

What is Whole Child Education?

A whole child approach to education is grounded in research and ensures students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Ohio's 1.7 million students arrive at school each day with the opportunity to achieve their personal goals, pursue their passions and aspirations, gain new and diverse perspectives, discover new knowledge and understanding and interact with peers and caring adults. Schools often meet basic needs — including access to nutritious food, health care services and a safe, warm environment — to ensure students are set up for success and ready to effectively engage in learning.

Ohio's four equal learning domains outlined in the strategic plan contribute to the holistic success of each child. These include **foundational knowledge and skills, well-rounded content, leadership and reasoning skills and social-emotional learning**. The four equal learning domains enable schools to challenge, prepare and empower students for success beyond high school by giving them tools to become resilient, lifelong learners.

Five Whole Child Tenets and Indicators

The Ohio Department of Education's Whole Child Framework has five tenets that complement the four learning domains in *Each Child, Our Future*. The tenets of Ohio's Whole Child Framework operationalize the four learning domains by recognizing students' basic physiological and psychological needs must be met before they can fully engage in complex learning and social activities. When students are **healthy**, feel **safe**, are **supported** through strong systems and relationships, are **challenged** and experience success, and are **engaged** in learning that is relevant and meaningful, they are more likely to enjoy learning, develop positive social skills and achieve greater success.

For each of the five tenets, there are 10 key school indicators. Each indicator begins with the phrase "Our school..." to signify its representation of school attributes to which each school should aspire. The five tenets and related school indicators were adapted from [ASCD's Whole Child Framework](#) and [School Improvement Tool](#). Schools can use the related indicators to define goals and outcomes for each tenet. They can serve as a whole child needs assessment within the school improvement process. The tenets and indicators should be shared and discussed with staff, parents and community. The following are the five tenets:

- **Healthy:** Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- **Safe:** Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- **Supported:** Qualified, caring adults support each student in way that addresses each student's individual needs and circumstances.
- **Challenged:** Each student is challenged academically and prepared for success.
- **Engaged:** Each student is actively engaged in learning and connected to the school and broader community.

Twelve Whole Child Components

The 12 components of the Whole Child Framework serve two main functions. First, schools provide structures that give students knowledge and skills to make decisions that positively impact their health and social emotional well-being. Schools engage students in health, physical education and social-emotional lessons and activities from prekindergarten through high school. Second, schools provide services to meet students' nutrition, physical and behavioral health needs. Services are tiered and support the needs of individual students and the student body as a whole. They are provided in partnership with families and in collaboration with community organizations. These components describe structures to build lifelong healthy skills and provide services to meet whole child needs. They are clustered into the following four categories:

- Developing Healthy Behaviors:
 - Physical education and physical activity;
 - Health education;
 - Social-emotional learning.

- Services to Students and Families:
 - School and child nutrition;
 - Health services;
 - Behavioral health services.
- Engaging Others
 - Family engagement;
 - Community involvement.
- Safe and Supportive School Environment:
 - School climate and culture;
 - School safety;
 - Physical environment;
 - Staff wellness and self-care.

The complete [Whole Child Framework document](#) describes more information about each tenet and indicator of the framework. The full document provides more information about the 12 components and other details captured in the graphic.

Organize for Success

Schools and districts often have the foundational structures in place to implement whole child support and can leverage existing policies, programs and practices to expand what they already are doing to meet the needs of the whole child. Foundational structures, such as mission and vision statements, school improvement processes and plans, and collaborative teams, set the direction, priorities and programs for the district. A first step in providing a whole child approach to education is to examine and integrate whole child language into the school or district's mission and vision and include strategies that address whole child needs in improvement plans, programs and supports. Before a school or district determines priority needs for implementing whole child education, it must *organize for success*, establish and align core beliefs, set up collaborative teams and identify members and responsibilities.

This section guides schools through building a strong foundation to implement a whole child approach in the school. It includes information to help expand upon current foundations in the areas of:

1. Assembling or preparing a collaborative team
2. Connecting to a school's mission and vision
3. Identifying stakeholders
4. Setting meeting norms

Assemble or Prepare a Collaborative Team

Collaborative teams, as part of a continuous improvement process, are essential for the implementation of Ohio's Whole Child Framework. If a school or district has existing collaborative teams as part of its implementation of a continuous improvement process, then a new team should not be created. The existing team can be prepared to incorporate whole child data and supports into its routine work. If a school or district does not have an existing collaborative team as part of a continuous improvement process, a team should be established to prepare for success.

