Initiating, Monitoring, and Sustaining School Integration Projects:

A Toolkit for New York State School Districts

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About this Toolkit

This toolkit is a resource for school districts to support the planning, implementation, monitoring, and refining of integration initiatives aimed at offering equitable learning opportunities and support for all students.[1] It contains publicly available frameworks and guides, as well as tools created by the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) to support the New York State Education Department's New York State Integration Project. Since 2018, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and its partners have supported the New York State Integration Project-Professional Learning Community (NYSIP-PLC), a program to help school districts create more diverse schools as a mechanism for increasing student achievement in Title I schools. Through this multi-year effort, NYSED has provided funding and technical assistance to qualifying districts as they design and implement strategies to integrate schools and create more inclusive and responsive learning communities. With respect to integration, district leaders and their partners have sought to create more diverse schools based not only on race and ethnicity but also on socioeconomic status, learning ability, English language learner status, and other student identities relevant to districts' local contexts (e.g., immigrant status or experiences with temporary housing or homelessness). Efforts to create more inclusive and culturally-responsive schools rely heavily on NYSED's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (CR-S).[2] NYSED and its partners see both integration strategies and efforts to create more inclusive and responsive schools as key to successful integration plans.

The toolkit can be used to guide both integration strategies (also known as composition strategies) and strategies for the development of culturally-responsive and sustaining (CR-S) education environments. You can find resources on integrative composition strategies here and resources on CR-S here.

This toolkit is organized around the elements of the Evolutionary Learning cycle, a cornerstone of CPRL's approach to supporting equitable educational outcomes. Evolutionary Learning is a disciplined way to learn rapidly from the carefully observed experience of people closest to the problem to be solved and the strategy to be enacted. Individuals, teams, and organizations can use Evolutionary Learning effectively

1 Integration refers to initiatives aimed at diversifying and supporting student populations based on subgroups such as race/ethnicity, economically (dis)advantaged, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners.

2 New York State Education Department (NYSED). (2020). NYSED's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework. Retrieved from: http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework

for activities as simple as maximizing the impact of small changes in procedures and as complex as reorganizing an existing system's overall plan of operations, such as might be required for a district-wide integration initiative. In all such cases, actors in a broadly participative manner agree on a set of goals and propose a strategy for meeting them. They treat the strategy and everyday actions as experiments. Specifically, they:

- Define what successful implementation entails and what desired outcomes look like
- Measure whether their actions and results match their expectations
- Study gaps between expectations and results to find ways to improve, holding themselves accountable for examining and elevating their work's impact on marginalized communities

In taking these steps, actors:

- Multiply opportunities to develop and test ways to succeed
- Empower participants to try new approaches
- Invite broad participation by local staff, individuals, and communities
- Facilitate learning and spread knowledge and uptake of what works

In its most straightforward form, Evolutionary Learning in support of a strategic initiative such as integration unfolds in six stages:

Stage 1: Organizing Your Effort
Stage 2: Mapping Your System & Strategy
Stage 3: Defining Your Measurement Framework
Stage 4: Implementing & Measuring Strategies
Stage 5: Evaluating & Refining Strategies
Stage 6: Meaning-making & Spreading the Word

Stage 1: Organizing Your Effort

For any new district-wide initiative, it is important to establish a working team of critical stakeholders. In this section, we offer some considerations for identifying stakeholders who are crucial to include on this team, as well as some practices for establishing a healthy, well-organized, and productive team dynamic.

This stage has five steps, the first is designed to create your initial working team, and the others will be taken collectively by the team:

- **1.1. Assemble your preliminary team:** Identify and convene a group of individuals who will help lead the initiative under consideration.
- **1.2. Map your stakeholders:** Map the groups of people most likely to influence or feel the initiative's impact, particularly stakeholders your organization or the broader school system have historically marginalized or whom your initiative could marginalize.
- **1.3. Revisit the composition of your team:** Adjust team composition to ensure sufficient participation by people in each impact group, particularly those your organization or the broader school system have historically marginalized or whom your initiative could marginalize.
- **1.4. Create working norms:** Agree on the standards, processes, and mindsets that will guide interactions among team members and mitigate biases.
- **1.5 Align on a Vision Statement:** Collaborate with your team to envision how your district might look in an integrated state that celebrates and supports diversity.

Step 1.1: Assemble Your Team

Core to Evolutionary Learning is deep participation by people with a variety of perspectives, particularly perspectives closest to the problem. Consider assembling a group of five to ten people who collectively:

1. **Possess diverse perspectives.** Include individuals who will experience the initiative at different stages and from different roles and who are close to the problem and the work of solving it (for example, teachers, school leaders, district staff members, students and families, and outside partners and collaborators). Team members should have varied racial, cultural, and socioeconomic perspectives to understand the problem better, strengthen solutions, and mitigate biases.
2. **Possess the required expertise.** Include individuals with relevant lived and practical experience and professional and, if available, research-based expertise in the subject matter and processes central to your initiative. Relevant areas of expertise include teaching and learning; diversity, equity, and inclusion; community engagement; communication; strategic thinking; project management; data management and analysis; and implementation.
3. **Ensure access to necessary resources.** Include team members who can provide dedicated time and connections to critical relationships, funding, and other resources.
4. **Bring relevant authority.** Team members should include individuals who: (1) have responsibility for directing and implementing the initiative; (2) have influence with members of the department or team within which the initiative will operate; (3) have access to relevant decision-making authority; and (4) can facilitate changes to organization-wide policies or practices to advance your initiative's progress.

There is no right team size. Ensure that you have sufficient viewpoints and bandwidth to plan and organize the initiative successfully, but that you keep the core team small enough to foster efficient discussions and decision-making.

The Integration Team Identification Template can help you identify team members. Note that you will need a district management team as well as external partners that you might work with, such as parent and student associations, consulting organizations, or community organizations. First, list the knowledge, skills, and expertise and the key stakeholder voices the team needs. Remember to include voices that bring racially, socially, culturally, and experientially diverse perspectives. Then list potential team members who fill each need, keeping in mind that one person may meet several needs. Once you name prospective participants, identify the steps you will need to secure their participation. Do your best to anticipate the team you will need, but don't let over-analysis keep you from getting started. As your work progresses, you will almost certainly find it necessary to adjust team composition to ensure your work succeeds.

Another tool that can help you assemble your team based on the priority areas in your integration plan is the [MOCHA Team-Building Framework](#) (Table 1). A MOCHA framework will help you: denote ownership of key initiatives or buckets of work; clarify roles and responsibilities; help your team members understand the role of external partners; and reduce the likelihood of "hidden labor".

MOCHA stands for:

- **Manager:** Supports and holds the owner accountable through delegation. Serves as a resource, shares feedback, asks probing questions, reviews progress, and intervenes if the work is off-track. This person may or may not be the owner's supervisor.
- **Owner:** Has overall responsibility for driving the project forward and coordinating steps to accomplish the goal. Ensures all the work gets done (directly or with helpers) and involves others (consults) meaningfully. There should only be one owner.
- **Consulted:** Provides input and perspective. May share resources or referrals.
- **Helper:** Implements aspects of the work and actively contributes to project success. The helper may own a significant area of work with its own MOCHA (we call this a cascading MOCHA).
- **Approver:** Signs off on the final product or key decisions. May be the owner or manager, though it can also be a person or group with a clear decision-making role on the project.

Table 1: MOCHA for a Magnet & Controlled Choice Project

Manager	Elementary and Middle School Superintendent [Will serve as a resource and hold the owner accountable to progress]
Owner	Director of Secondary [Will drive the middle school magnet & controlled choice project forward]
Consulted [Internal]	Middle School Principals [Will be consulted on the admissions set-aside criteria for middle schools]
Helper	Leap-frog Consulting [Will assist in implementing magnet programs]

Approver	Superintendent [Will sign off on the admissions set-aside criteria & chosen magnet programs based on families' preferences]
Co-Create	Parents and Students [Will choose the right accelerated magnet program for each middle school]
Consult [External]	Students [Will weigh in on the magnet program of choice they wish to attend beginning in 6th grade]
Inform	School Staff [Will be updated quarterly on developments around magnet programs and admissions criteria set-asides]

Step 1.2: Map Your Stakeholders

Now that you've brought together a preliminary team, you are in position to map the other stakeholders associated with your project. Mapping stakeholders early in your work will ensure that you plan and implement your initiative in a broadly participatory manner, which in turn will increase the likelihood that the initiative achieves its intended outcomes and does so equitably for all affected parties. Specifically, broad participation will:

