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Data Base Decision Making in The Upper Grades (Grades 6–12)

Using a Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

June, 2026

Haley Bryant and Tiffany O'Neil

Pulse Check

Where is your building on their literacy journey with data?

1

2

3

Today's Objectives

- Participants will understand the purpose of collaborative problem-solving and its role in efficient, schoolwide literacy decision-making in a school's I-MTSS.
- Understand multiple sources of data by differentiating among system-level, adult implementation, and student-level data.
- Participants will demonstrate understanding of the Tier 1 problem-solving protocol by actively engaging in each step

Ohio's Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Providing effective instruction for all students through academic and non-academic supports.

Student Learning Components

Adult Implementation Components

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Ohio's Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports

STUDENT COMPONENTS

- Universal Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Continuum of Supports
- Team-Based Problem Solving
- Data-Based Decision Making

PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

Shared Leadership

Professional Capacity

Communication and Collaboration

Collaborative Problem-Solving

- A structured process for data-based decision-making
- Often follows a Plan–Do–Study–Act cycle
- Creates a common routine for identifying and solving problems
- Helps teams focus more time on solutions for students

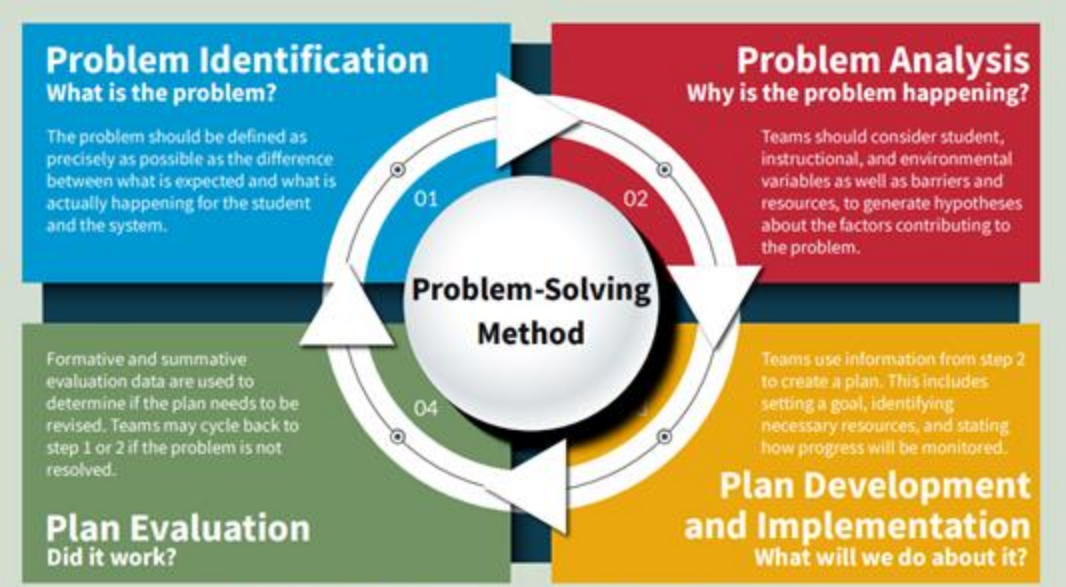

Figure 11. Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

[p. 43 Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy]

Purpose of a Schoolwide Assessment System

Supports literacy decision-making across a school

Uses multiple data sources

Includes adult implementation data (walkthroughs), student data and stakeholder input

Helps guide both system-level and student-level decisions.

Adult Implementation Data

Adult behaviors strongly influence student outcomes

Instructional leaders monitor teaching practices

Walk-through tools provide feedback to teachers

Supports collaboration to improve instructional practices

Four Types of Student Assessments

UNIVERSAL SCREENER

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

PROGRESS MONITOR

OUTCOME EVALUATION

- **Each type of data answers** a different instructional question.

Universal Screening

Question Answered: Which students are at risk?

