

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, LEAs, schools, and school communities are embarking on a path of continuous school improvement. Local needs will set the direction for improvement efforts, while resources and teams from the Pennsylvania Department of Education will support each phase of planning and implementation. PA's cycle of improvement is grounded in evidence-based approaches that can both improve student outcomes and increase return on investment, as resources are spent on programs and practices likely to have a positive impact. Opportunities to create, assess, and adjust throughout the cycle will empower schools and engage all stakeholders in pursuit of a shared vision: students that are **college-, career-, and community-ready**.



"ESSA provides state education agencies with new flexibility in determining how and when to deliver school improvement strategies."

Pennsylvania ESSA Consolidated State Plan
January 12, 2018, page 59

Set the direction.

- Establish a clear direction that informs the work of all stakeholders
- Agree upon ambitious and aspirational goals
- Set interim targets to gauge progress toward long-term goals
- Define the purpose of the improvement process

Adjust course.

- Use implementation data to adjust actions and milestones to keep the work on track as it progresses
- Monitor adjustments carefully to determine if they are positively impacting progress

Assess needs.

- Assess implementation of the PA Essential Practices
- Include voice of students, families, educators, and administrators
- Analyze root cause to address the problem, not the symptom
- Prioritize focus for planning

Cycle of Improvement

Monitor the plan.

- Discuss progress, celebrate successes, and identify challenges and possible solutions at monthly meetings with stakeholder teams, who have responsibility for milestones and groups working on actions
- Provide monthly status reports to the leadership team so they can provide support and make timely adjustments
- Regularly report on progress to stakeholders using implementation data and performance data

Create a plan.

Create a rigorous, yet attainable plan based on needs assessment and root cause analysis

Strategies: Powerful, high-leverage work that builds capacity and changes practice, behavior, and belief so students are more successful

Strategy Performance Measures: Indicators of the impact of the strategies

Milestones: Indicators of strategy implementation

Actions: Incremental steps to complete milestone

Implement the plan.

- Implement the plan as designed with stakeholders committing to and holding each accountable
- Reference the plan for day-to-day action and decision-making

Last revised 08/2021.