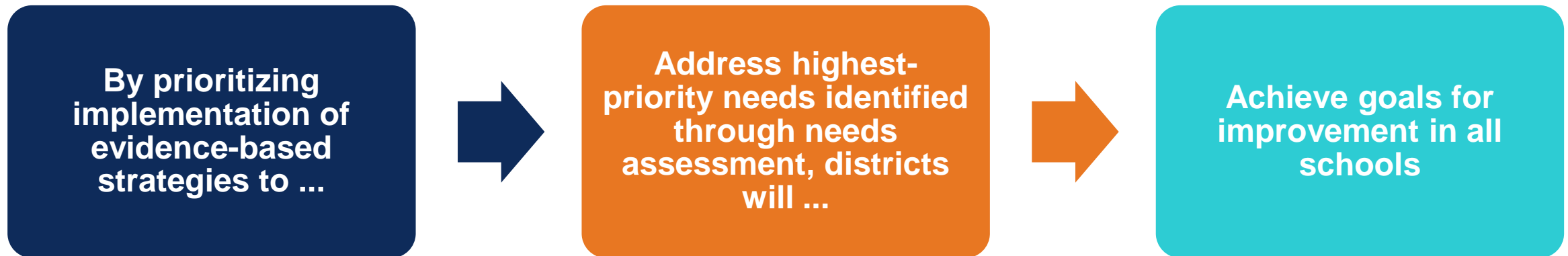
# Session Materials



# Purpose of Planning

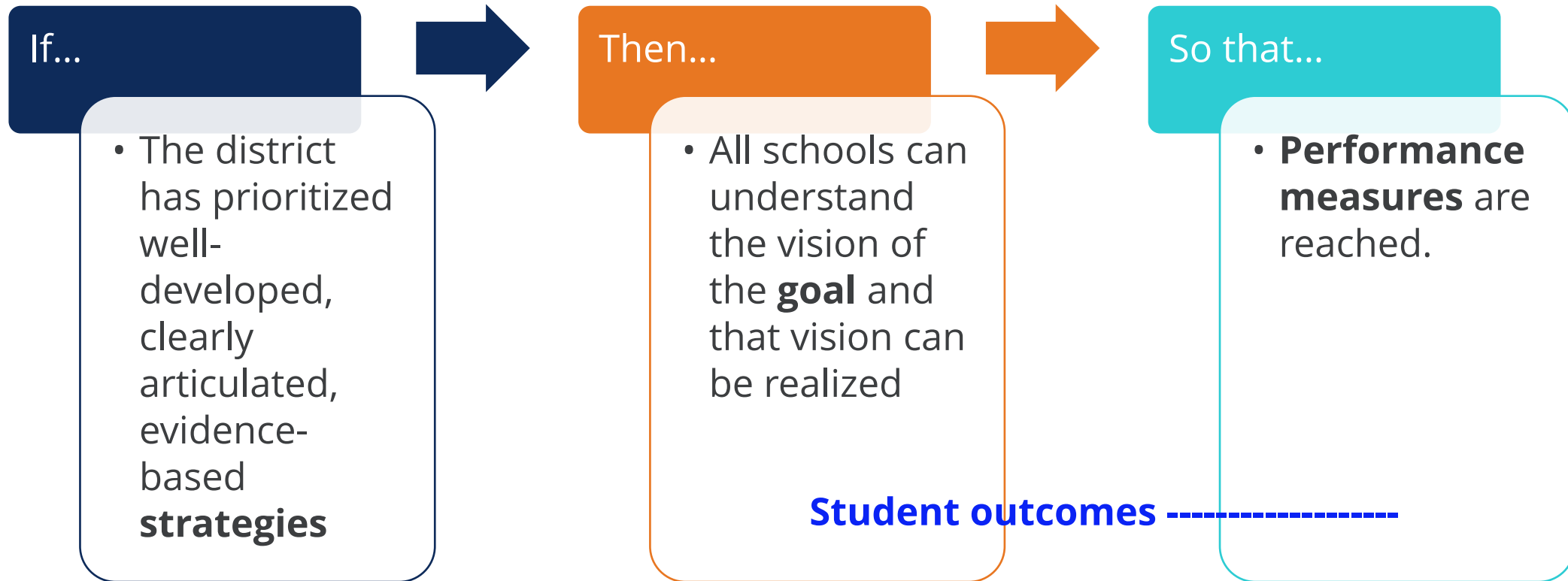
# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts create and implement a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools



# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools

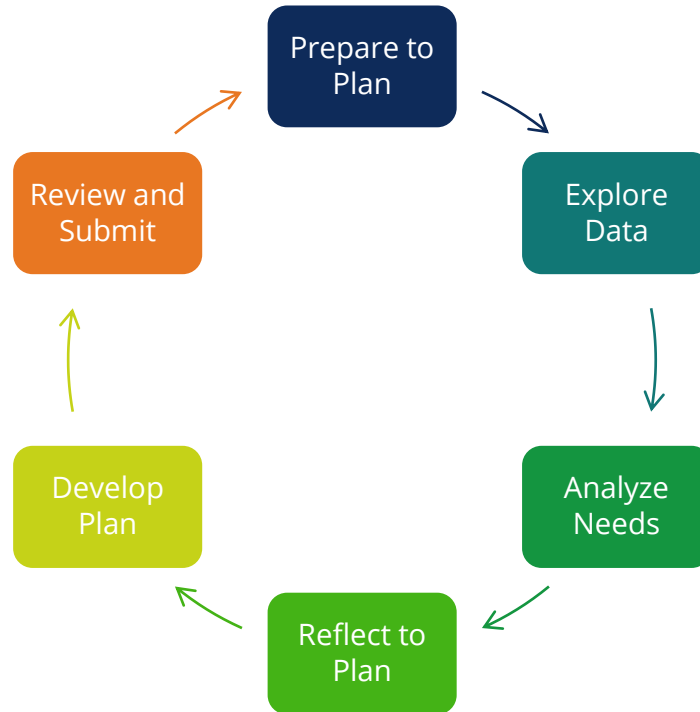


# The Cycle of District Planning

## Academic Playbook

January - March

Develop the Plan

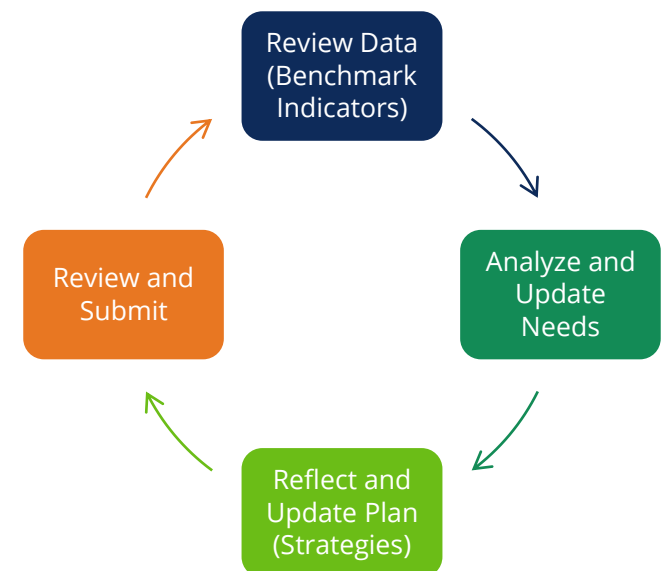


Reflect & Update Throughout the Year

July-August



November-December





# ESSA in InformTN

- The *Prepare to Plan* and the *Reflect to Plan* sections of InformTN were designed to help LEAs show how federal requirements around stakeholder involvement and program-specific needs assessments are met.
- ESSA funding is tied closely to these sections and LEAs are expected to describe the connection between the district plan and funding within the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA).

*What needs, strategies, and/or actions did your district surface during the completion of the Reflect to Plan that should be brought forward to the Needs Assessment or Develop Plan components of the district's plan?*



# TISA in District Planning

- TISA Accountability Reporting provided an opportunity to align student achievement goals across plans/reports and outline the strategies the district intends to implement to reach those goals over the next several years.
  - Are there 2024-25 goals or strategies from the TISA Accountability Report that should be included in your district plan?
  - Does your district plan include TISA funded strategies that will support K-12 student achievement goal attainment in 2025-26?

*What did your district surface during the completion of the TISA Accountability Report that should be brought forward to the district's plan?*





# Needs Assessment: Explore Data & Analyze Needs

# Completing the Needs Assessment

Scenario 1: The district developed the 2024-25 plan but has not revisited to make updates based on most recent data and strategy progress.



Scenario 2: The district developed the 2024-25 plan and has revisited to make updates based on most recent data and strategy progress to ensure the plan aligns to the current state.



# Completing the Needs Assessment



Scenario 1: The district developed the 2024-25 plan but has not revisited to make updates based on most recent data and strategy progress.

Explore the data and capture insights for each of the four areas of data provided in InformTN and 2024-25 local data.

Consider:

- What is the data telling you about overall performance? Subgroup performance? Grade level/band performance? Where does variance exist that needs additional investigation?
- Are all subgroups performing at their highest level?
- What trends and patterns are observed for all students and each subgroup?
- What important trends and patterns exist that identify student, teacher, and leader needs?
- What additional (leading/real-time) data should be considered as overarching needs are identified?

**Capturing Insights is about very specifically stating observations and/or facts about the data. Steer away from including interpretations or solutions to the insights being captured.**



# Completing the Needs Assessment



Scenario 2: The district developed the 2024-25 plan and has revisited to make updates based on most recent data and strategy progress to ensure the plan aligns to the current state.

For the areas that were revised during the 2024-25 school year, review the data in the platform **and** 2024-25 local data to determine what other needs may exist or may have surfaced since those revisions were completed.