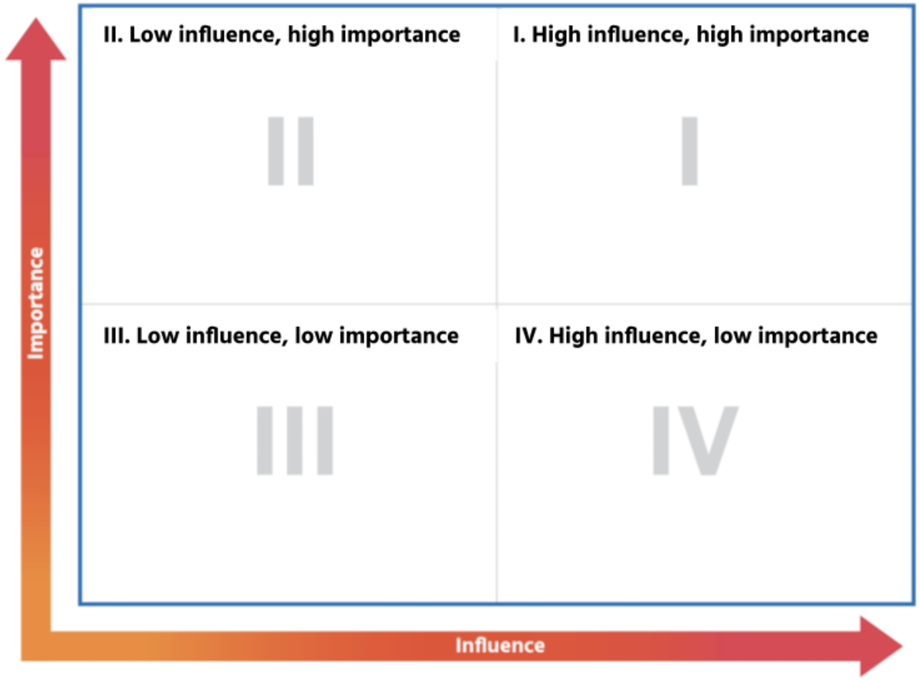
- Bring the breadth of perspectives, knowledge, and relationships that is essential in effectively defining, testing, implementing, and improving your initiative.
- Alert the team and help it respond to risks and potential conflicts that could dampen the initiative's success.
- Foster equity and democracy by enabling members of all affected communities to participate in defining the content and implementation, and in reporting information to them about the effect of the initiative.

The first step in stakeholder mapping is to list all stakeholders who influence or are affected by the initiative. Then select and apply an analytical framework to understand your stakeholders and consider how you want to involve them in developing and implementing the initiative. One commonly used tool for this type of analysis is an **Influence and Importance Matrix** (Figure 1).

An influence and importance matrix can help you determine whom you will need to support your initiative and whose needs you will need to consider in its design and implementation. For the purposes of this exercise, *influence* is defined as the degree to which a stakeholder can facilitate or hinder progress toward your goal; *importance* is the priority given to satisfying a stakeholder's needs. Follow the steps below to use this template.

- Brainstorm a list of stakeholders. Write each stakeholder on a sticky note.
- Position stakeholders on a two-by-two matrix based on their level of influence and importance.
- Consider stakeholders in quadrant I (high influence, high importance): What actions can your team take to harness these stakeholders' high degree of influence and importance?
- Consider stakeholders in quadrant II (low influence, high importance): What actions can your team take to ensure these stakeholders' needs are met given their low level of influence?
- Consider stakeholders in quadrant III (low influence, low importance): What actions can your team take to ensure these stakeholders' needs are met given their low level of influence?
- Consider stakeholders in quadrant IV (high influence, low importance): What actions can your team take to ensure these stakeholders' influence is used to benefit the initiative?

Figure 1: Influence and Importance Matrix



Step 1.3: Revisit the Composition of Your Team

Having mapped your initiative's stakeholders, revisit your team membership. You might find it helpful to check your team membership against these questions:

1. Does your team have the diverse perspectives, required expertise, access to resources, and authority it needs?
2. Are the stakeholders that have the most to gain or lose from your initiative represented?
3. Have you included those your organization or the broader school system has historically marginalized or whom your initiative could marginalize?

4. Are those with the most influence and importance represented or connected through someone on the team?

If not, make the necessary adjustments to your team listed in documents such as the Team Identification Template and/or MOCHA Template.

Step 1.4: Create Working Norms

Brainstorm working norms

In this step, agree on the standards, processes, and mindsets that will guide interactions among team members and between the team and the broader district or system. It is important to stop and examine your biases before you finalize your norms so that you can build the necessary norms to mitigate the biases your team might hold.

Explicit efforts to create norms can help you speed up or skip some of the usual stages of team development and achieve high-level team functioning quickly. Norms are agreements about how the team will work, communicate, and make decisions. All team members should draft and ratify norms together. A meeting that occurs early in the initiative is the best time to create norms. For the duration of the effort, norms should be easily accessible to everyone (for example, posted on chart paper in meeting rooms or stored online in a shared folder), and the team should revisit, amend, or supplement norms as necessary. Absent such norming, teams often experience early bouts of "storming," as discrepancies between team members' views of the goal and initiative create tension and cause delays. Common categories of norms to consider and questions to ask are:

- **Purpose:** How will we keep our initiative's goal front and center?
- **Equity:** How will we ensure we are advancing equity? How will we ensure equity of voice? How will we create an inclusive team environment?
- **Communication:** How will we share ideas? How will we offer feedback? How will we organize our conversations? How will we listen to one another? How will we encourage productive debate that is also respectful? How will we seek clarity when there is misunderstanding?
- **Dissent and debate:** How will we disagree while remaining agreeable? What protocol will we use to resolve conflict?

- **Engagement:** When will we work together or apart? How will we share the work?
- **Decision-making:** How will we make decisions? How will we get input from others not on the team?
- **Documentation:** How will we record our work steps and results?
- **Technology:** What uses are appropriate during team work time?

As a team begins to work together, team members will often act in ways that are mostly but not fully consistent with the norms the team initially detailed. Keep in mind that the norms you create at this stage are working norms. As you engage in your work, you will identify norms that do and do not work for your team. Dedicate time to revisiting your norms and reflecting on the ways your team has behaved consistently or inconsistently with its norms. This reflection can yield revisions, additions, and subtractions from the original set.

Interrogate your biases

People naturally bring their experiences to anything they do, yet these experiences bring with them individual and systemic biases. Facing this issue head-on is critical. Once your team is formed, use an early meeting to analyze and reflect on personal, collective, and institutional identities, perspectives, experiences, and biases that could impede the work.

Many tools and frameworks can guide this type of reflection, rooted in self-study of identities, study of institutional manifestations of inequity, and design thinking. We offer two illustrations supplemented by a short list of others.

Implicit Association Test from Project Implicit

An Implicit Association Test (IAT) uses rapid sorting to identify the direction and strength of biases that team members may not realize are at play or feel constrained to discuss, including biases about race, religion, and gender, among others. Teams can then use the Making Sense of Your IAT Results resource from the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University to understand common reactions to IAT results and identify effective responses.

Liberatory Design Card Deck from National Equity Project and Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University

The Liberatory Design Card Deck provides a design-thinking framework for addressing equity challenges and change efforts in complex systems. It identifies mindsets that support equity-centered solutions and key steps in an equity-centered design thinking process that has much in common with the Evolutionary Learning cycle.

Other resources

These resources, tools, and discussion guides also can facilitate team discussion of obstructive biases:

- Awareness Activities: Strategies and Preparation Icebreakers, and Introspectives (EdChange MultiCultural Pavilion)
- Basic Principles of Equity Literacy (Equity Literacy Institute)
- Common Beliefs Protocol (SPLC's Teaching Tolerance Project)
- Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education: Teacher Leadership (SPLC's Teaching Tolerance Project)
- Developing Community Agreements (National Equity Project)
- Equity and Justice Awareness Quiz (EdChange MultiCultural Pavilion)
- How the Best Bosses Interrupt Biases on Their Teams (Harvard Business Review)
- Interrupting Bias in Problem-Solving Teams (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)
- Using Visualization for Avoiding Unconscious Bias at Work (MindTools)

Once you have completed a team reflection on individual, institutional and team biases, revisit your working norms to see if you need to add some to mitigate these biases.

Step 1.5: Align on a Vision Statement

Now that your team is assembled and you have established working norms, align on a vision about how your schools might look if they were diverse and inclusive. A vision statement is the what, where, or who you want to become. It provides a long-term direction for the district and inspires and motivates others in your district to rally around the integration project.

Use this Integration Vision Worksheet individually and with your team to reflect on what might go into the vision statement for your district. Below is an example of a vision statement for an integration project:

Vision: In ten years, as a result of reducing disciplinary practices that disproportionately affect students of color, the school-to-prison pipeline will be disrupted and students of color will have more opportunities to learn and succeed in school.

Stage 2: Mapping Your System & Strategy

At this stage of the process, your team develops: 1) an understanding of the state of segregation in your district; 2) the impact of segregation on student achievement and experience; and the integration strategies you will use to reach your goals. This stage ensures that team members have a common understanding of what you are trying to do and how you will do it, are invested in the work ahead, and have identified sources of inequity and barriers to success that the initiative must overcome. This stage has five steps:

- **2.1. Examine the state of segregation within your district:** Collect data that illuminates the state of segregation in your district and incorporates the experiences of a diverse range of stakeholders.
- **2.2. Write a problem statement:** Define the problem by broadly describing the situation your integration project aims to alter.
- **2.3: Draft your goal statement:** Establish and clearly articulate the goal of the new initiative.
- **2.4: Analyze the causes of the identified issue:** Conduct systems and causal analyses to broaden your understanding of segregation within your district and the ways it gives rise to the inequities your project aims to address. Use these analyses to refine your problem statement and goal statement.
- **2.5. Conduct due diligence on integration strategies:** Research how other stakeholders and organizations have done similar work.
- **2.6. Develop your high-level strategy:** Describe, at a high level, the logical progression of work you expect to undertake to accomplish your goal.
- **2.7. Flesh out a detailed strategy:** Create a detailed logic model that makes clear how you plan to put your high-level strategy into action.