- Brief standarized measures of essential literacy skills
- Identifies students who may not meet reading outcomes
- Conducted 1-3 times a year
- Helps teams identify problems early

Diagnostic Assessments

Question Answered: What does the student need to learn next?

- In-depth assessments linked to instruction
- Given to some students after screening results
- Determines the root cause of reading difficulty

Progress Monitoring

Question Answered: Is progress being made?

- Repeated measures over time
- Evaluates effectiveness of instruction or intervention
- Allows teams to adjust instruction quickly

Outcome Evaluation

Question Answered: Did we meet our goal?

- Summative assessments of grade-level standards
- Often states tests, course exams, or achievement tests
- Used to evaluate overall success of instruction

Other Student Data to Consider

Attendance
Monitor regularity

Behavioral incidents
Track events

Early warning signs
Identify at-risk indicators

Graduation rates
Measure success

Stakeholder Input

Students

Feedback on learning experiences, engagement, and school climate

Teachers

Insights on curriculum, instructional strategies, and resource needs

Parents

Perspectives on child's progress, communication, and school involvement

Community

Input on partnerships, workforce readiness, and local priorities

Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

Scope: School-Wide | Tier One | Student Focus

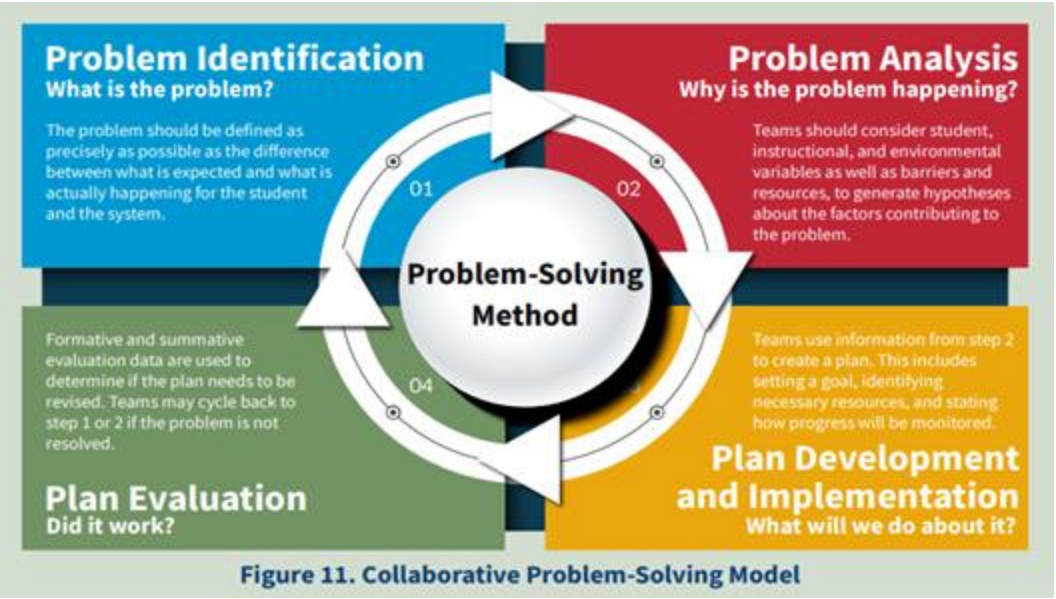

Figure 11. Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

School-Wide
Tier One
Student

Tool 3: Building Leadership Team Problem-Solving Template

TIER 1 PROBLEM SOLVING

School: _____ **Grade level:** _____

Screening period (circle one): **Fall** **Winter** **Spring**

Team Members:

Meeting Purpose: Determine effectiveness of classroom literacy instruction in Tier 1.

STEP 1: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION (WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?)