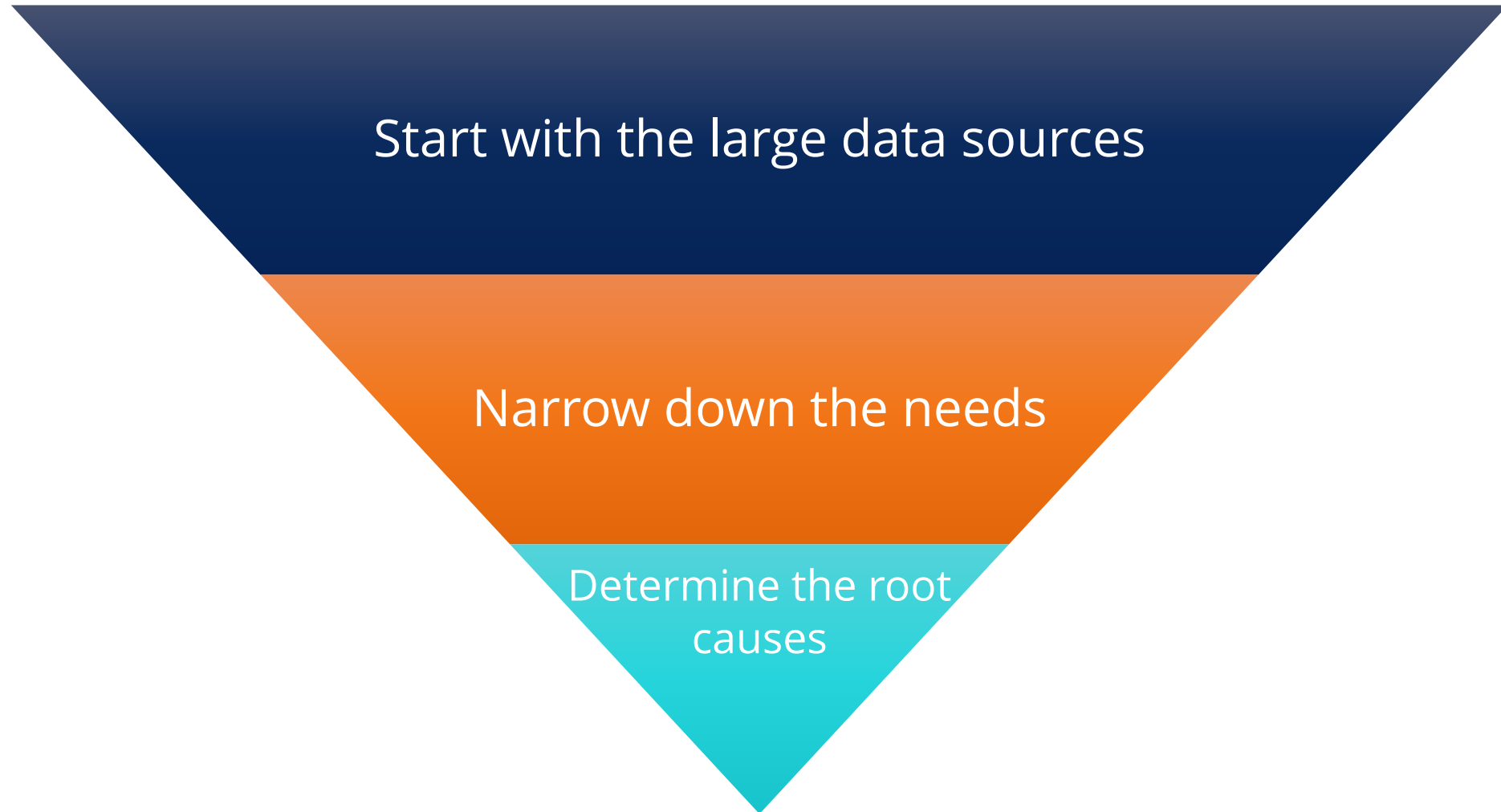
For the areas of data provided in InformTN that did not undergo revisions, explore the provided and local data and capture insights for each.

Consider:

- What is the data telling you about overall performance? Subgroup performance? Grade level/band performance? Where does variance exist that needs additional investigation?
- Are all subgroups performing at their highest level?
- What trends and patterns are observed for all students and each subgroup?
- What important trends and patterns exist that identify student, teacher, and leader needs?
- What additional (leading/real-time) data should be considered as overarching needs are identified?

**Capturing Insights is about very specifically stating observations and/or facts about the data. Steer away from including interpretations or solutions to the insights being captured.**

# Conducting a Needs Assessment



# Explore Data

## Climate and Access

- Chronically Out of School, Discipline, English Learners

## Educators

- Staffing Characteristics, Retention and Climate

## Academic Achievement and Growth

- Success Rate Grades 3-5, Success Rate Grades 6-8, Success Rate Grades 9-12, Growth Grades 4-5, Growth Grades 6-8, Growth Grades 9-12

## College and Career Readiness

- ACT, CTE, Graduation Rate, Postsecondary Enrollment

# Explore Data: Climate & Access

**Chronically Out of School**

**9.4%**  
of students were chronically out of school

vs. 13.5% in Comparable Districts

**Discipline**

**3.9%**  
of students were disciplined

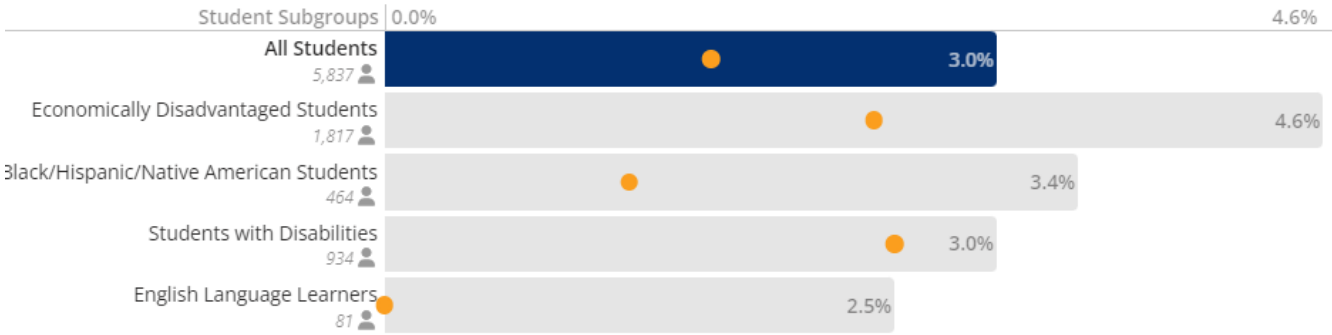
vs. 6.0% in Comparable Districts

**English Language Learners**

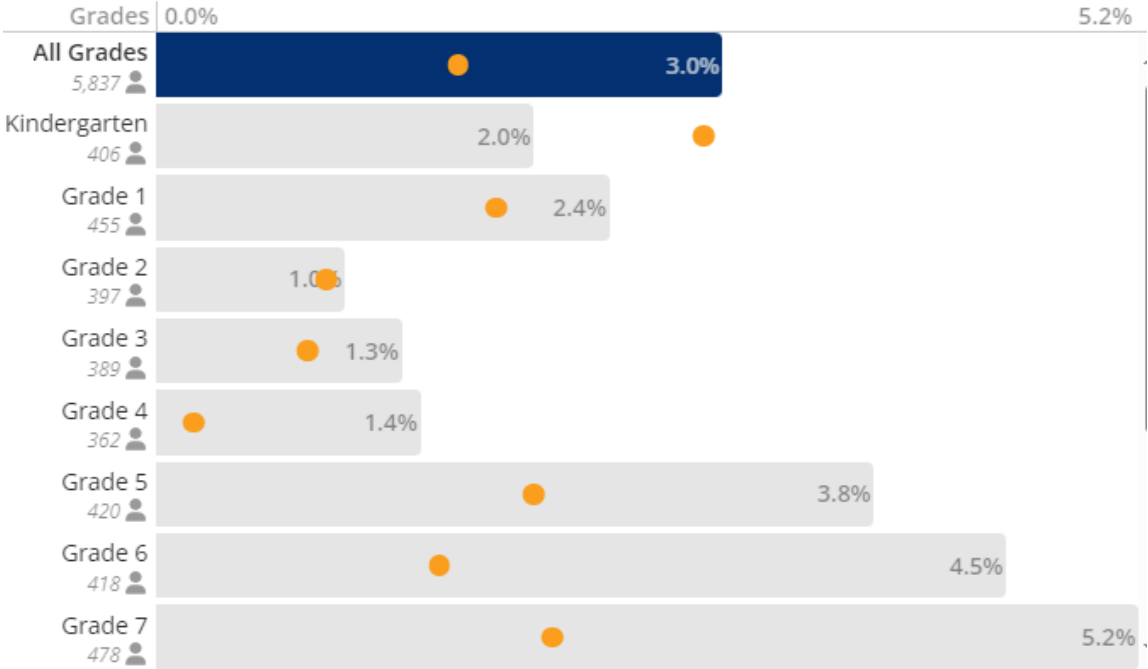
**29.7%**  
of students who are ELLs met the growth standard

vs. 30.1% in Comparable Districts

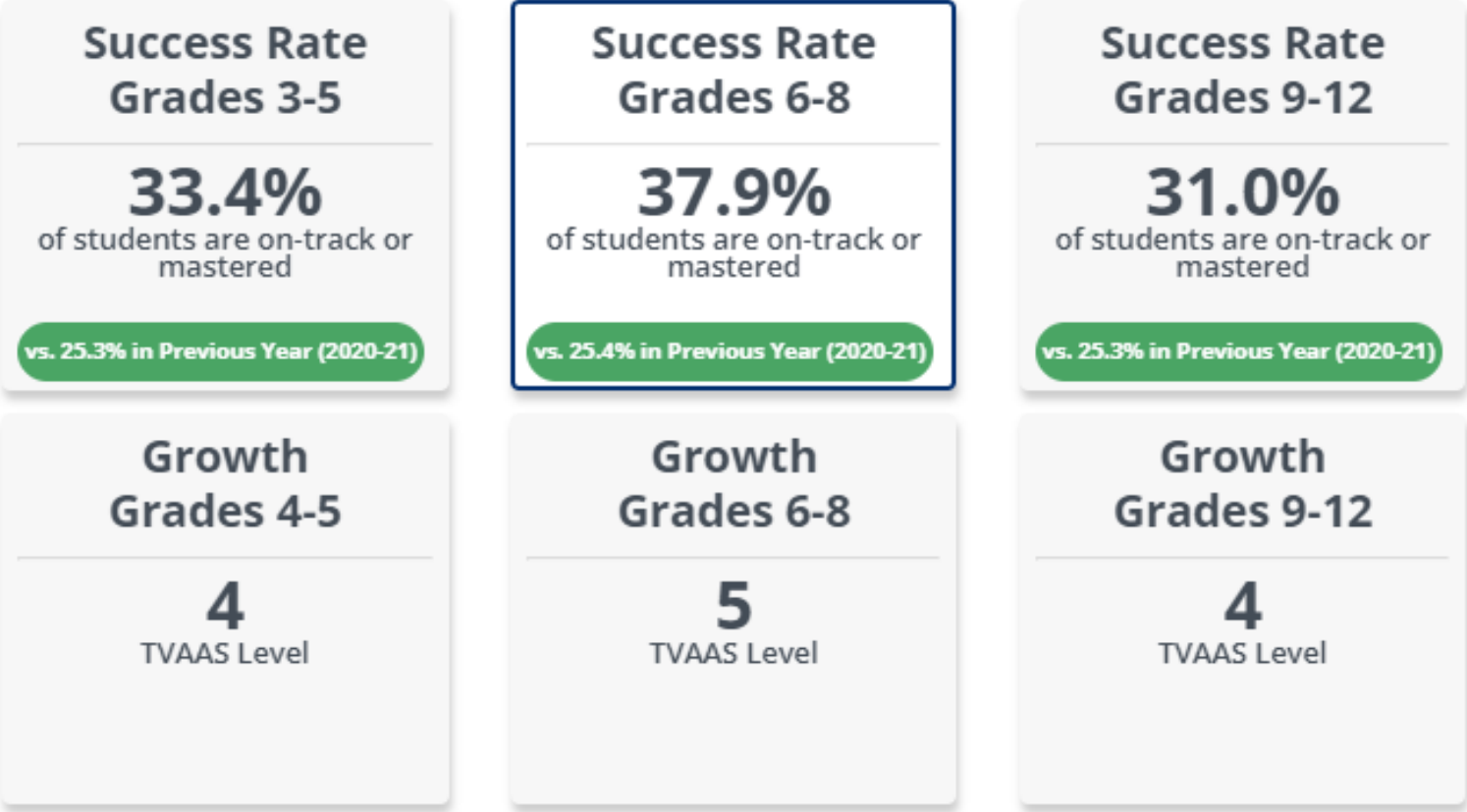
How does the percentage of students who are **Absent more than 20% of the year** vary by **Student Groups?**