Step 2.1: Examine the State of Segregation Within Your District

Stage 2 begins with the crucial recognition that there is a system that by design (whether intentionally or accidentally or a combination of the two) creates the conditions that your integration initiative aims to change. Your job is to understand that system so you can begin to change it. Overlapping questions to ask at this step are:

- What people, conditions, or forces within your district significantly influence the state and impact of segregation that your integration initiative seeks to change?
- What people, conditions, or forces within your district are likely to be positively or negatively affected by the current state of segregation?
- What people, conditions, or forces outside your district significantly influence the state of segregation that your initiative seeks to change?
- How might you roughly map the relationships between all these people, conditions, and forces?
- What linkages exist between the people, conditions, and forces that have influence and the people who are marginalized or are otherwise negatively affected by the situation?

Understanding the system in these ways will allow you to create a strategy that: (a) addresses underlying causes of segregation and the inequitable impacts it produces rather than symptoms; (b) takes into account enabling and inhibiting conditions; (c) minimizes unintended consequences; and (d) identifies system improvements beyond your initiative that allow you to achieve your integration goal and sustain progress.

Getting the full benefit of this step requires meaningful participation by multiple internal and external stakeholders in addition to those on your team. Broad participation brings a diversity of perspectives, expertise, and real-life experiences to the mapping exercises. Of utmost importance is participation by the end users of the initiative—students, families, community members, and practitioners—especially when the end users are ones the system traditionally has marginalized or who your initiative could marginalize. This Examining Segregation Worksheet provides a template for reflecting individually and in your team on the state of segregation in your district and its impact.

Consider collecting three types of data to illuminate the state of segregation and its impact in your district and to incorporate the experiences of a diverse range of stakeholders: Satellite Data, Map Data, and Street Data.[3]

3 Adapted from Dugan, J. & Safir, S. (2021). Street data: A next generation model for equity, pedagogy and school transformation. Corwin publishers.

Satellite data can point you in a general direction for further investigation, for example by highlighting differences in student achievement outcomes by race. This can include information such as state test score data, enrollment and segregation trends, student attendance and suspension data, and graduation rate data.

While Satellite Data is your most zoomed-out view of an issue, **Map Data** can point you in a slightly more focused direction for further investigation. Map data typically focuses on a classroom or school level, and can include for example how students feel about classroom climate or whether or not curriculum materials reflect and affirm their identities. You can collect map data through student portfolios, satisfaction surveys, school climate surveys, and CR-S Scorecards.[4]

Street Data provides a more nuanced view of an issue through a focus on individual or group experiences, mindsets, or misconceptions. Street data can be collected through student interviews, focus groups, student work artifacts, or community interviews. Here's an example to illustrate how Street Data can complement other types of data.

[4] You can start with NYU's Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard Toolkit or the ED School Climate Survey.

District 93 is an Open Enrollment district and allows families to apply to any middle school in the district. They reviewed disaggregated enrollment data for their district and found that among the 12 schools in their district, two schools (MS 12 and MS 13) have over 40% Multilingual Learners; while three schools (MS 14, 15, and 16) have less than 3% of these students. Next, they set out to explore why this was the case. Using climate survey data for each school, they discovered that Multilingual Learners in MS 12 and 13 reported higher levels of satisfaction with the school climate than the Multilingual Learners in MS 14, 15 & 16. While the map data helped them zoom in a little more on what could possibly be happening, they still did not have enough of an understanding of all the reasons behind the segregation. The District then convened focus groups with teachers, families, and students in their district to gain a deeper understanding of what was happening in these schools. Through these focus groups, they found that the principals in MS 12 and 13 had partnered closely with families and students in their district to leverage community resources for English Language Learners. Students gave examples of being supported and challenged in advanced coursework. In contrast, in MS 14, 15, and 16, families of English Language Learners felt that their children were not challenged and the schools did not have sufficient resources to help them. Through Street Data, the district learned that through family and school partnerships, MS 12 and 13 had been able to attract and support more English Language Learners than the other schools.

As the example above illustrates, each type of data provides additional information that can be crucial to your understanding of the underlying issues in the district and possible strategies to address these. Allocate time and resources earlier on in your project to examine the state of segregation in your district through different types of data. Once you have completed this step, you can begin formulating a problem statement for your integration project.

Step 2.2: Write a Problem Statement

This step starts with a rough working statement of the problem your initiative seeks to solve. This problem statement should succinctly define the problem you are trying to solve by describing the state of segregation and its impacts in your district. A strong problem statement describes a problem that is:

- Within your sphere of influence.
- Based on the data you collected when examining the state of segregation in your district.

- Possible to address within the stated time frame and with a feasible amount of resources.
- Strategically connected to advancing equity and to the longer-term aims of the organization.
- Human and user-centered.

Here's a sample working statement that defines the problem:

Problem statement: In District 92 severe disciplinary actions such as suspensions are disproportionately higher for Black and Latinx students. Black and Latinx students, families, and teachers were also more likely to identify a negative school climate in aggregated school surveys. In focus group interviews, Black and Latinx students indicated a lack of trust and belonging and this could eventually be a factor in the lower student achievement scores for Black and Latinx students.

This broad statement captures overlapping problems identified through the three types of data. Through satellite data, the school was able to identify disaggregated rates of severe disciplinary action. Through Map Data, the district was able to identify school climate as a possible contributing factor. And through Street Data, the district was able to identify the impact of the suspensions and negative school climate on how students feel in the schools and possible areas of focus for their integration work. The statement also identifies the district's perspective on why this problem is important to solve.

Next, use your problem statement to draft a goal statement that meaningfully guides your integration project.

Step 2.3: Draft Your Goal Statement

Your goal drives your entire effort and should be inspiring, high leverage, specific, and measurable. It answers the question: **What are you trying to accomplish through your integration efforts?**

Your goal statement should directly address your problem statement, making it more specific than your vision statement as it is informed by the data you collected to understand the state of segregation in your district.

Goal statements should be equity-oriented

Your goal statement should make clear the ways in which you intend to advance equity on behalf of your district. Making equity implications clear from the outset will motivate everyone involved in and affected by the integration initiative. This is a crucial step in ensuring that equity priorities are not lost in planning and implementation.

Goal statements should be ambitious yet achievable with the time & resources available

Your goal statement should motivate everyone affected by the initiative. Your goal should be ambitious. How will your district be different as a result of this work? Why is it worth marshaling so many resources to pursue this effort? Developing your goal statement is a time to think in lofty, boundary-pushing terms. Of course, your goal also must be achievable within the time and with the resources available, but given those constraints, push your team to imagine how much it can achieve.

Goal statements should be clearly articulated

A vague goal statement may lead different team members to understand the project differently, proliferating conflicting variations on the initiative as the team divides up and does the work. Specificity, however, will help your goal statement provide a shared understanding of what the team is trying to achieve.

You can use these guiding questions to get specific:

- **Whom** will your initiative ultimately affect?
- **What** will your initiative achieve?
- **Where** will your initiative be seen? What communities or levels of the system will the initiative affect?
- **When** will your goal be achieved?
- **Why** is your initiative important?
- **How** does your initiative advance equity?
- **How** will you achieve your goal?

Goal statements should be measurable

Your goal statement must be measurable, so you can assess the extent to which you accomplish your aim. Concretely stating how you will know if you've been successful provides a common way to determine whether you have achieved your goal.

Here is a sample goal statement for a fictional district's integration initiative:

Goal statement: District 92's goal is to reduce severe disciplinary actions for all student subgroups with a specific focus on Black and Latinx students. The District will do this by initiating and implementing restorative justice training and CR-S Strategies by the Year 2024 in at least 70% of the schools in the District and in 100% of the schools by the Year 2025. By doing so, the District aims to improve the performance on state exams for Black and Latinx students by 30 percentage points at the end of the project.

You could also use a tool such as The Management Center's SMARTIE Goal-Setting Framework and Worksheet to guide goal development. Below are the key components of the SMARTIE framework:

Strategic: Reflects an important dimension of what your organization seeks to accomplish (programmatic or capacity-building capabilities)

Measurable: Includes standards by which reasonable people can agree on whether the goal has been met (by numbers or defined qualities)

Ambitious: Challenging enough that achievement would mean significant progress—a "stretch" for the organization

Realistic: Not so challenging as to indicate lack of thought about resources, capacity, or execution; possible to track and worth the time and energy to do so

Timebound: Includes a clear deadline

Inclusive: Brings traditionally marginalized people—particularly those most impacted—into processes, activities, and decision/policy-making in a way that shares power

Equitable: Seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression

Now that you have a problem statement and a goal, you will need to understand the underlying causes behind the problem so that you can develop specific strategies that will help you meet your goal.

Step 2.4: Analyze the Causes of the Identified Issue

Causal analysis tools bring discipline and structure to the messy process of linking cause and effect. Two commonly employed tools are the **5 Whys** and the **Fishbone Diagram**. Going back and forth between the two tools can help you uncover the causes underlying the problem you have observed. While your efforts to identify the state of segregation and its impact in your district are a starting point to understanding the problem at hand, going deeper with the use of these tools allows you to center your efforts on root causes.