Based on screening data, is our core program sufficient for most students at our grade level (80% or more above benchmark goals)?

a) Review and analyze ***current*** benchmark screening data. Record percentages below:
b) Review and analyze ***previous*** benchmark screening data. Record percentages below:
c) Using current and previous benchmarking data, set a ***goal*** for next benchmarking period. Record below:

	Previous Screening	Current Screening	***Goal** for Next Screening
% *At or Above Benchmark*			
% *Below Benchmarks*			
% *Well Below Benchmark*			

d) Review other available grade-wide data (e.g. state test, in-curriculum assessments, etc.). Determine percentage of students meeting minimum proficiency standards as set by the district

Tool 3: Building Leadership Team Problem-Solving Template

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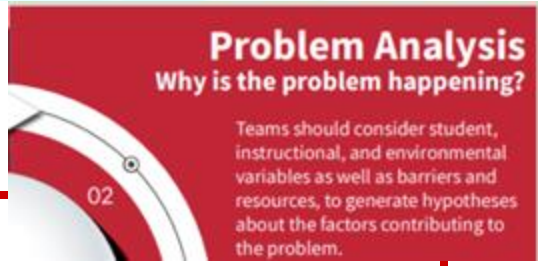
b) Review and analyze ***previous*** benchmark screening data. Record percentages below:
c) Using current and previous benchmarking data, set a ***goal*** for next benchmarking period. Record below:

	Previous Screening	Current Screening	***Goal** for Next Screening*
% At or Above Benchmark	39%	51%	Goal: 65%
% Below Benchmarks			
% Well Below Benchmark			

d) Review other available grade-wide data (e.g. state test, in-curriculum assessments, etc.). Determine percentage of students meeting minimum proficiency standards as set by the district Team looked at 5th grade OST, scores, curriculum assessments, attendance



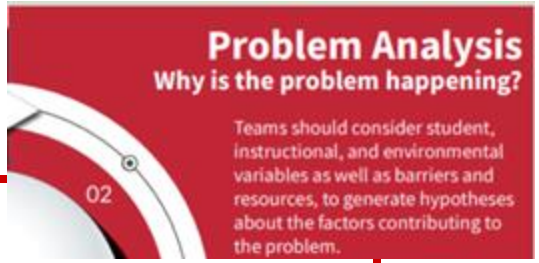
STEP 2: PROBLEM ANALYSIS (WHY IS IT HAPPENING?)

a) Determine the common priority skill: Use data to prioritize which big idea of reading is currently the most important ***common instructional need*** for most students *(circle one):*

Skill	Word Recognition	Oral Reading Fluency	Vocabulary	Reading Comprehension
Measure				
% Above Benchmark				

b) Determine how much we need to enhance the curriculum/instruction of the **priority skill**.

	Previous % At/Above Benchmark	Current % At/Above Benchmark
Priority Skill:		



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Skill	Word Recognition	Oral Reading Fluency	Vocabulary	Reading Comprehension
Measure				
% Above Benchmark				51%

b) Determine how much we need to enhance the curriculum/instruction of the **priority skill**.

	Previous % At/Above Benchmark	Current % At/Above Benchmark
Priority Skill:	39%	51%

STEP 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION (WHAT IS THE PLAN?)

What instructional adjustments are needed to ***strengthen the priority skill* to improve the health of the classroom reading instruction?**

- Which **priority skill(s)** have you identified to target instruction? (Advanced Word Study, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension)
- **Priority Skill Focus:** _____

Curriculum: What core materials are available to increase the time spent teaching the priority skill (*Will this be addressed in whole group, small group, and/or independent*)?
Instruction: What *common instructional routines* need to be enhanced to address the priority skill/s? What *active engagement strategies* can be used with the instructional strategy to address the priority skill?
Environment: What *behavior management strategies* can be enhanced to increase instructional time? How well is the district adopted PBIS system being implemented?

What do we need to help implement our plan well?

STEP 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION (WHAT IS THE PLAN?)

What instructional adjustments are needed to *strengthen the priority skill* to improve the health of the classroom reading instruction?