How does the percentage of students who are **Absent more than 20% of the year** vary by **Student Groups?**

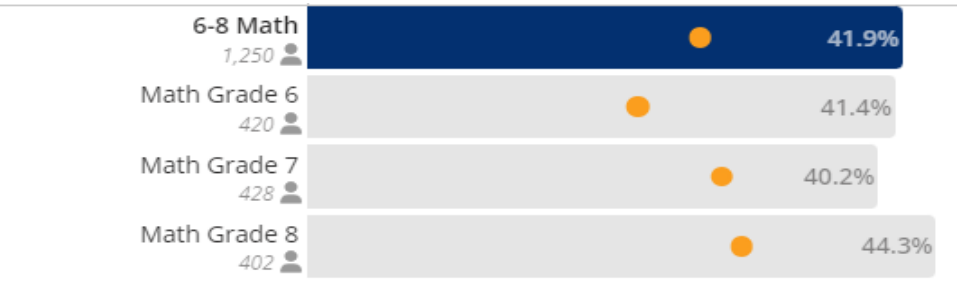
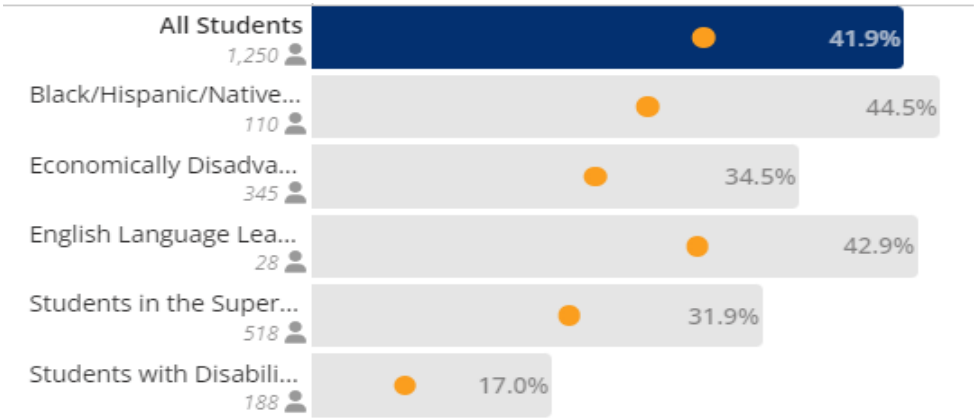
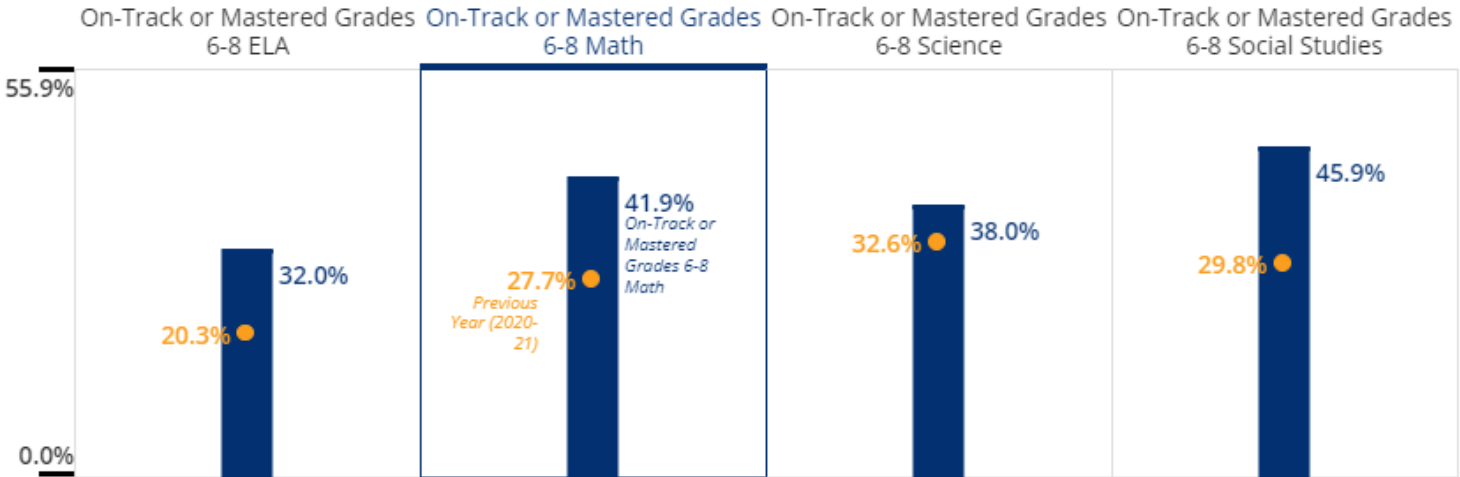


# Explore Data: Academic Achievement & Growth





# Explore Data: Academic Achievement & Growth



# College and Career Readiness

**ACT**

**62.2%**  
of students met the ACT college readiness benchmark

vs. 41.8% in Comparable Districts

**CTE**

**61.7%**  
students concentrated in CTE

vs. 71.6% in Comparable Districts

**Graduation**

**93.9%**  
of students graduated

vs. 94.4% in Comparable Districts

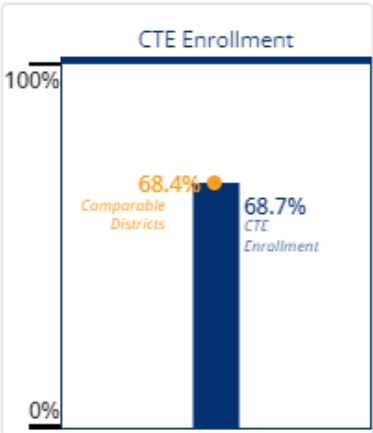
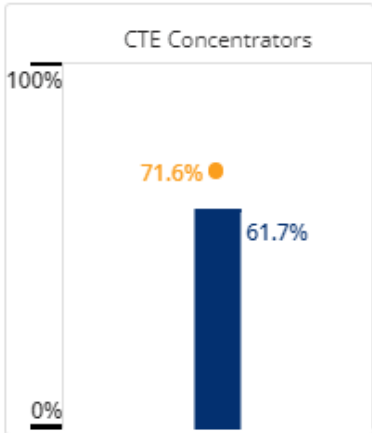
**Postsecondary Enrollment**

**47.0%**  
of graduates enrolled in postsecondary

vs. 52.5% in Previous Cohort (2020)

Select prior provided year.

Select prior provided year. 2024 Graduating Cohort available late February.



**Tier 1 - Recognized**

**100.0%**  
of 70 reported students obtained Tier 1 - Recognized industry credentials

vs. 97.9% in Comparable Districts

**Tier 2 - Valued**

**100.0%**  
of 122 reported students obtained Tier 2 - Valued industry credentials

vs. 71.3% in Comparable Districts

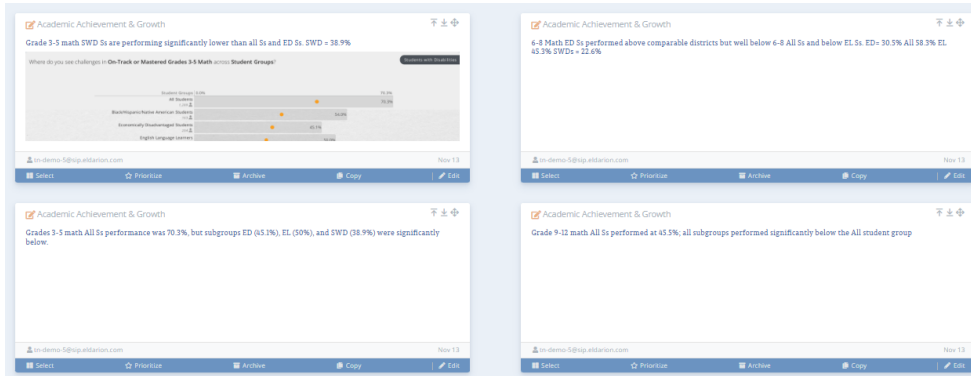
**Tier 3 - Preferred**

**71.4%**  
of 91 reported students obtained Tier 3 - Preferred industry credentials

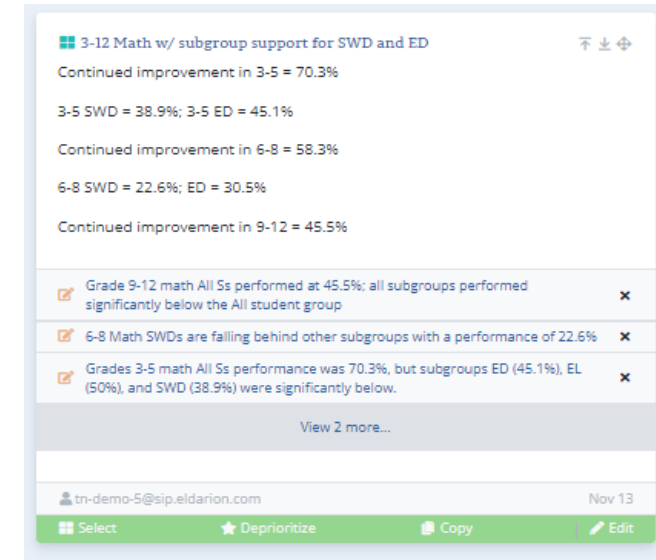
vs. 85.1% in Comparable Districts

# Prioritizing Needs to Determine Goals

## Insights

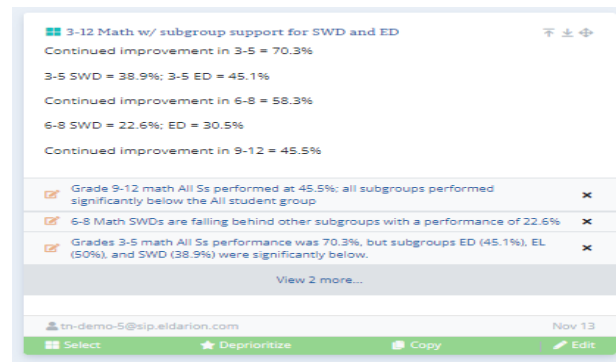


## Prioritized Need

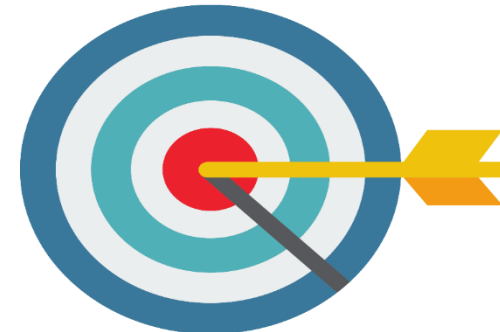


- In what ways do ALL students need to continue to improve?
- Which subgroup(s) and/or grade bands/levels need the most support?
- What important trends and patterns exist?