5 Whys

In employing this technique, a 5 Whys template guides you to:

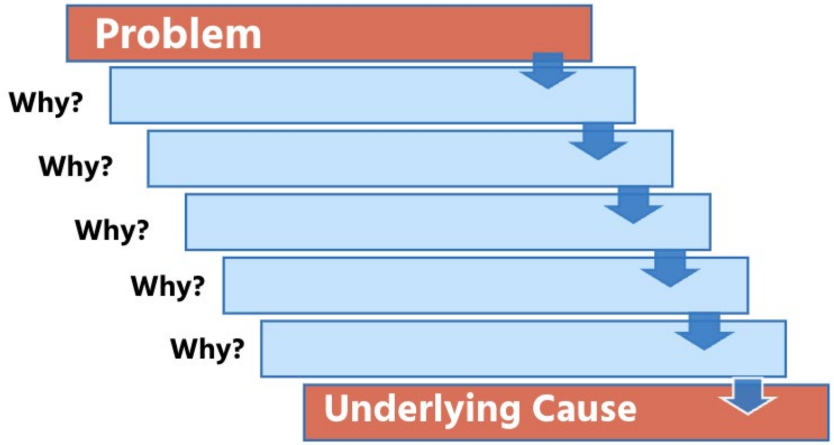
1. Identify the problem you want to solve and write it in the orange box on the top of the template.
2. Ask, "Why does this happen?" Write your response in the first box. Make sure the cause you articulate is grounded in evidence from external research, your knowledge of the system, and how your stakeholders experience the system.
3. Ask, "Why does that happen?" and write your response in the next blue box. Make sure the cause you articulate is grounded in evidence from external research, your knowledge of the system, and how your stakeholders experience the system.
4. Continue to ask "Why does that happen?" three more times, writing your responses in the rest of the blue boxes, drilling down to the underlying cause for the problem you observed.
5. Write the original or underlying cause in the orange box at the bottom of the template.
6. Of course, you can add more "Whys" if you feel there's more to learn or use fewer than five if you're sure you've found the root cause.

By asking “Why?” multiple times, the 5 Whys practice allows you to:

- Generate deeper levels of causes.
- Uncover unintended consequences.
- Avoid solving for symptoms rather than for the cause of the problem.

Once the **5 Whys** diagram (Figure 2) is completed, it will represent one causal chain underlying the problem you observed. As you use the 5 Whys technique, you will likely identify other causal chains to pursue. If you do, you might want to transition to using a Fishbone Diagram, which will let you explore and document many causal chains simultaneously. Keep in mind that the cause you ultimately decide to address need not be the root cause if another cause higher up in the chain is more easily tackled.

Figure 2: 5 Whys Diagram



Fishbone Diagram[5,6]

The **Fishbone Diagram** (Figure 3) offers a visual way to organize the problem's multiple causal chains. Each primary bone represents a causal chain. The primary cause is written in the box at the end of the bone, and sub-causes are written underneath the secondary bones jutting from the primary bone.

To conduct a Fishbone exercise, use this Fishbone Diagram template to:

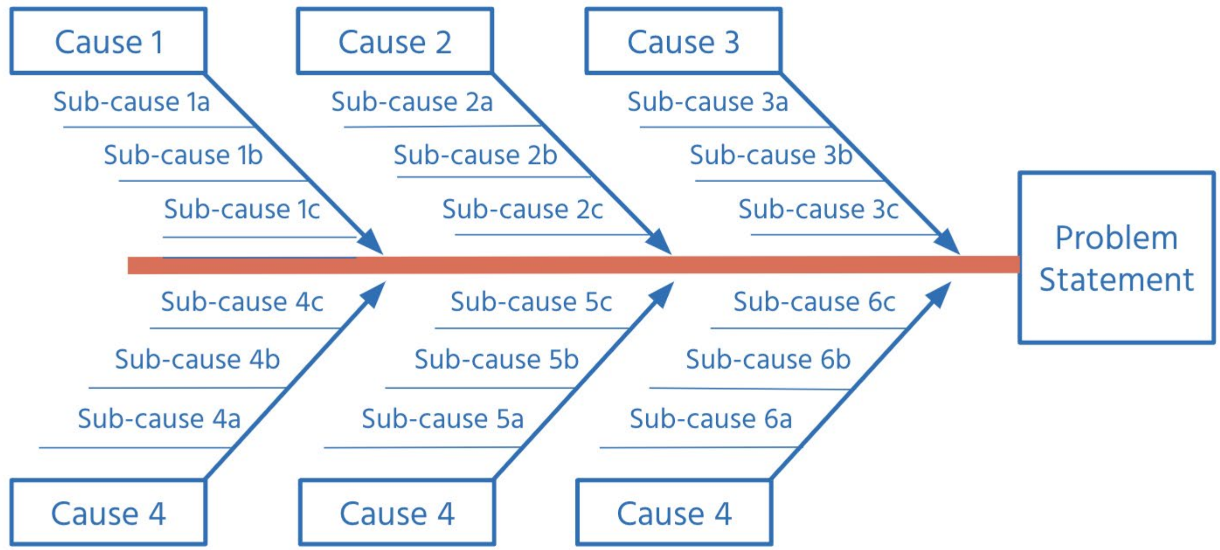
1. Insert your problem statement at the end of the arrow on the right side of the diagram.

5 Anthony S. Bryk, Louis M. Gomez, Alicia Grunow, and Paul G. LeMahieu, Learning to Improve: How America's Schools Can Get Better at Getting Better (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2015), 280.

6 Gerald J. Langley, Ronald D. Moen, Kevin M. Nolan, Thomas W. Nolan, Clifford L. Norman, and Lloyd P. Provost, The Improvement Guide: A Practical Approach to Enhancing Organization Performance (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009).

2. Brainstorm possible causes of the problem, writing each one on a sticky note. Use the 5 Whys to uncover as many causes of the problem as possible. Make sure the causes you articulate are grounded in evidence from external research, your knowledge of the system, and how your stakeholders experience the system.
3. Organize causes into major categories of factors contributing to the problem. Write the categories in the boxes at the ends of each primary bone coming off the main arrow.
4. Write the brainstormed ideas from Step 2 along the secondary bones of the appropriate categories. You may wish to apply 5 Whys analysis to each primary cause. If a brainstormed idea relates to more than one primary category, write it under each relevant category.
5. Add more bones as necessary.

Figure 3: Fishbone Diagram



Step 2.5: Conduct Due Diligence on Strategies to Address Segregation in Your District

Now that you have analyzed the causes for the problem, you are ready to gather ideas about how best to tackle the state and impact of segregation and achieve your integration goal. These ideas will eventually become the substance of your strategy. To source ideas, you might:

- Conduct interviews or focus groups with stakeholders outside your team to gather information about their views of the problem and goal statements and the strategies they believe should be employed to achieve the desired integration result.
- Conduct interviews with internal or external experts who have addressed analogous problems or studied other districts that have achieved similar integration goals.
- Conduct desktop research on how other districts have addressed analogous problems and achieved similar integration goals.
- Conduct brainstorming sessions with your team to develop ideas about how segregation might best be addressed.

- Review examples of [integrative composition strategies] and [resources to foster CR-S practices].

Step 2.6: Develop Your High-Level Strategy

You now are ready to craft a short statement capturing your high-level integration strategy. Doing so clarifies your team's strategic vision, creates a shared understanding of the initiative, and establishes a common language your team can use to communicate its work. You can use a Theory of Action framework (Figure 4) to articulate and visualize your high-level strategy.

A theory of action presents, at a summary level, an initiative's ultimately desired (guiding vision) impacts, its key intended outcomes, and the actions that will aim to achieve those outcomes. A theory of action is specific and focused and articulates both means and ends in the form of broad tactical strategies to attain organizational goals. An effective theory of action (a) represents your hypothesis of the causal relationship between actions, outcomes, and impacts, (b) is measurable, and (c) is relatively stable but subject to modification through an iterative learning process.

A theory of action often is written in this format: "If we do X (**actions**), then Y (**outcomes**) will occur. As a result, we will achieve Z (**impacts**)."

To articulate your theory of action, use this Theory of Action Template to:

1. Record your impact statement(s) in the "As a result" box. You can use your organization's long-term goal as your impact statement or the long-term goal of your initiative. (Long-term refers to impacts occurring, say, more than three years in the future.) Work to limit yourself to no more than 3 impact statements.
2. Write your shorter-term outcomes in "Then" boxes located in the middle row of the template. These outcomes are the key sets of results you intend to bring about as a result of your initiative and that you expect to lead over time to the impacts. These outcomes—which may be changes in attitudes, behaviors, and results—should be observable in the relatively near future (six to 24 months). In some cases, these shorter-term outcomes and your goal statement will be one and the same. In other cases, your goal statement will be more aligned with your impact statements. Either way, if there is a logical gap between the strategic actions you

identified and the outcomes you initially articulate, you might want to add one or two outcomes you expect to arise more immediately and lead to the outcomes you initially identified. Similarly, if your goal statement is overly broad, you might want to break it apart into a small number of specific outcomes and, possibly, multiple impacts. Work to limit yourself to no more than five outcome statements.