- Which **priority skill(s)** have you identified to target instruction? (Advanced Word Study, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension)
- **Priority Skill Focus:** _____comprehension_____

Curriculum: What core materials are available to increase the time spent teaching the priority skill (*Will this be addressed in whole group, small group, and/or independent*)? Teachers agreed to use one curriculum-based texts per week to implement an explicit reading routine, including building background knowledge, pre-teaching vocabulary, and using the "Get the Gist" strategy.
Instruction: What *common instructional routines* need to be enhanced to address the priority skill/s? What *active engagement strategies* can be used with the instructional strategy to address the priority skill? Reading routine will be the common instructional routine and will utilize Anita Archer's "I Do, We Do, You Do" explicit instruction engagement strategy.
Environment: What *behavior management strategies* can be enhanced to increase instructional time? How well is the district adopted PBIS system being implemented? Teachers came up with an idea with an attendance competition to stop absences to get students in school.

What do we need to help implement our plan well? Coaching, walkthrough feedback on routine with student engagement.

Step #3 continued:

Professional Development: What *support* (professional development or coaching) do you need to implement these common agreements?

Other Implementation Supports: What other strategies will we use to help implement our agreements/plan?

- ☐ Walkthroughs with feedback (Who is responsible: _____)
- ☐ Post agreements/plan in a public place
- ☐ Classroom management support needed _____
- ☐ Review agreements/plan at weekly/monthly team meetings. What data will be used to track progress towards goal? _____
- ☐ Other (Describe: _____)

Step #3 continued:

Professional Development: What *support* (professional development or coaching) do you need to implement these common agreements?

Other Implementation Supports: What other strategies will we use to help implement our agreements/plan?

- [x] Walkthroughs with feedback (Who is responsible: _____)
- [ ] Post agreements/plan in a public place
- [x] Classroom management support needed _____
- [x] Review agreements/plan at weekly/monthly team meetings. What data will be used to track progress towards goal? _____
- [x] Other (Describe: Student artifact-reading annotations)

Formative and summative evaluation data are used to determine if the plan needs to be revised. Teams may cycle back to step 1 or 2 if the problem is not resolved.

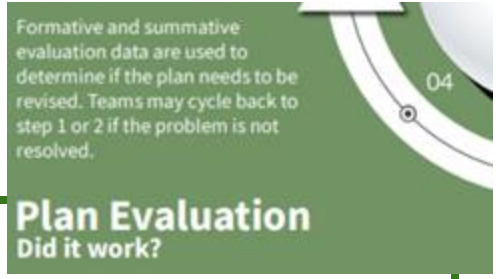
04

Plan Evaluation
Did it work?

STEP 4: PLAN EVALUATION (DID IT WORK?)

At next universal screening period, review the plan and determine if goal was met.

Skill	Word Recognition	Oral Reading Fluency	Vocabulary	Reading Comprehension
Measure				
% Above Benchmark				



STEP 4: PLAN EVALUATION (DID IT WORK?)

At next universal screening period, review the plan and determine if goal was met.

Skill	Word Recognition	Oral Reading Fluency	Vocabulary	Reading Comprehension
Measure				
% Above Benchmark				67%

Teachers also reported an up tick in unit assessments in each content.

Key Takeaways: Collaborative Problem Solving

- **Collaborative Problem-Solving**: A structured, ongoing process often following the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle.
- **Multiple Data Sources**: Utilize system-level, adult implementation, and student data for comprehensive understanding.
- **Focus on Tier 1:** Strengthening core instruction is crucial for improving schoolwide literacy.
- **Continuous Improvement**: Regularly review and analyze data to refine instructional strategies and interventions.
- **Commitment to the Process**: Dedicated teamwork and data analysis lead to better student outcomes.

Reflection

What is my district already doing well?

What can be improved?

Q&A

Thank you

We appreciate your time and attention today. Your engagement and dedication make a difference!

If you have any questions or would like to continue the conversation, feel free to reach out.

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