## Prioritized Need



## Goals



# Prioritized Needs – Root Causes

For each prioritized need, please provide the following information:

1. For the prioritized area of need, state the **prior strategies the district implemented to support outcomes in this area**, include the **challenges that prevented the desired improvement** and the **strengths that led to quantitative and/or qualitative improvements**.
2. Identify the **root causes that are within the district's control** that are **contributing to this specific prioritized need** and **describe the challenges** created by each root cause. The [5 Whys protocol](#) is an optional tool to support leaders in identifying these root causes and supporting data for each prioritized need.

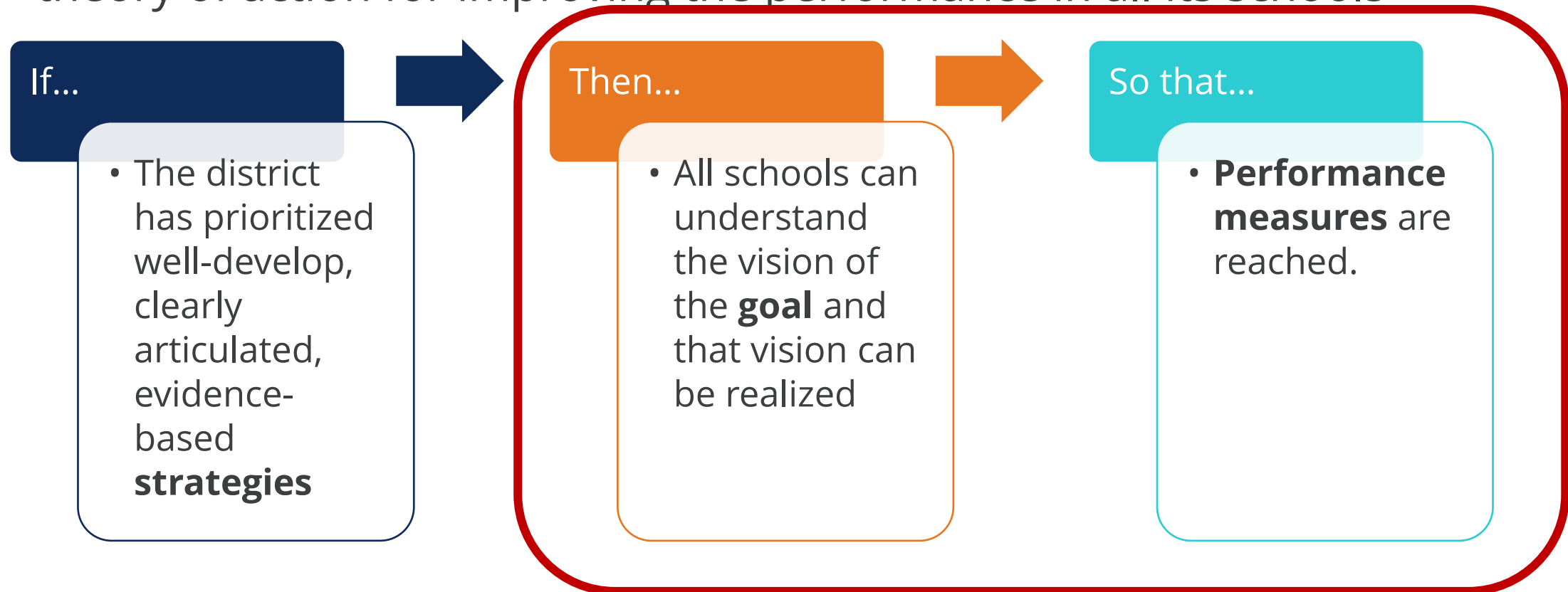


# Develop Plan: Goals, Strategies, Action Steps



# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools



# Theory of Action: Improving Goals

Goal
Description
Performance Measures

- Goal descriptions lets the district communicate what they intend to improve
- Performance Measures states what the district expects improvement to look like by cycle completion.
- S.M.A.R.T. goals provide a target to aim for, a place for the entire organization to focus its efforts, and they increase the chances of achieving the goal.

**S.M.A.R.T.**

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timebound



# Examining the Theory of Action

<b>Goal Title:</b>
<b>If we...</b>
1. [strategy]
2. [strategy]
3. [strategy]
4. [strategy]
<b>Then...</b> [description]
<b>So that...</b> [performance measures]



# Theory of Action: Improving Goals

## Handout: Example District - Improving the Theory of Action

<b>Goal Title:</b> Literacy
<b>If we...</b>
1. [strategy]
2. [strategy]
<b>Then...</b> By Spring 2026, we will improve district-wide K-12 Literacy. We believe if we raise the expectations for ALL students through the use of high-quality instructional materials in K-12 while ensuring students receive appropriate acceleration and intervention opportunities that we will see improvement in teacher practice, student work, and student outcomes. We will have intentional focus on K-2 literacy around explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction, that we will see an increase in the number of students reading on grade level.
<b>So that...</b>  By Spring 2026, increase the percent of students scoring Meets or Exceeds on the ELA TCAP as follows: 3rd - 5th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 35.6% to 2026 = 40% 6th - 8th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 23.2% to 2026 = 28% English I: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 20.5 % to 2026 = 25% English II: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 55.6 % to 2026 = 60%  By Spring 2026, increase the percent of 3rd grade students scoring met or exceeded Expectations on the ELA TCAP from 47.7% to 54.7%.



# Theory of Action: Improving Goals

**Goal Title:** Literacy

**If we...**

1. [strategy]

2. [strategy]

**Then...** By Spring 2026, we will improve **districtwide K-12 literacy**. We believe if we **raise the expectations for ALL** students through the **use of high-quality instructional materials** in K-12 while ensuring students receive appropriate **acceleration and intervention opportunities** that we will see improvement in **teacher practice, student work, and student outcomes**. We will have **intentional focus on K-2 literacy around explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction**, that we will see an increase in the number of students reading on grade level.

**So that...**

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of students scoring Meets or Exceeds on the ELA TCAP as follows:

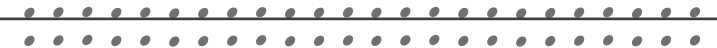
3rd - 5th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 35.6% to 2026 = 40%

6th - 8th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 23.2% to 2026 = 28%

English I: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 20.5 % to 2026 = 25%

English II: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 55.6 % to 2026 = 60%

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of 3rd grade students scoring met or exceeded Expectations on the ELA TCAP from 47.7% to 54.7%





# Theory of Action: Improving Goals

**Review the goal description and performance measures to determine what's missing or what could be improved. Consider the following:**

- Is the focus of the improvement clearly articulated?
- Are the metrics specific? Is there a specific number, percentage, etc. stated for the defined grade levels, bands, subgroups, etc.?
- Does any misalignment exist (e.g. missing grade levels/bands) between the description and the performance measures?
- Is the goal too narrow for schools to engage?
- Is the goal description too broad for schools to understand the improvement and their role in improvement?

**Take 3 minutes to review the goal description and performance measures to determine what, if any, improvements are needed.**

**Improvements should include:**

- Metrics for K-2 need to be included to ensure the full scope of the “districtwide K-12 literacy” goal is addressed.
- Subgroup improvements should be included, as applicable, with specific metrics for each.



# Theory of Action: Improving Goals

**Goal Title:** Literacy

**If we...**

1. [strategy]

2. [strategy]

**Then...** By Spring 2026, we will improve district-wide K-12 Literacy. We believe if we raise the expectations for ALL students through the use of high-quality instructional materials in K-12 while ensuring students receive appropriate acceleration and intervention opportunities that we will see improvement in teacher practice, student work, and student outcomes. We will have intention focus on K-2 literacy around explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction, that we will see an increase in the number of students reading on grade level.

**So that...**

**By Spring 2026, increase the percentage of students in grades K-2 who score at or above the nationally-norm on the NWEA Reading MAP**

**K- 44.61% to 49.61%**

**1st - 46.67% to 51.67%**

**2nd - 25.3% to 30.3%**

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of students scoring Meets or Exceeds on the ELA TCAP as follows:

3rd - 5th grade: 35.6% to 40% All students; **23.2% to 26.2% SWD**

6th - 8th grade: 23.2% to 28% All students; **18.6% to 21.6% SWD**

English I: 20.5 % to = 25% All students; **17.5% to 20.5% SWD**

English II: 55.6 % to 60% All students; **40.2% to 43.2% SWD**

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of 3rd grade students scoring met or exceeded Expectations on the ELA TCAP from 47.7% to 54.7%

***Add these metrics to your handout so you can reference them later when reviewing strategies.***



# Let's Practice!

Session  
Materials



Find your district's folder and locate the Theory of Action Template and 2024-25 plan.

- As a team, identify 1 goal your district will workshop during today's session.
- Copy that goal from the district's current year plan to the "Then..." And "So that..." sections of the Theory of Action template.
- As a team, review the goal for the following:
  - Are the metrics clear and specific?
  - Are the bands and specified grade levels aligned when looking at the goal description and performance measures?
  - Is the goal inclusive enough to align to the priorities at the district and school level?
  - Based on data reviews you've completed earlier this year:
    - Are there additional or different subgroups that should be identified?
    - Are there grade bands or levels that need a specific call out in the performance measures?
  - How should the metrics for all students, identified subgroups, and/or specific grade levels be updated for Spring 2026?