3. Write your high-level actions in the “If” boxes located in the top row of the template. These actions should support the integration strategies you identified in Section 2.5 that can help you achieve your integration goal. Limit yourself to no more than five high-level action statements.

4. Review the whole theory of action for (a) alignment with equity and responsiveness to your problem statement; (b) clarity and precision of language; (c) user-centered communication; (d) logic; (e) feasibility; and (f) power for inspiration. Adjust the strategy, and tweak the language as necessary.

Figure 4: Theory of Action for a Composition Initiative

If our district…			
Opens school choice programs to allow enrollment outside school zones	Offers rigorous academic programs at targeted middle schools to attract diverse family enrollment	Incorporates families' input into the creation of school choice and rigorous academic program offerings	Uses set-aside admissions targets for underrepresented demographic groups
Then…			
Families will apply to attend schools with rigorous program offerings outside their school zone		Choice middle schools and rigorous programs in these schools will become more diverse	
As a result…			
All students in our district will thrive academically			

Step 2.7: Flesh Out a Detailed Strategy

The theory of action is a crucial tool for clarifying and communicating your high-level strategy. More is needed, however, to provide a thorough, shared understanding of what the integration work will look like when implemented and for revealing opportunities for continual improvement and learning. Your team's next step, therefore, is to flesh out your high-level strategy into a detailed logic model. A logic model is a graphic depiction that presents the relationship between your initiative's activities and effects. It makes clear what your strategy will look like in action and what waves of outcomes and impacts you believe you will see as a result of your work. Creating this logic model will help your team say how you will operationalize your theory of action—how you will put it to use. Here's an example of what a logic model might look like. We provide detailed steps for how to get to this below.

Table 2: Sample Logic Model

Actions	Outcomes	Impact
Hold 3 Town Hall meetings in school year 2023-2024 to determine family choice programs for middle schools. Conduct a vote at the town halls for middle school programs and middle school admissions set-aside targets.	By May 2024, 90% of families surveyed (with a goal of capturing 85% of 5th-grade families) feel their input has been received and listened to regarding programming and admissions set-asides.	By September 2028, student enrollment data in our rigorous middle school programs will mirror the district's population demographics.
By March 2025, 95% of District 92's (D92) parents and families will attend a virtual or in-person Middle School Orientation in their native language. In the orientation, families will learn about the middle school admissions process, lottery instructions, and programming shifts for D92 middle schools.	By March 2025, we will have reached 95% of families and measured their understanding of and satisfaction with Middle School choices.	
By April 2025, 98% of incoming 6th-grade families select their top choices for middle school.	By June 2025, 6th-grade families are admitted to their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice of school.	
By May 2025, audit admissions and enrollment at every middle school against admission set-aside goals. Once analysis is complete, principals in partnership with the Director of Secondary will strategize admissions shifts between schools, as needed, to ensure all isolated and identified student subgroups receive their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice.	By August 2025, D92 will improve 6th-grade enrollment aligned to admissions set-aside goals.	

Here are the steps you can take to flesh out a detailed logic model such as the one above.

1. **Articulate your short-, medium-, and long-term goals.**
    a. Translate the guiding vision or "As a result" impacts from your Theory of Action Template into a series of concrete, observable impacts. Write these down in the "Impacts" column, listing the nearest-term impact at the top, the longest-term impact at the bottom, and others in rough chronological order in between.
    b. Translate the shorter-term outcomes ("Thens") from your Theory of Action Template into a series of concrete, observable outcomes. Sequence these outcomes from near to far term, with the nearest-term outcomes often being changes in attitudes, followed by changes in behaviors, followed by changes in results arising from improved behaviors. Write down these outcomes in the "Outcomes" column, listing the nearest-term outcome at the top, the longest-term outcome at the bottom, and others in rough chronological order in between.

2. **Articulate the actions needed to achieve your goals.**
    a. Translate the actions ("Ifs) from your Theory of Action Template into a series of concrete, observable actions, making it clear who is responsible for doing what in implementing your initiative. Sequence these actions chronologically and write them down in the "Actions" column, with those occurring first listed at the top.
3. **Identify priority areas of focus to organize key workstreams.**
    a. Review the drivers of segregation identified in the causal analysis you conducted in Step 2.4 and identify priority areas of focus to address each driver. Group sets of actions into key workstreams to clarify and bring coherence to the initiative.
    b. Ensure outcomes directly align with the actions that support each of your priority areas of focus.
4. **Review, revise, and refine the logic model.**
    a. Review the logic model as it stands, and check the overarching and intermediate causal pathways for missing components. Add components as needed to ensure that the causal path from action to final impacts is as complete as necessary for all team members to understand how the initiative will bring about the desired changes.
    b. Review the logic model for its alignment with your team's theory of action and for feasibility of implementation, iteratively adjusting the theory of action and the logic model as needed to ensure tight alignment between the two strategy documents and to ensure that the plan is ambitious yet feasible given the team's resources and context.

c. Refine the language of the theory of action and the logic model to be sure that both are clear, user-centered, and present a coherent picture of the equity-oriented strategy.

Stage 3: Defining Your Measurement Framework

Next, you will need to build a measurement framework to help you assess whether your hypothesis is working as you thought it would and producing the results you expected. The measurement framework is an essential component of any improvement effort. Without it, the task of discerning—for each part of your strategy—what is happening, if it's happening as you expected, and what and how to improve is difficult or impossible.

Measurement for improvement is different from measurement for accountability or research; it is done more frequently and, in less time, than other forms of measurement and it aims to increase and spread learning. Measurement for accountability assigns rank, ratings, or consequences, and measurement for research derives statistically valid theories.

Step 3.1: Determine What to Measure

The first step in building your measurement framework is to determine what parts of your strategy to measure. If resources allow, you might measure all elements of your strategy. When resources are constrained, however, it is sufficient to measure select elements of your strategy and to use indicators and instruments that are sensitive to variability in implementation and outcomes across multiple elements. These are likely to provide early warning of design or implementation flaws.

Aim to measure elements of your strategy that are:

- Indicative of how equitably you have designed and are implementing your initiative. Review your strategy to identify elements that are essential to delivering services equitably and advancing equitable outcomes.
- Critical to its success. Review your strategy to identify the elements that are essential to achieving your ultimate impact.
- Provide the clearest signal of whether you are on track. Identify elements that provide strong early signs of the efficacy of many prior steps or are crucial to the efficacy of many later steps.
- New to the organization or are a known area of weakness. Monitor elements of your strategy in which the likelihood of trouble is higher than usual, including new and previously untested elements and elements that have been the source of poor performance in the past.

- Easy to measure or are already being measured. In prioritizing elements to measure, especially ones that satisfy one or more of the above criteria, consider measurement cost. You may assign higher priority to elements for which implementation steps or results are easily observable and evaluated or that your organization already measures for other purposes. In the latter regard, inventory all information your organization routinely collects to see if any of it provides a direct or approximate measure of any key elements of your strategy.

Step 3.2: Identify Your Measures

Once you've identified elements of your strategy that you'd like to measure, the next step is to identify a set of measures, or indicators, aligned to those elements.

To identify measures for each element of your strategy that you decide to measure and their usefulness as a whole:

1. **Determine whether to measure each element's quality, quantity, or both.**
   - Qualitative measures indicate how well you did something. Quantitative measures indicate how much of something you did in a specified time period. When examining an informational newsletter regarding your integration initiatives, for example, a qualitative measure might assess the clarity, accessibility, and visual appeal of the newsletter; a quantitative measure might count the number of times the newsletter was opened.

2. **Specify measures for each element, aiming for measures that are:**
   - Tightly aligned to what they are measuring—that is, as close to the desired processes and outcomes as possible, recognizing that almost all measures are only proxies to some degree.
   - Feasible to implement—that is, relatively easy to put in place and embedded in regular work routines when possible.
   - Capable of consistently and accurately revealing variation (a) in quality or quantity of implementation and results and (b) between expectations and what actually happened.

3. **Review all the measures identified to be sure you have both process and outcome measures.**

- Process measures are often attached to action elements in your Logic Model. By indicating whether actions or steps in your initiative are occurring as planned, process measures provide "leading" or early indicators of progress toward expected outcomes and impact. Examples of process measures: the percentage of historically marginalized families who participate in community planning meetings and vote in favor of the integration initiatives the district proposes to the community.
- Outcome measures are often attached to outcome and impact elements in your Logic Model. They provide "lagging" or later evidence of your initiative's success and are measurable only after some or all parts of the initiative are enacted. Examples of outcome measures: survey results from families who attend town halls and feel that their input has been incorporated into the district's integration initiatives, and the percentage of families who apply and enroll in the district's new programs that aim to facilitate integration.

4. **Make sure the identified measures let you monitor disparities by race, ethnicity, and other identifiable categories in the service level and quality provided and in outcomes and impact.**

5. **Be sure you have taken full and appropriate advantage of measures already in use by your organization.**

6. **Decide whether to include balancing measures.**
    - Balancing measures indicate whether the initiative is causing new and unanticipated problems for your initiative or the broader organization. Focusing improvement on one area of a system may produce unintended effects in another area. For example, integrating schools and classrooms without ensuring the environments are culturally-responsive and equitable might unintentionally impede students' abilities to succeed in the newly integrated settings. It is helpful, therefore, to consider how elements of your strategy may affect other important activities and resources and to identify ways of measuring those effects to support later revision of the strategy to balance its prospective gains and costs more appropriately.