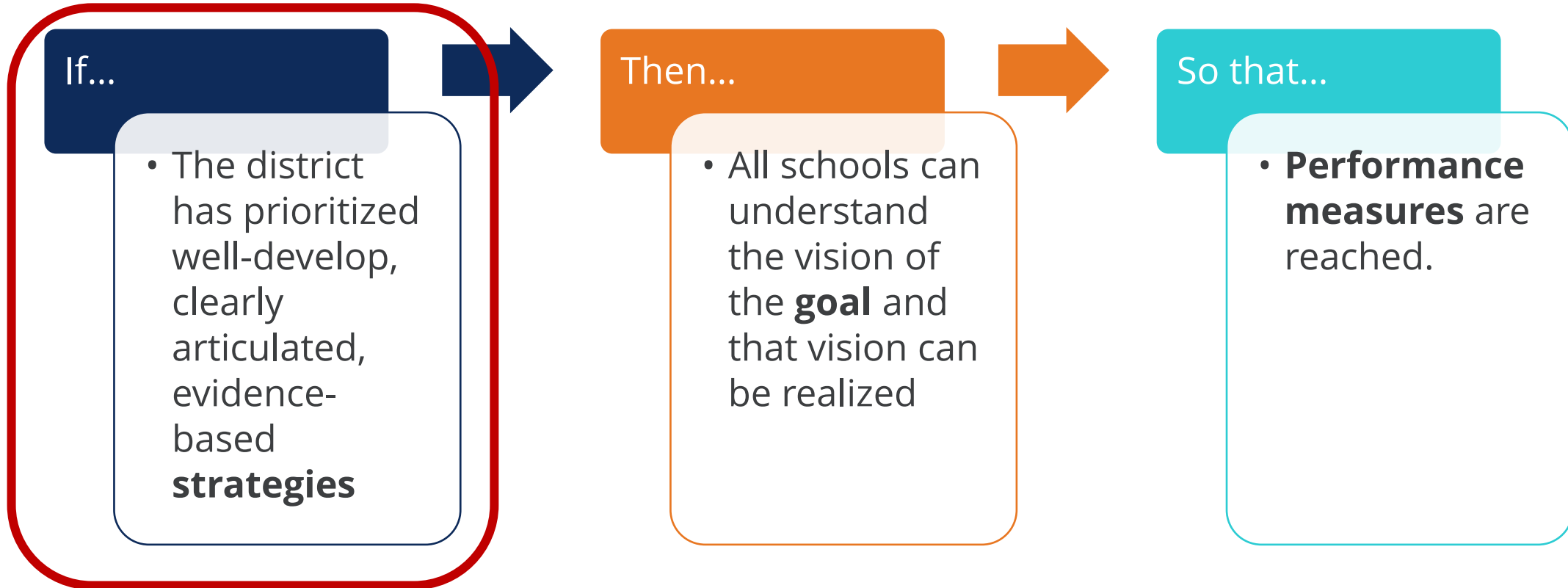
# Remember: Revising and Setting Goals

Considerations when determining goal revisions:

- Does the existing goal align to at least one prioritized need?
- Based on a review of the goal, are the metrics clear and specific, grade bands and specified grade levels aligned, and goal broad enough to align to the priorities at the district and school level?
- Based on the needs assessment, are there additional or different subgroups that should be identified?
- Are there grade bands or levels that need a specific call out in the performance measures?
- How should the metrics for all students, identified subgroups, and/or specific grade levels be updated for 2025-26?

# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools



# Improving Strategies

Strategy			
Description			
Benchmark Indicators			
Action Steps	Estimated Completion	Person Responsible	Funding Sources

- Strategies are the solutions that the planning team believes will best address the prioritized needs and ensure that goals are attained.
- A strategy should articulate a clear roadmap for how the district will make a change or improvement.
- Strategy descriptions should include areas the district will set districtwide expectation or define about the implementation of the strategy for its schools. The district should consider the structures, processes, resources, and/or expectations they want consistent across the district and where schools have autonomy.



# Examining the Theory of Action

**Goal Title:** Literacy

## If we...

1. [strategy]

2. [strategy]

**Then...** By Spring 2026, we will improve district-wide K-12 Literacy. We believe if we raise the expectations for ALL students through the use of high-quality instructional materials in K-12 while ensuring students receive appropriate acceleration and intervention opportunities that we will see improvement in teacher practice, student work, and student outcomes. We will have intention focus on K-2 literacy around explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction, that we will see an increase in the number of students reading on grade level.

## So that...

By Spring 2026, increase the percentage of students in grades K-2 who score at or above the nationally-norm on the NWEA Reading MAP

K-	44.61%	to	49.61%
1st	46.67%	to	51.67%
2nd	25.3%	to	30.3%

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of students scoring Meets or Exceeds on the ELA TCAP as follows:

3rd - 5th grade:	35.6%	to	40%	All students;	23.2%	to	26.2%	SWD
6th - 8th grade:	23.2%	to	28%	All students;	18.6%	to	21.6%	SWD
English I:	20.5 %	to	= 25%	All students;	17.5%	to	20.5%	SWD
English II:	55.6 %	to	60%	All students;	40.2%	to	43.2%	SWD

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of 3rd grade students scoring met or exceeded Expectations on the ELA TCAP from 47.7% to 54.7%

# Theory of Action: Improving Strategies

**If we...**

**1. Implementation of HQIM in K-12 ELA**

Continue full implementation of high-quality instructional ELA materials in grades K - 12 so all students have access to the resources and practices they need to reach proficiency. Learning walks and unit and lesson preparation protocols will support teachers in strong and consistent use of CKLA in grades K-5 and myPerspectives in grades 6-12. The introduction of student work analysis protocols will support teachers in identifying next steps for teaching and learning. Teachers and leaders will engage in professional learning and support on the implementation of unit and lesson preparation protocols, student work analysis protocols, and pacing of lessons and units. Lead teachers will collaborate plan weekly with grade level teachers and tutors.

**2. ELA Learning Acceleration for Grades K-5**

High dosage, low ratio tutoring in grades K-5 that supports Tier 1 through intensive, small-group (1:3) sessions delivered daily for 30-45 minutes reinforcing grade level content utilizing HQIM. Tutoring will serve as a bridge between participating students' current knowledge and grade level expectations supporting their mastery of grade-level standards. The district will communicate the purpose and intent of tutoring and set expectations for how students will be prioritized, developing student-focused schedules, the types and use of resources/materials, and methods and frequency of progress monitoring.

**3. Response to Instruction and Intervention**

Provide academic interventions and focused supplemental support to improve achievement and close identified skills gaps. Schools will use multiple sources of data, including TN-URS (K-8), early warning system (9-12), to identify students in need of support. Tiered time requirements must be met based on the individual student's intervention schedule. Instructional level progress monitoring must be completed every two weeks and grade level progress monitoring every month.

**4. Instructionally Appropriate Individual Education Plan (IAIEP)**

IEP teams will collaboratively develop instructionally appropriate IEPs for SWDs aligned to the IAIEP rubric that supports access to Tier I instruction in literacy with the use of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based strategies. General and special education teachers will collaboratively develop and implement individualized plans that provide special education services in the least restrictive environment with an emphasis on maximizing access to general education settings while accessing standards-based instruction supporting an increase in growth and proficiency in literacy.

The district will communicate the expectations for general and special education collaboration, IAIEP development, LRE considerations - access to Tier I, utilization of evidence-based strategies, and fidelity of high-quality instructional material implementation through development of procedures aligned with professional development and training.

**5. Summer Programming K-9**

Provide summer programming to identified students to support acceleration of learning and reduce learning loss that may occur during summer break. Programming must meet minimum requirements.





# Theory of Action: Improving Strategies

## Goal Title: Literacy

### If we...

1. [strategy]

2. [strategy]

**Then...** By Spring 2026, we will improve districtwide K-12 literacy. We believe if we **raise the expectations for ALL** students through the **use of high-quality instructional materials** in K-12 while ensuring students receive appropriate **acceleration and intervention opportunities** that we will see improvement in teacher practice, student work, and student outcomes. We will have **intentional focus on K-2 literacy around explicit and systematic foundational skills instruction**, that we will see an increase in the number of students reading on grade level.

### So that...

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of students scoring Meets or Exceeds on the ELA TCAP as follows:

3rd - 5th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 35.6% to 2026 = 40%

6th - 8th grade: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 23.2% to 2026 = 28%

English I: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 20.5 % to 2026 = 25%

English II: 2025 Met/Exceeds = 55.6 % to 2026 = 60%

By Spring 2026, increase the percent of 3rd grade students scoring met or exceeded Expectations on the ELA TCAP from 47.7% to 54.7%



# Theory of Action: Improving Strategies

## If we...

### 1. Implementation of HQIM in K-12 ELA

Continue full implementation of high-quality instructional ELA materials in grades K - 12 so all students have access to the resources and practices they need to reach proficiency. Learning walks and unit and lesson preparation protocols will support teachers in strong and consistent use of CKLA in grades K-5 and myPerspectives in grades 6-12. The introduction of student work analysis protocols will support teachers in identifying next steps for teaching and learning. Teachers and leaders will engage in professional learning and support on the implementation of unit and lesson preparation protocols, student work analysis protocols, and pacing of lessons and units. Lead teachers will collaborate plan weekly with grade level teachers and tutors.

### 2. ELA Learning Acceleration for Grades K-5

High dosage, low ratio tutoring in grades K-5 that supports Tier 1 through intensive, small-group (1:3) sessions delivered daily for 30-45 minutes reinforcing grade level content utilizing HQIM. Tutoring will serve as a bridge between participating students' current knowledge and grade level expectations supporting their mastery of grade-level standards. The district will communicate the purpose and intent of tutoring and set expectations for how students will be prioritized, developing student-focused schedules, the types and use of resources/materials, and methods and frequency of progress monitoring.

### 3. Response to Instruction and Intervention

Provide academic interventions and focused supplemental support to improve achievement and close identified skills gaps. Schools will use multiple sources of data, including TN-URS (K-8), early warning system (9-12), to identify students in need of support. Tiered time requirements must be met based on the individual student's intervention schedule. Instructional level progress monitoring must be completed every two weeks and grade level progress monitoring every month.

### 4. Instructionally Appropriate Individual Education Plan (IAIEP)

IEP teams will collaboratively develop instructionally appropriate IEPs for SWDs aligned to the IAIEP rubric that supports access to Tier I instruction in literacy with the use of high-quality instructional materials and evidence-based strategies. General and special education teachers will collaboratively develop and implement individualized plans that provide special education services in the least restrictive environment with an emphasis on maximizing access to general education settings while accessing standards-based instruction supporting an increase in growth and proficiency in literacy.

The district will communicate the expectations for general and special education collaboration, IAIEP development, LRE considerations - access to Tier I, utilization of evidence-based strategies, and fidelity of high-quality instructional material implementation through development of procedures aligned with professional development and training.

### 5. Summer Programming K-9

Provide summer programming to identified students to support acceleration of learning and reduce learning loss that may occur during summer break. Programming must meet minimum requirements.

**Missing: K-2 literacy foundational skills**

# Examining the Theory of Action

- Based on the strategies currently included, are all of the grade bands and subgroups supported in ways that will ensure goal attainment?
- Do you have a strong degree of belief that if these strategies are implemented well, the district will meet its goals? Are there other strategies that would strengthen your degree of belief?



# Theory of Action: Writing and Improving and Strategies

**Review the strategy description to determine what's missing or what could be improved. Consider the following:**

- Are the specifics of what the strategy is or will do identified?
- Are the areas for which the district will set districtwide expectations or define the implementation of the strategy for its schools articulated?
- Does the strategy description include a single strategy? If the strategy description has more than one strategy, are they tightly connected strategies that will utilize the same benchmark indicators and action steps for implementation?

**Take 3 minutes to review the Summer Programming strategy description to determine what, if any, improvements are needed.**

**Improvements should include:**

- Grade levels and students to be served.
- “Programming must meet minimum requirements.” is too vague to ensure consistency in meeting the requirements.
  - State the grade levels to be served.
  - Include the instructional components and time requirements.



# Theory of Action: Improving Strategies

<b>If we...</b>
1. <u>Implementation of HQIM in K-12 ELA</u>
2. <u>ELA Learning Acceleration for Grades K-5</u>
3. <u>Response to Instruction and Intervention</u>
4. <u>Instructionally Appropriate Individual Education Plan (IAIEP)</u>
<b>5. <u>Summer Programming K-9</u></b> Provide summer programming to identified students to support acceleration of learning and reduce learning loss that may occur during summer break. <b>Camps will be available to rising K-9 students who are economically disadvantaged, whose data indicates at risk of scoring below proficient in ELA or math, scored below proficient on most recent TCAP, and grade 3 students required to participate based on a promotion pathway. Daily programming will include 4 hours of reading and math instruction (with at least one hour of this block dedicated to math and at least one hour for reading) using HQIM, one hour of intervention, and one hour of physical activity. Rising K-3 will also offer STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Math) for one hour daily.</b>





# Let's Practice!

Session  
Materials



Locate the district's Theory of Action Template and 2024-25 plan.

- Copy that strategy title and descriptions from the district's current year plan to the "If we..." sections of the Theory of Action template.
- As a team, review the strategies for the following:
  - Does the district's goal description reference strategies that are not included in the theory of action?
  - Are there additional strategies the district has or will have in place that strengthens the theory of action?
  - Are the specifics of what each strategy is or will do identified?
  - Are the areas for which the district will set districtwide expectations or define the implementation for its schools articulated for each strategy?
  - Based on the strategies included, are all of the grade bands and subgroups supported in ways that will ensure goal attainment?
  - Does the strategy description include a single strategy? If the strategy description has more than one strategy, are they tightly connected strategies that will utilize the same benchmark indicators and action steps for implementation?
  - Is there a strong degree of belief that if these strategies are implemented well, the district will meet its goals?



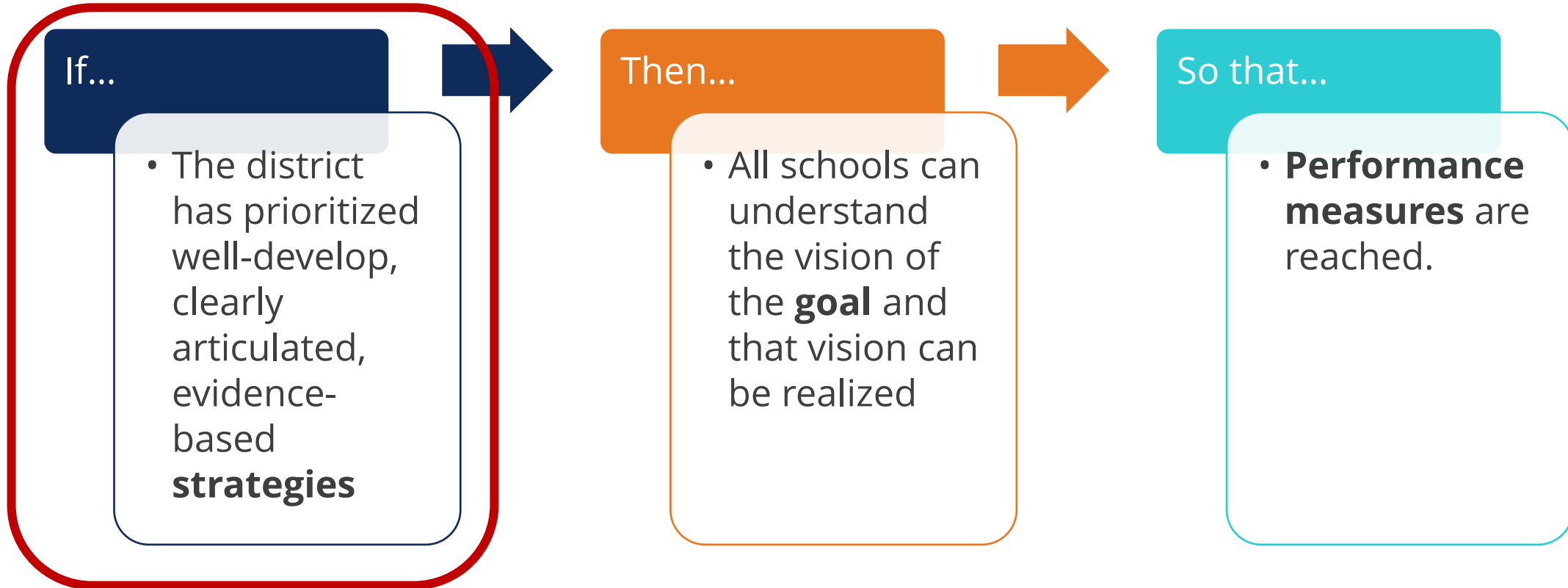
# Remember: Writing and Improving Strategies

Considerations when determining strategy revisions:

- Are the specifics of what the strategy is or will do identified?
- Are the areas for which the district will set districtwide expectations or define the implementation of the strategy for its schools articulated?
- Does the strategy description include a single strategy? If the strategy description has more than one strategy, are they tightly connected strategies that will utilize the same benchmark indicators and action steps for implementation?

# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools





# Theory of Action: Improving Benchmark Indicators

Strategy			
Description			
Benchmark Indicators			
Action Steps	Estimated Completion	Person Responsible	Funding Sources

- Benchmarks indicators define how the district will gauge improvement throughout the year.
- Checking progress throughout the year should include knowing whether the strategy is happening as planned **AND** whether it is leading to the desired improvement.

*Knowing the strategy is happening or happening somewhere in the district is not the same as knowing the strategy is working as intended or leading to the desired improvement.*      ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::

# Theory of Action: Improving Benchmark Indicators

**Review the strategy description to determine what's missing or what could be improved. Consider the following:**

- Are there methods for knowing this strategy is occurring as expected?
- Are there measures for knowing this strategy is leading to desired improvement?
- Is the amount of expected incremental improvement/change defined for each data collection?
- Is a timeline for collecting and monitoring/reviewing/reflecting data included?
- Is it clear who or who all is responsible for collection and/or monitoring of data?
- Is there a method for analyzing and reflecting on the data to inform decision making?

## **Example benchmark indicator:**

- Tutoring Benchmark Indicators: The district will assess students throughout the year using Amplify benchmarks, iReady benchmarks, and Mastery Connect.

**Take 3 minutes to review the Tutoring Benchmark Indicator to determine what, if any, improvements are needed.**



# Theory of Action: Improving Benchmark Indicators

## Example benchmark indicator:

- Tutoring Benchmark Indicators: The district will assess students throughout the year using Amplify benchmarks, iReady benchmarks, and Mastery Connect.

## Improvements should include:

- A method for knowing the strategy is being implemented as expected should be identified.
- The desired incremental improvement or the change the district expects to see at each collection should be made clear.
- The timeline for collecting and monitoring data should be stated.
- People responsible need to be assigned.

## Improved tutoring benchmark indicators would include all of the following:

- **The district-level instructional team and principals will conduct tutoring visits, using tutoring walkthrough tool, at each school each semester to understand progress of tutoring implementation.**
- **Student attendance rate will be monitored by the principal and reported to the district monthly. District expectation is 90% attendance in tutoring sessions.**
- **75% of students in tutoring demonstrate at or above expected growth on the Winter and Spring administration of each assessment. Each principal is responsible for gathering the data and reporting at the district's winter and spring data meeting.**



# Theory of Action: Improving Benchmark Indicators

**Example benchmark indicator to gauge that implementation is going as expected:**

- Monthly IPG walks for each grade level completed and submitted by school admins and walks in each school in October, January, and March completed and submitted by instructional coaches and instructional supervisor.

By October of 2025

- Core Action 1 - 100% Yes
- Core Action 2 - 40% Yes
- Core Action 3 - 20% Yes

By January of 2026

- Core Action 1 - 100% Yes
- Core Action 2 - 50% Yes
- Core Action 3 - 30% Yes

By March of 2026

- Core Action 1 - 100% Yes
- Core Action 2 - 60% Yes
- Core Action 3 - 40% Yes

Reflection of IPG walk data facilitated by instructional supervisor during instructional team and principals' meeting in October, January, and March.

*What benchmark indicator might the district include that will indicate progress is being made toward the intended outcome?*





# Let's Practice!

Session  
Materials



Locate the district's 2024-25 plan and the theory of action you've been working to improve during today's session.

- As a team, review each strategy's benchmark indicators for the following:
  - Are there methods for knowing this strategy is occurring as expected?
  - Are there measures for knowing this strategy is leading to desired improvement?
  - Is the amount of expected incremental improvement/change defined for each data collection?
  - Is a timeline for collecting and monitoring/reviewing/reflecting data included?
  - Is it clear who or who all is responsible for collection and/or monitoring of data?
  - Is there a method for analyzing and reflecting on the data to inform decision making?

# Remember: Writing and Improving Benchmark Indicators

Considerations when determining revisions to benchmark indicators

- Are there methods for knowing this strategy is occurring as expected?
- Are there measures for knowing this strategy is leading to desired improvement?
- Is the amount of expected incremental improvement/change defined for each data collection?
- Is a timeline for collecting and monitoring/reviewing/reflecting data included?
- Is it clear who or who all is responsible for collection and/or monitoring of data?
- Is there a method for analyzing and reflecting on the data to inform decision making?

# Improving Action Steps

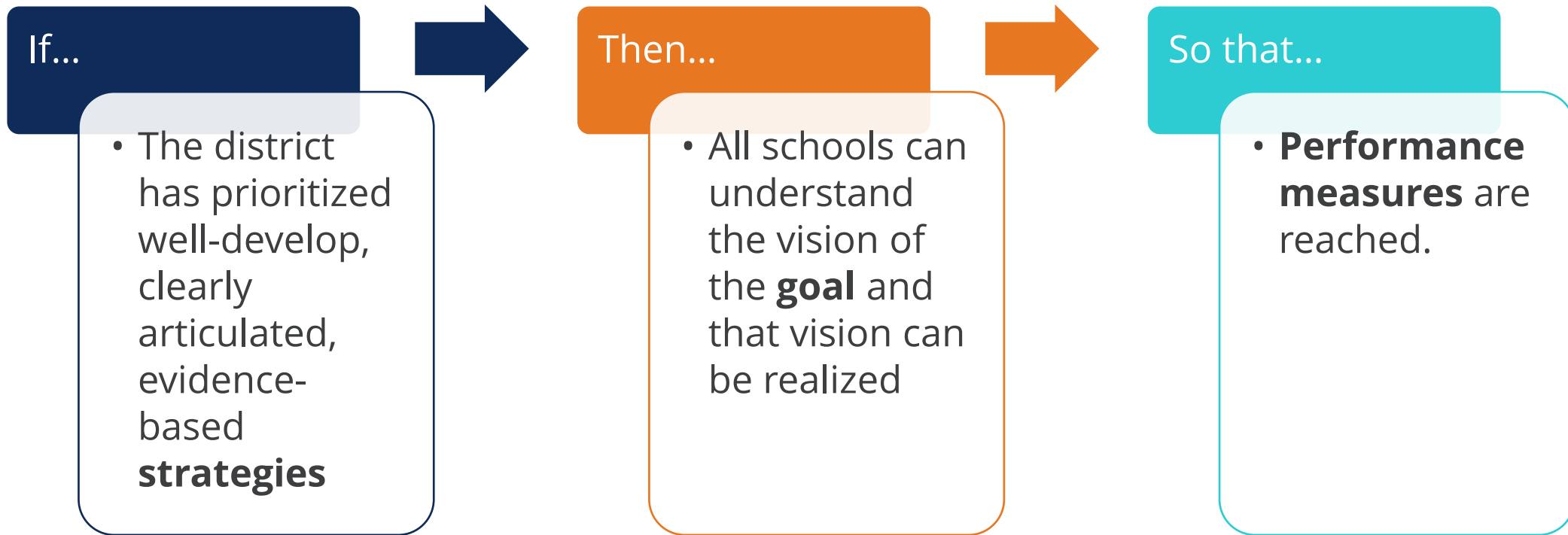
Strategy			
Description			
Benchmark Indicators			
Action Steps	Estimated Completion	Person Responsible	Funding Sources

- Action steps define the actions needed to put a strategy in place.
- Action steps outline the needed systems, structures, resources, and communications that will make implementation possible and consistent implementation expected. They establish a reasonable timeframe, and the person responsible for completing or shepherding the action to completion.