Step 3.3: Select Measurement Tools

With your measures tentatively in place, you now need to select measurement tools. Measurement tools are instruments used to collect, organize, and analyze the data required to assess your initiative's performance on each measure. Common tools for collecting data on measures include surveys, administrative records, standardized assessments, observation rubrics, and student work. There are a much wider variety of data organization, analytic, and storage tools for which you are encouraged to consult experts within and beyond your organization.

To select measurement tools, complete the following steps:

1. Identify tools already in use by your organization to collect information about any of the measures you have attached to elements of your initiative, or tools your organization uses to collect analogous information for other purposes. You may need to seek input from individuals outside your improvement team to get a full sense of tools already in use.

2. Research and brainstorm new tools you can use to collect information on measures for which your organization has no existing tools. Also, use this step to identify ways you want to revise or replace tools already in use. When possible, identify multiple tools of potential value to facilitate comparisons and reveal the pros and cons of different approaches.

3. In addition to considering data-collection resources, identify tools you will need to analyze, organize, and store the collected data. Consult people in your organization who are responsible for data management to see if their tools and personnel are available to your initiative for these purposes. If not, how do they recommend you address these needs?

4. Determine which data collection, organization, and analytic tools to use. Rely on research and conversations with stakeholders and experts inside and beyond your organization to be sure the tools you select are appropriate and accessible to those who will collect the data.

Once you have attached a measurement tool or a set of tools to each measure, review each tool and all of them as a whole to determine their effectiveness in collecting, organizing, and analyzing the desired information and their feasibility. In doing so, consider these questions:

1. What data will you collect? Consider the three types of data described in Step 2.1 above and consider including a balance of Satellite, Map, and Street data in your measurement framework.
2. How will you gain access to the data you want?
3. How will you collect the data?

4. Who will collect the data?
5. How long will it take to collect the data, given when and where it will be collected?
6. How will you analyze the data?
7. Who will analyze the data?
8. How long will it take to analyze the data?

In making final decisions, you will need to balance the value of the information—how accurately and consistently it tells you what you want to know—against the cost of collecting and analyzing it. No matter how valuable the information may be, it will not serve your purposes if it cannot feasibly be obtained and used. Be prepared, therefore, to let "good enough" suffice when perfection is unattainable. One benefit of measurement for improvement as opposed to measurement for accountability or research is that information and analyses do not need to be near-perfect to be useful.

The selection process described above may lead you to change your mind about what to measure and how to measure it. If you decide that particular measures or tools will be too difficult or costly to use, consider choosing either a different element of the initiative to measure, a different measure to use for the chosen element, or different tools to implement the chosen measure.

Step 3.4: Set Performance Expectations

The final step in Stage 3 is to set performance expectations for each measure you have identified. Performance expectations specify the level and quality of implementation steps (actions to which you have attached measures) and results (outcomes and impacts to which you have attached measures) that you expect to observe if the initiative is working as planned.

Performance expectations enable you to learn from the ongoing operation of your initiative how to improve it. If reality falls short of expectations, the gap between the two will reveal the problem early on and provide you with data for use in understanding why the gap exists and how to fix it. If results exceed expectations, that too is an occasion to examine why your expectations were inaccurate and to adjust plans and predictions accordingly.

To ensure that your performance expectations serve these purposes, be sure they:

- **Define success.** While being realistic, you should set expectations at a level you consider to be fully satisfactory. They should reflect what you expect to observe if your strategy is working as planned.

- **Reveal how equitably you are implementing your initiative & how equitable its impact is.** Be explicit about how you expect your initiative to affect historically marginalized people whom your strategy is likely to affect. Set success at a level that increases equity and corrects processes or activities that reproduce injustice or oppression.

- **Motivate action.** Performance expectations should be specific enough to give people a clear view of what they're aiming to do or accomplish. To inspire people to act, performance expectations must also be realistic to achieve. If they are not, they may not be taken seriously and may cause frustration.

- **Clarify progress.** Select performance expectations that align to your performance measures, and clearly reveal whether the actual level or quality of actions and results is at, below, or above what you expect.

Organize your performance expectations by setting targets for the **actions** that need to be completed in order to achieve desired **outcomes** that will **impact** the state of segregation in your district. Action targets, outcome targets, and impact targets can be defined as follows:

- **Action Targets:** Actions are key ongoing activities your district completes in service of your outcome targets. Setting action targets establishes the time by which you must complete key actions in order to meet each of your outcome targets.
- **Outcome Targets:** Outcomes name the short-term changes (that usually occur within a given school year) that you expect will ultimately lead to broader impact.
- **Impact Targets:** Impacts are broader changes that happen in a community as a result of multiple outcome targets being met.

Here is an example of incorporating action, outcome, and impact targets into the Logic Model that was introduced in Section 2.7:

Table 3: Action, Outcome, and Impact Targets

Action Targets	Outcome Targets	Impact Targets
Hold 3 Town Hall meetings **in school year 2023-2024** to determine family choice programs for middle schools. **Collect meeting agenda minutes** during each Town Hall and a **final vote count** for middle school programs and middle school admissions set-aside targets.	**By May 2024, 90% of families surveyed** (with a **goal of capturing 85% of 5th-grade families**) feel their input has been received and listened to regarding programming and admissions set-asides, **evidenced through an engagement survey** administered in Town Halls **and via school newsletters.**	**By September 2028, student enrollment data** in our rigorous middle school programs will **mirror the district's population demographics**.
By March 2025, 95% of District 92's (D92) parents and families will attend a virtual or in-person Middle School Orientation in their native language. In the orientation, families will learn about the middle school admissions process, lottery instructions, and programming shifts for D92 middle schools. **We will measure if we have reached 95% of families by tracking 6th-grade families in attendance** and reaching out to those that have not yet attended.	**By March 2025,** we will have reached 95% of families by both **tracking 6th-grade families in attendance** at the Middle School Orientations and reaching out to those that have not yet attended, as well as **measuring their understanding of and satisfaction with Middle School choices via a survey.**	
By April 2025, 98% of incoming 6th-grade families properly fill in the lottery form to select their top choices for middle school.	**By June 2025, 100% of isolated 6th-grade families are admitted** to their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice of school.	
By May 2025, audit admissions and enrollment at every middle school against **admission set-aside goals**: 52% FRPL, 12% special education, 13% living in temporary housing. Once analysis is complete, principals in partnership with the Director of Secondary will strategize admissions shifts between schools, as needed, to ensure all isolated and identified student subgroups receive their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice.	**By August 2025,** D92 will **increase from 70% to 95% of 6th-grade enrollment aligned to admissions set-aside goals** of 52% FRPL, 12% special education, 13% living in temporary housing. This will be **measured by a preliminary demographic analysis of 6th-grade class composition** at each middle school in May 2025 before acceptance letters are sent to families, allowing the Director of Secondary and middle school Principals to make shifts to admissions, as needed.	

Here is an example of a Logic Model and Target-Setting Template that can be used for integration plans.

Keep in mind that performance expectations may need to change over time. As you learn more about your strategy and capabilities, revisit your expectations.

Stage 4: Implementing & Observing

At this stage of Evolutionary Learning, your team puts its detailed strategy and targets into action, fleshing out and implementing your plan and measuring whether your strategy is being implemented as planned and achieving desired progress. Measurement is an essential component of any integration strategy. Without it, the task of discerning—for each part of your strategy—what is happening, if it's happening as you expected, and what and how to improve is difficult or impossible.

This stage has the following steps:

- **4.1. Generate your project plan:** Map out the tasks necessary to meet all Action, Outcome, and Impact Targets, and assign owners and deadlines for each.
- **4.2. Implement and track your progress:** Put your project plan into action and monitor progress with your implementation team.

Step 4.1: Generate Your Project Plan

The next step at this stage is to create a project plan that will serve as a roadmap of the key actions and tasks that need to be completed in order to implement your integration initiative. You identified actions in Step 2.7 and action targets in Step 3.4 above. Actions and action targets are a series of concrete, observable steps based on your Theory of Action. Sequence these actions chronologically, and write them down in the "Action Target" column, with those occurring first listed at the top. Next, capture a detailed list of tasks that need to be completed in order to meet the action target. Table 4 provides an example of an action target from Step 3.4, with related tasks needed to meet the action target.

Table 4: Project Plan

Action Target	Tasks	Owner	Deadline	Status	Tools	Successes/Challenges
Hold 3 Town Hall meetings in school year 2023-2024 to determine family choice programs for middle schools. Collect meeting agenda minutes during each Town Hall and a final vote count for middle school programs and middle school admissions set-aside targets.	Prepare deck in English and Spanish for family engagement town hall meetings.	Director of Secondary	8/31/2023	**Completed**	Orientation PowerPoint (English & Spanish version)	We tested different times for each town hall to see which yielded the highest engagement. Meetings directly after school were the most popular. Having materials translated into various languages seemed to increase attendance to town hall meetings
	Calendar town hall meetings with all schools, sharing with all 5th-grade families.	Secretary to the Director of Secondary	9/30/2023	**On Track**	Town Hall Registration Form & Calendar Invites	TBD
	Calendar principal update meetings after townhalls	Secretary to the Director of Secondary	9/30/2023	**To Do**	Accepted Calendar Invites	TBD
	Create program content for 3 town hall meetings	Director of Secondary's Assistant	10/13/2023	**To Do**	Orientation PowerPoint, Presenter/Speaker Notes, Handouts/Flyers, Voting Form, & Satisfaction Survey	TBD

Creating a project plan at this stage is critical because it:

- Surfaces and forces you to confirm resources or other prerequisites or dependencies that are critical to your initiative's success.
- Requires your team to be specific and precise—to align everyone's expectations—about what steps need to be taken, who will take them, and how long they will take positions for you to effectively monitor the progress of your initiative.

You may want to identify a person to act as project manager. This person can lead the process of drafting the project plan and vetting it with your team. Often, a project manager is also responsible for managing the team's meeting schedule and creating and distributing meeting agendas.

To create your project plan:

1. Choose a format and platform that works for your team. Whether you choose low-tech options or an advanced project-management application, make sure the system works for the team as a whole and for the project manager in particular.

2. Organize the plan via the priority areas of focus you identified in Section 2.7 to address each driver of segregation in your district. This can categorize your efforts into key workstreams.

3. Lay out all the intermediate tasks that need to be completed in order to meet your Action Targets.

4. Check to be sure your project plan includes data-collection and monitoring tasks that are necessary to understand whether or not your targets are met. Indicate the tools you will use to complete tasks and measure your progress.

5. Identify individuals with responsibility for each step.

6. Develop deadlines for all tasks.

7. Identify progress descriptions that convey the information you want (not yet started, on time, slightly behind, very behind, complete).

8. Because your integration initiative will likely last many school years and later-stage initiatives might not yet be clear, adding detail for later stages after your early work gives you greater clarity on the successes and/or challenges your integration work faces.

Here is an Integration Project Plan Template with examples included of the tasks to be completed, owners, deadlines, status updates, tools, and progress related to an Action Target.

Step 4.2: Implement & Track Your Progress

Now you are ready to put your initiative into action.

Complete the implementation tasks outlined in your Project Plan based on the deadlines for each. Monitor progress and indicate whether tasks are progressing as expected or have fallen behind schedule. Note the tools you are using to complete and measure progress on each task. When deadlines pass, record the success(es) or challenge(s) faced when approaching a given task. This will help you understand what contributed to meeting or not meeting your Action Targets and how that affects whether or not you meet your Outcome Targets at the end of the school year.

To assist your efforts in measuring your strategies throughout implementation, leverage resources such as the National Center for Education Statistics' Guide to Collecting and Using Disaggregated Data on Racial/Ethnic Subgroups and data from Integrate NY.

To assist your efforts in measuring CR-S strategies throughout implementation, here are some tools you can use, organized by strategy:

- Creating a Welcoming & Affirming Environment: Panorama's Student Survey User Guide
- Identifying Inclusive Curriculum & Assessment: NYU's CRE Curriculum Scorecard, Tricia Ebavria's Inclusive Literacy Infographic, Lee & Low Books' Classroom Library Questionnaire, NYU's STEAM Curriculum Scorecard
- Fostering High Expectations & Rigorous Instruction: EdTrust's Guide to Rigorous Learning for All Students
- Engaging in Ongoing Professional Learning & Support: Education Northwest's LEAD Tool

Stage 5: Evaluating & Refining Strategies

At this stage of Evolutionary Learning, your team evaluates outcomes and identifies opportunities for improvement to problem solve and adjusting course when observed results differ from those you expected. These steps will ensure that your team is continually building its capacity to improve the initiative's design and implementation in order to achieve your stated integration goals.

This stage has two steps:

- **5.1. Create a performance report:** At the end of your first school year of implementation, evaluate and record your performance.
- **5.2. Analyze and act on results:** Study the outcomes and based on your performance, modify your integration initiative's design, implementation, and targets as needed in effort to improve your results in the next school year.

In Stage 4, you created a project plan and began implementing. In Stage 5, you will evaluate your outcomes, and identify opportunities for improvement in disciplined cycles of inquiry to move from opportunity to action.

Together, all the steps in this stage make up the problem-solving cycle. As with all the others, this stage prioritizes learning, especially when reality deviates from expectations. Since the strategy you have implemented is a hypothesis about what will work best in your context, it demands constant observation and testing. In this stage, you make good on the commitment to avoid deploying strategies that do not work and to instead continually learn and employ strategies that do.

Step 5.1: Create a Performance Report

At the end of the first school year of implementation, the first step is to create a performance report in order to measure and record your outcomes and evaluate your results. Evaluating how results differ from expected outcomes is critical to learning and identifying areas to improve your integration strategy.

To create your performance report:

1. Choose a format and platform that works for your team. Whether you choose low-tech options or an advanced application, make sure the system works for the team as a whole and for the project manager in particular.
2. Organize your performance report via your priority areas. These are the drivers of segregation you identified via your causal analysis and used to categorize your efforts into key workstreams.
3. Name the integration strategy you implemented to support your efforts in meeting your outcome targets in this priority area. This will help you identify whether a particular integration strategy is well-suited to meet your district's needs or if you might consider implementing a different integration strategy.
4. Enter all of the outcome targets you set in your detailed strategy.
5. Identify performance descriptions that convey the information you want (met, partially met, not met).
6. Add space to analyze performance by sharing evidence that explains why you met, partially met, or did not meet your outcome targets. Recording such evidence enables you to recognize patterns across the types of efforts that work well in meeting your district's needs and those that fall short.
7. Add space to evaluate your results by articulating how your performance towards meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting your outcome targets will inform your integration plan and strategy for the next school year.

Here is a Performance Report Template, which is designed to help you measure your performance towards meeting your Outcome Targets and understand where results differ from expected outcomes. If you are implementing both composition and CR-S strategies in your integration work, this template provides separate reports for both strategies. Toggle between the tabs at the bottom of the worksheet to access the composition strategy performance report and the CR-S strategy performance report.

Step 5.2: Analyze & Act on Results

Now put your performance report to use. Record whether you met, partially met, or did not meet the outcome targets set in each of your priority areas, and list the integration strategy you implemented to support your effort. Analyze the data you collected and measured throughout implementation to share evidence as to why you met or did not meet targets. Evaluate how your results will inform your integration plan and strategy for the next school year, and focus on improving the areas where your results did not align with your targets.

Table 5 displays an example of the Performance Report Template for composition strategies.

Table 5: Performance Report Template Example

Priority Area:	Integration Strategy:	Outcome Targets:	Progress Towards Targets:	Explanation of WHY target was met, partially met, or not met:	How Results Inform Plans for Next Year:
Increase Access to Rigorous Middle School Programs	Controlled Choice	By March 2023, we will have reached 95% of families by both tracking 6th grade families in attendance at the Middle School Orientations and reaching out to those that have not yet attended, as well as measured their understanding of and satisfaction with Middle School choices via the survey.	Met	The management team recorded attendance by 95% of families, and gauged their understanding and satisfaction levels by 95% of families completing the survey.	We will adjust our middle school choices as needed based on family feedback collected in the survey.
	Controlled Choice	By August 2023, District 92 will increase from 70% to 95% of middle schools' 6th grade enrollment aligned to admissions set-aside goals of 52% FRPL, 12% special education, 13% living in temporary housing. This will be measured by a preliminary demographic analysis of 6th grade class composition at each MS in May 2023 before acceptance letters are sent to families.	Not Met	Only 3 out of 12 (25%) of middle schools met the admissions set-asides. There was not an adequate number of isolated students who applied to the predominantly white middle schools in our district because of transportation.	We will revamp our family orientation to include clarity of bussing and transportation support for children who attend a middle school outside of their neighborhood.

Stage 6: Meaning-making & Spreading the Word

Step 6.1: Preserve & Disseminate What You Learned

This section describes ways to document, reflect on, and share the story of what you learned.

Document & reflect on what you learned

Set aside time at key moments and at the close of your effort to carefully document and reflect on what you have learned about what worked and what did not. Compiling your team's meeting agendas and minutes, theory of action, logic framework, project plan, measurement framework, and the data and analyses they generated, along with records of how your team problem-solved issues that the measurement framework revealed, will prepare you for these reflective moments. Retaining the various templates your team filled out in Stages 1 to 5, as well as email chains, texts, and other running records of insights along the way, can also help. Use the guided questions in Tab 1 and Tab 2 of this Iterative Planning Questionnaire to reflect on what you learned.

In considering how to reflect on and document learning about your initiative and Evolutionary Learning, you should:

- Resist the temptation to skip this step to save time, thinking "My team members view the situation as I do. It's obvious." Even among close team members, memories and insights differ in ways that, when reflected upon, generate productive insights. Additionally, keep in mind how useful your learnings are to others in and beyond your organization who have not had an opportunity to "view the situation."
- Focus on process (e.g., team formation and efforts to widen and enrich stakeholder participation) as well as decisions reached, steps taken, and results obtained.
- Ask what you learned, and what more you can learn, from strategies and processes that failed—which often harbor exceptionally valuable information—as well as ones that worked as planned.