*Don't confuse action steps with strategies. Strategies are uniquely identified to help the district reach its goal and define the theory of action. Action steps communicate the work needed to put the strategy in place.*

# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools





# Thinking Ahead

- Take 5 minutes to identify dates in January and February for your team to continue the work of revising the theories of action for your 2025-26 plan.



# Reminders: ESSA Evidence

# ESSA: Evidence-Based Interventions

Critical Resource: [Focus on ESSA Evidence Webinar Recording](#)

- A key aspect of ESSA is its commitment to the use of evidence to drive better outcomes for students.
- If implemented well, evidence-based interventions can:
  - improve student outcomes and
  - increase the return on education investments.
- In other words, resources are spent on programs and practices that are likely to have a positive impact on student achievement and growth.



# ESSA: Evidence of Effectiveness

- **Tier 1 = Strong:**
  - At least one randomized, well-conducted study showing significant positive student outcomes
- **Tier 2 = Moderate:**
  - At least one quasi-experimental (i.e., matched), well-conducted study showing significant positive student outcomes
- **Tier 3 = Promising:**
  - At least one correlational, well-conducted study with controls for inputs showing significant positive student outcomes
- **Tier 4 = Demonstrates a Rationale:**
  - Practices that have a well-defined logic method or theory of action, are supported by research and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness



# The Evidence Provisions of ESSA

Federal Program	Required Tier Level of Evidence
Title I, Section 1003: School Improvement	-Minimum of 1 intervention must meet Tiers I, II, or III in CSI, TSI, and ATSI schools.
Title I, Part A: Basic Programs for Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance	- All four levels (Tiers I, II, III, IV) of the evidence-based definition apply, where evidence is reasonably available. - External providers must have expertise in using evidence-based practices.
Title II: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders	All four levels (Tiers I, II, III, IV) of the evidence-based definition apply, where evidence is reasonably available.
Title III: Instruction For English Learners and Immigrant Students	All four levels (Tiers I, II, III, IV) of the evidence-based definition apply, where evidence is reasonably available.
Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants	All four levels (Tiers I, II, III, IV) of the evidence-based definition apply, where evidence is reasonably available.
Title V, Part B: Rural Education Initiative	All four levels (Tiers I, II, III, IV) of the evidence-based definition apply, where evidence is reasonably available.



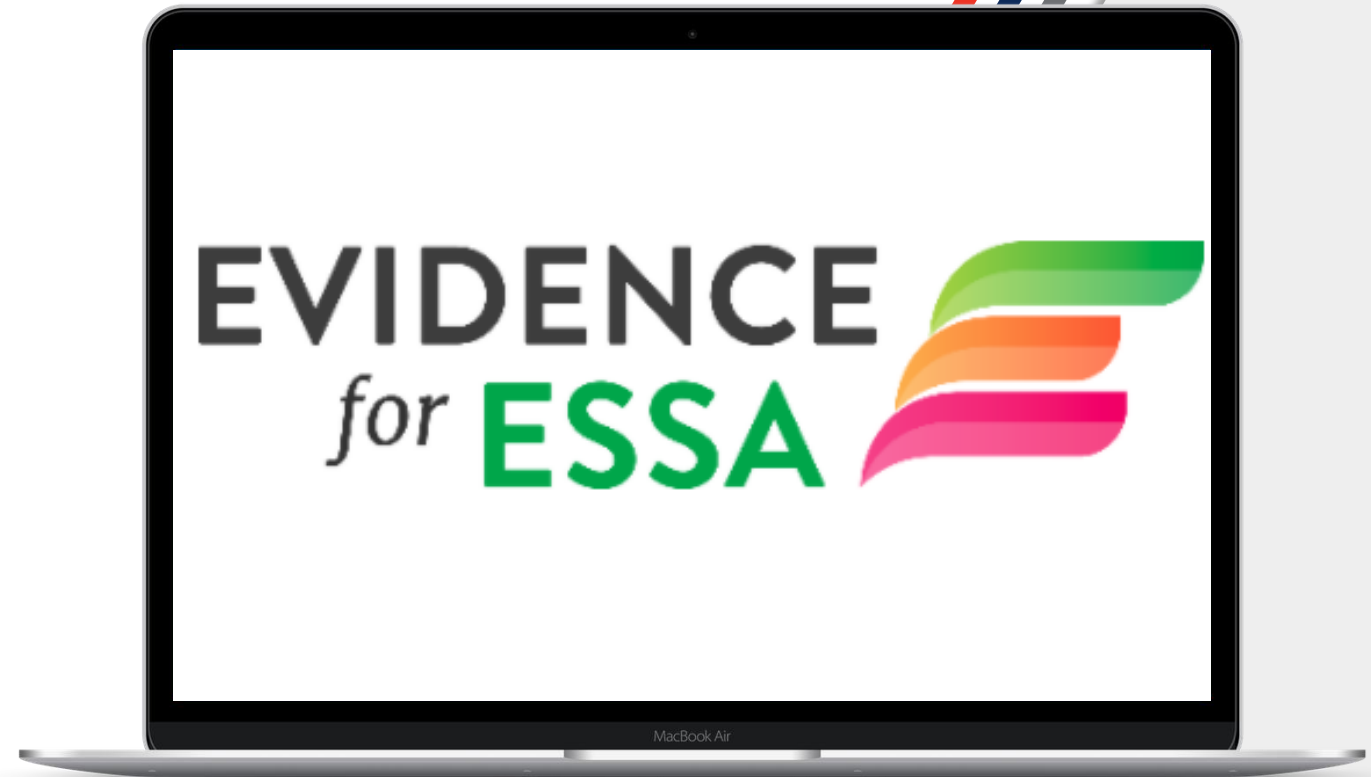
# What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)

- The [What Works Clearinghouse \(WWC\)](#) is an Institute of Education Sciences (IES) investment within the U.S. Department of Education that was established in 2002.
  - WWC reviews research, determines which studies meet rigorous standards, and summarizes the findings.
  - WWC focuses on high-quality research to answer the question, “What works in education?”



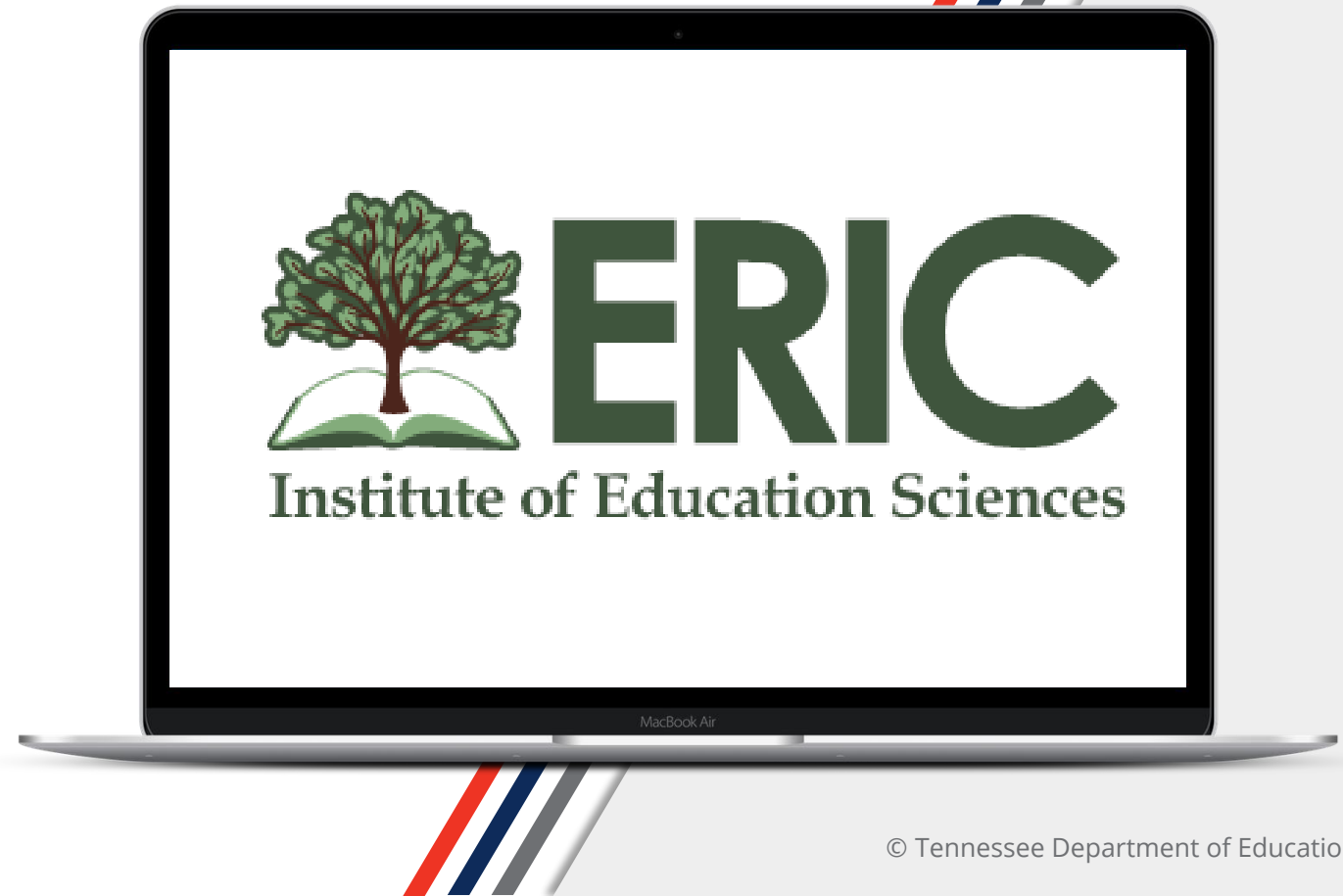
# ESSA for Evidence

- **ESSA for Evidence** identifies the following:
  - the level of evidence under ESSA that is associated with a given program;
  - a snapshot of what the program looks like in terms of cost and implementation; and
  - program categories that include reading, math, social-emotional, attendance, science, and writing.



# ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)

- **ERIC** provides a wide variety of educational research from journals and non-journal sources (i.e., centers, institutes, and foundations).
  - Sponsored by IES of the US Department of Education
  - Individual research oriented





# InformTN Requirements

- Interventions, programs, and strategies funded by ESSA are **required** to be evidence-based.
- If ESSA grant funds are supporting a particular strategy or action step, the Funding Source and evidence tier must also be identified.
  - This is reviewed by the department to ensure funding budgeted in the CFA aligns with the district plan in InformTN.