- Consider whether time and resources permit you to analyze and display data from your measurement framework in additional ways that are more informative to you and more useful to others.
- Take time to make sense of the information you've compiled, seeking insights from each step along the way, as well as patterns and cross-cutting inferences that smaller insights may yield in the aggregate.

Preparing short summaries (one to two pages) of the team's conclusions reached in both components of the Iterative Planning Questionnaire is an efficient way to preserve the team's findings for its own use, orient new team members, inform others about the initiative, and spread/model Evolutionary Learning. The team should also store results of its reflections and underlying data in a manner that ensures the security and accessibility of the information and accords with federal and state law.

Share your story

A good way for your team to share lessons learned and spread ideas across your organization is through a narrative of how your team worked together, what you accomplished, and what others might learn from the experience. The team can use the diversity of its members to help it decide (and to model) how comprehensively to frame the story, how widely to project it within and beyond the organization, and how to creatively spread and collect feedback from it. Creating meaningful and interactive opportunities for colleagues and external stakeholders to learn about the team's strategy and outcomes, use Evolutionary Learning, ask questions, offer feedback, and join later iterations of the work that will likely pay dividends in the future.

In taking a broader approach to the story, you might aim to do the following (not necessarily in this order):

- Explain the problem the initiative addressed and why the organization needed to address it.
- Describe team members and how they were recruited.
- Explain the Evolutionary Learning process and how the team problem-solved to improve the initiative.
- Give an honest and balanced account of what was—and was not—accomplished.

- Tell stories about people and communities affected by the problem and solution and how their participation in defining and tackling the problem changed their relations to one another and to the organization.

In telling the story, the team might also:

- Celebrate successes and recognize how the team worked together and the contributions of members, external stakeholders, colleagues, and organizational leaders.
- Explain failure as a mechanism for collective sensemaking, not personal shame.
- Illustrate how particular failures turned out to be productive, revealing fissures in organizational systems, as well as gaps in knowledge about what client communities need and how to meet those needs, how context matters, and how success can be measured.
- Show how Evolutionary Learning can reveal, reinforce, and recommit organizations and stakeholders to shared values, goals, and actions.

Step 6.2: Sustaining & Enlarging the Impact of Your Initiative

Your team's After Action Review and other reflections on its strategy and processes may generate ideas for (1) sustaining your initiative's impact, (2) enlarging your initiative's impact, and (3) for implementing Evolutionary Learning more effectively and spreading it throughout the organization. This section describes steps you can take to sustain and enlarge the impact of your initiative. Section 6.3 addresses steps to spread Evolutionary Learning as a governance model.

Sustain the impact of proven strategies and improvement ideas

Table 6 inventories some steps your team may take to sustain what worked and what you learned from failure in the initiative and in testing potential solutions to problems your measurement framework exposed.

Table 6: Actions to Help Sustain Your Initiative

Operational Area	Action
Strategy	• Revise your theory of action, logic model, and measurement framework based on what you learned. • Extend your due diligence, collecting additional ideas and information from peer organizations, colleagues, and external experts. • Align the effort to and embed it in the organization's five-year plan or equivalent. • Conduct a risk analysis to minimize barriers and maximize impact.
Finance	• Work with colleagues to include the effort in the organization's budget. • Develop a funding plan to sustain the effort.
Regulatory	• Confirm compliance of the effort with existing organizational, local, state, and federal guidelines, contractual obligations, and funding expectations. • Secure approval of organizational leadership to continue the effort. • Align the effort with the organization's performance-management systems.
Talent	• Revise roles and responsibilities to include new activities related to the effort. • Conform improvement ideas to what existing workloads make possible. • Hire and train staff needed to sustain the effort.
Communication	• Plan to communicate the continuation of the effort to colleagues and stakeholders. • Draw on successes, including the initiative's ability to reveal and address trouble spots, to support continuation of the plan.
Infrastructure	• Integrate data derived from the effort in the organization's data collection, analytic, and management processes and systems. • Assemble tangible resources and technology needed to sustain the effort.

Enlarge the impact of proven strategies and improvement ideas

The team should also consider how to enlarge the impact of the initiative's successes by extending operations or learning to other people, sites, times, or conditions. Below are examples:

- **Actors:** Increase the number or categories of stakeholders participating in or benefited by the initiative.
- **Sites:** Expand the effort within current schools, classrooms, or locations, or test or apply it in new ones.
- **Duration:** Extend the length of time the initiative is implemented.
- **Conditions:** Test the initiative in contexts in which course subjects, values, beliefs, and practices are different.

Enlarging impact also can mean aligning your strategy or solution to organizational priorities (key populations, subjects, or sites and realities (limited budgets, time, or capacity). Possibilities include:

- **Actors:** Cut the number of staff needed to implement the initiative or limit it to subpopulations in need.
- **Sites:** Reduce unit costs per school, classrooms, or location, including through economies of scale.
- **Duration:** Lower the amount of time needed to prepare and launch the initiative.
- **Conditions:** Use the measurement framework to find contexts in which the initiative works best or costs less.

Use the processes and tools from Evolutionary Learning Stages to help your team sustain and enlarge the impact of its initiative via five steps:

Step 1: Reorganize your effort

Step 2: Remap your system and strategy

Step 3: Redefine your measurement framework

Steps 4 & 5: Evaluating & refining strategies

Step 1: Reorganize your effort

- Reevaluate team membership. As you extend operations and impact to new sites or populations, remap your initiative's stakeholders and adjust the team to be sure it has the necessary authority, expertise, and perspectives of individuals and communities whom the effort will affect and otherwise marginalize.
- Reset goals and norms. Sustaining and enlarging impact presents challenges, triggers biases, and affects staff and communities different from those involved in developing a novel strategy. Use the Stage 1 tools and processes to revise accordingly your goal statement, efforts to mitigate bias, and working norms.

Step 2: Remap system & strategy

- Update your theory of action and logic model. To sustain your initiative, use insights from your measurement framework, performance report and After Action Review to adjust your hypotheses about desired impacts and how actions generate outcomes that lead to those impacts.
- Remap the system. Updated hypotheses about your initiative-and steps to extend it to new communities, contexts, and sites-may mean the system in which it operates is different, requiring a new system map.
- Restate the problem. An updated understanding of your initiative and new contexts in which it operates may also require revisions to your problem statement.
- Extend your theory of action and logic model. Even as updated by learning from your initiative's initial run, hypotheses about desired impacts and how to achieve them will have to change further in accordance with steps to enlarge the initiative's impact.

Step 3: Redefine your measurement framework

- Update your measurement tools. Glean insights from experiences implementing and acting on data collected via your measurement framework to identify better logic model elements to track for early signs of trouble, stronger measures of quantity and especially quality, more practical data-collection and analytic tools, and more appropriate performance expectations.
- Extend your measurement tools. Identify new logic model elements to track and develop associated measures, data tools, and expectations, aligning them to people, communities, contexts, and sites the enlarged initiative will reach.

Steps 4 & 5 Evaluate & Refine

- Address problems your reflections expose. Catalog unexamined problems that your measurement framework and After Action Review reveal. Catalog improvement possibilities that prior implementation and short-cycle tests did not fully explore and difficulties encountered in rethinking your initiative's high-level hypotheses, actions, outcomes, and impacts. Repeat Stage 2 processes and tools-problem prioritization, causal analysis, solution identification, testing, and analysis-to problems on the list.
- Treat sustaining and enlarging your initiative as a problem to be solved. The same processes and tools can help you prioritize and tackle challenges to maintaining and extending your initiative.

Prioritize expansion steps

To select among ideas for sustaining and expanding the impact of your initiative, your team should consider the following:

1. **Equity:** How important to advancing equity is the proposed next step compared with others? Who seeks to gain the most from the proposed next step? Who will be negatively affected?
2. **Impact:** To what extent does the proposed next step help your broader organization pursue its mission or solve a problem important to it? How will the step affect other departments, teams, and projects?

3. **Urgency:** How important to the success, stability, and expansion of your initiative is the proposed next step compared with others? How soon must the need be addressed?
4. **Feasibility:** Is there the funding, time, expertise, staff, and other conditions needed for the proposed next step?
5. **Interest:** Is there a desire among colleagues and stakeholders to pursue the proposed next step?

Seek feedback from organizational leaders and stakeholders on your list of prioritized improvement steps, describing your initiative's results and process and stakeholder input. Secure leaders' and stakeholders' support in designing, implementing, and testing your improvement ideas.

Finally, start at the beginning and organize your effort for the next cycle of your integration work in the district! Remember that this Evolutionary Learning approach can be used not only for your integration project, but also for activities as simple as maximizing the impact of small changes in procedures and as complex as reorganizing your school system's existing overall plan of operations.

Teaching Cases

Here are case studies that highlight key learnings from the work of three districts that participated in the NYSIP-PLC grant:

- District 15: Mobilizing Family and Community Participation to Support Sustainable Integration Projects
- District 3: Using Street Data to Inform Sustainable Strategies in Integration Work
- District 24: Using a Rigorous and Culturally Responsive STEM Magnet Program to Reduce Segregation