# InformTN Requirements

## Create Evidence

Describe the evidence that supports the use of the strategy/intervention by providing an narrative in the text box, adding a hyperlink and/or uploading an attachment.

Title

Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

Description

ESSA (Section 8002) and the U.S. Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments outline the requirements around evidence-based interventions/programs and what is required when federal funds are utilized. For more information and resources on these requirement and the four tiers of evidence, click here.

Normal **B** **I** **U** **S**

Title IV funds will support this strategy in K-5 schools.

Tier

Need help determining the tier?

Tier 1 - Strong Evidence

Attachments

Type

Hyperlink

Hyperlink

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/78551#

Type

Uploaded file

File

Choose File Study\_78551.pdf

+ Add attachment

Cancel

Create Evidence

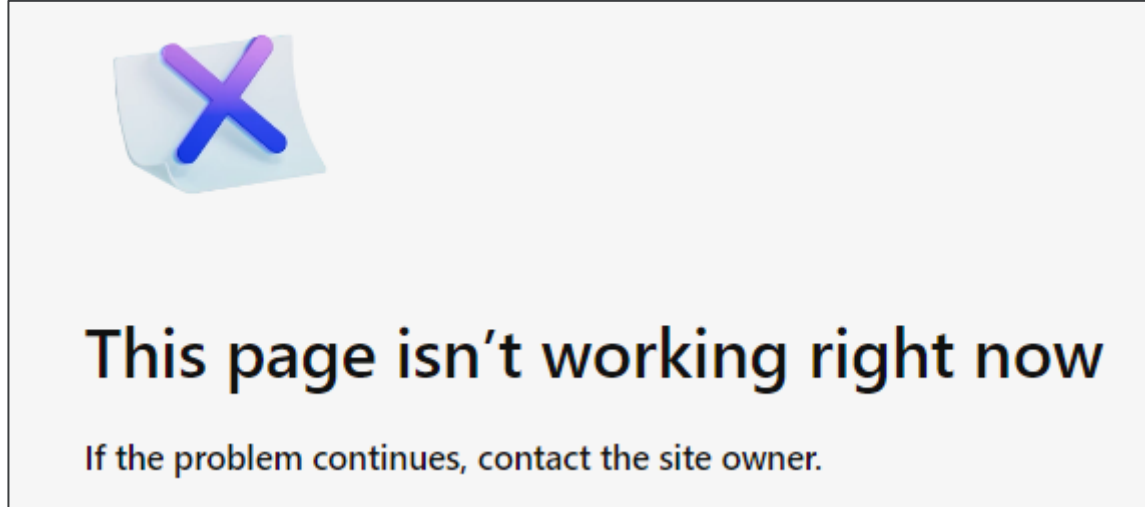
# Resources

- [Focus on ESSA Evidence Webinar Recording](#)
- [ESSA Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments](#)
- [ESSA Tiers of Evidence Guidance Document](#)
- [Focus on ESSA Evidence Slides](#)
- [ERIC - An Online Library of Education Research and Information](#)
- [ESSA Action Guide - Selecting Evidence-Based Practices for Low-Performing Schools](#)
- [ESSA Key Resources - Selecting the Right Evidence-Based Practices](#)
- [Evidence for ESSA](#)
- [Guide to Evidence-Based Clearinghouses](#)
- [REL Midwest Regional Education Laboratory](#)
- [What Works Clearinghouse](#)



# Troubleshooting

# Caching Issues



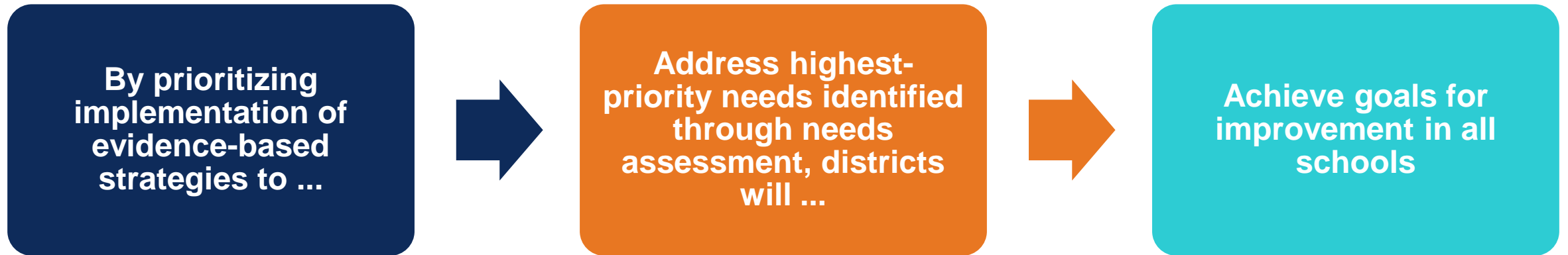
- The above error is due to a caching issue with SSO. Users should try the following steps:
  - Browse to <https://authority.tneducation.net/Account/Logout> then retry the InformTN login <https://edplan.tn.gov/account/login/?next=/>
  - If the above is unsuccessful, try Firefox or Edge and/or a private browsing window.



# Closing

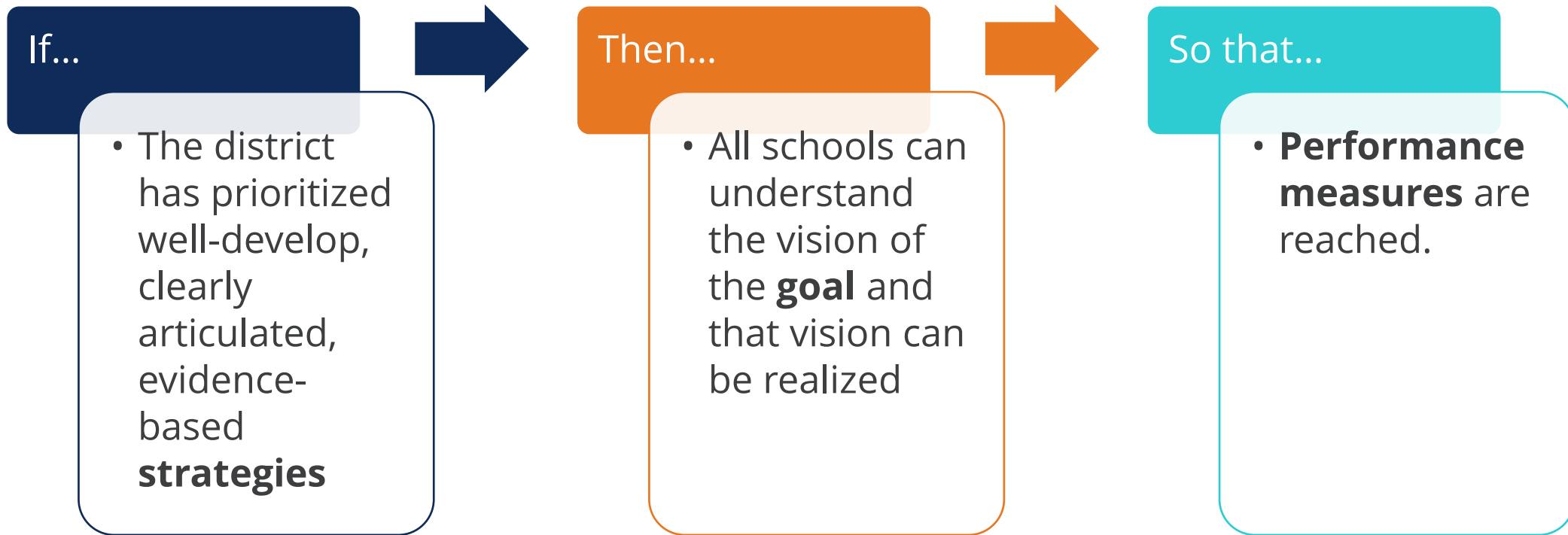
# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts create and implement a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools



# Purpose of the District Plan

Helps districts **create, implement, and communicate** a coherent theory of action for improving the performance in all its schools





# LEA Planning Timeline

Key Event	Date
District plans open	January 2, 2025
District Turnaround plans open	February 3, 2025
District plans due	March 3, 2025
Feedback and resubmission window *See next slide for specific timeline	March 3 – April 9, 2025
TDOE deadline to approve district plans	April 15, 2025
District Turnaround plans due	May 1, 2025

# Resubmission Timeline

Key Event	Date
Districts who receive feedback by March 17 will resubmit their LEA plan for review by April 2	April 2, 2025
Districts who receive feedback after March 17 will resubmit their LEA plan for review by April 9.	April 9, 2025

# LEA ePlan Roles

- LEA User Access Administrators can add and delete all school-level and most LEA-level roles for LEA ePlan users.
- This allows LEAs faster access to roles and will increase efficiency for LEAs for completing steps related to planning.
- More information about this can be found in the [ePlan LEA User Access Administrator Manual](#) or the [InformTN Technical Guide](#).

<b>Role</b>	<b>What can this role do?</b>	<b>Who usually has this role?</b>	<b>Who can add this role for a user?</b>
LEA Authorized Representative	Submit LEA plan, Funding Applications, Monitoring Instruments	Director of Schools	ePlan help team
LEA Fiscal Representative	Edit LEA plan, Approve Funding Applications	District Financial Officer	ePlan help team
LEA User Access Administrator	Manage the LEA's user access roles-including adding new roles	LEA users assigned the role	ePlan help team
LEA Data View	View any ePlan component or planning tool, Upload to LEA Document Library	District users	LEA User Access Administrator
LEA Plan Data Entry	Edit LEA plan or school plans	District administrator	LEA User Access Administrator
LEA School Plan Reviewer	Edit school or LEA plans, and approve school plans	District administrator	LEA User Access Administrator
LEA Consolidated Director	Edit LEA plan	Federal Director	LEA User Access Administrator
School Plan Data Entry	Edit school plan	Assistant Principal	LEA User Access Administrator
School Plan Reviewer	Edit and approve school plan	Principal	LEA User Access Administrator

# Planning Support Contacts

Planning Area	Point of Contact
Prepare to Plan, Explore Data, Analyze Needs, Develop Plan (Goals, Strategies, Action Steps)	<a href="mailto:Jami.Corwin@tn.gov">Jami.Corwin@tn.gov</a>   East
	<a href="mailto:Janice.Fox@tn.gov">Janice.Fox@tn.gov</a>   Middle
	<a href="mailto:Tanika.Lester@tn.gov">Tanika.Lester@tn.gov</a>   West





# Please Share Your Feedback!



*This is **not** the address for signing in.*





# Thank You!

Contact Info or Questions?

*Permission is granted to use and copy these materials for non-commercial educational purposes with attribution credit to the "Tennessee Department of Education". If you wish to use these materials for reasons other than non-commercial educational purposes, please contact the Office of General Counsel at (615) 741-2921 or [TDOE.GeneralCounsel@tn.gov](mailto:TDOE.GeneralCounsel@tn.gov).*