The role of the collaborative team is to analyze systemic policies, programs and practices to determine needs and priorities to ensure equity, cultural responsiveness and coordination of whole child supports through a continuous improvement process. Teams direct resources to school goals. These resources include people, program materials, time and funding. This collaborative decision-making process includes stakeholder engagement and data analysis to determine the school or district's priority needs, including the tenets of the Whole Child Framework that will be included in the school or district's continuous improvement plan.

School and district leaders should provide the collaborative team with an overview of Ohio's Whole Child Framework and engage in discussions about how the framework connects to current policies, programs and

practices. School leaders can determine the right forum for providing this overview, whether during an existing staff meeting or as part of an initial collaborative team meeting. Districts and schools should consider keeping the whole child topics as a standing agenda item at staff and team meetings.

The existing collaborative team should include individuals with key positions and support roles and be representative of the students and community. In addition to the already-established teams, the following groups of people may be considered as members or engaged through the process as needed:

- Teachers who represent all grade-levels, early childhood, general education, special education, English learners and all subgroups;
- Students;
- Families;
- Non-administrative staff who serve in leadership positions, for example, literacy coach, math coach, after-school coordinator and parent/family liaison;
- Non-certified staff such as secretaries, custodial and maintenance staff, food services staff and bus drivers;
- Community partners representing parents and families, local businesses or community organizations, such as a community program that serves children and families who will transition into the elementary building or a Parent Teacher Association representative;
- Union representation;
- Other ad hoc members as necessary.

Key stakeholders on the collaborative teams may include teachers who lead teacher-based teams, families representing the diversity of the student body or an administrator from a feeder pattern school. Some members of the collaborative team may vary based on the school or district's focus tenet(s) and indicators. For example, when analyzing child nutrition or safety, it would be appropriate for someone from the school's food service program to participate. This person may not need to engage around conversations regarding global awareness in the curriculum.

Revisit Mission, Vision and Core Values

Many schools and districts have a mission, vision and core values statement aligned to the school or district's strategic plan. These statements are clear and concise and convey the purpose and direction of the school and district. These statements communicate to students, families, staff and community members what drives the organization. The mission and vision are holistic and oriented toward students' growth and future and should depict what a thriving student can look like at school, in a career and in all aspects of life. The statements reflect the values and hopes the community shares for its children. A shared vision of success for students is developed through authentic collaboration among all school community members (including leaders, staff, students, families and caregivers, and community partners), laying the foundation for trust and partnership. The district and school should revisit the mission and vision statements regularly to ensure they include new perspectives, learnings and context from the changing community.

The district and school's vision, mission and core values should reflect a whole child approach to education. School leaders, in conjunction with their collaborative teams, should spend time analyzing their existing mission, vision and core values in comparison to the Whole Child Framework and the students in the building. Some questions to ask include:

- Where do the existing mission, vision and core values reflect the Whole Child Framework tenets?
- Are the mission, vision and core values culturally responsive to the students and families in the school?
- Are there unintended disparities created by the existing mission, vision and core values?
- Are the core values espoused or enacted?
 - Espoused values are what the school says it desires (community, respect or other values).
 - Enacted values are what is valued by the school.

- How is the school community (staff, students and families) informed of the mission, vision and core values?
- Is this information provided in languages and locations that are accessible for all students and families?
- Are these legacy documents or did the current school community participate in their creation?
 - Schools may need to revise legacy documents with the current community of students, teachers, families and community members so they are culturally responsive and equally accessible.
 - What are blind spots or implicit biases of those involved?
- Is it necessary for the school community to revisit these documents before beginning to assemble the Whole Child Framework team?

Identify Stakeholders and Resources

Not all stakeholders will serve on the school or district collaborative teams. Stakeholders can provide insight when identifying critical areas, help to select evidence-based strategies, design the implementation plan and identify and provide community resources. During the implement and monitor stage of a continuous improvement process, stakeholders may provide unique skill sets that align with implementing the specific tenets and indicators in a school's action plan.

Stakeholders should represent the diversity of the student population. Key stakeholders may include mental health professionals, public health departments, faith-based organizations and other child-serving organizations. Members of the collaborative team may vary based on the school or district's focus tenet(s) and indicators. For example, when analyzing absences due to chronic health conditions, it would be appropriate for someone from the public health department or other health providers to participate. This person may not need to engage in the implementation of other tenets. However, to meet the needs of the whole child, it is important for key stakeholders to provide insight and share connections to other tenants when addressing critical areas. Stakeholders to consider include the following:

- Parents and families;
- District and school-level educators;
- Government agencies and representatives;
- Community-based organizations;
- Research and evaluation experts;
- Business communities;
- Elected officials;
- Physical and behavioral health professionals;
- Students and youth;
- Philanthropy groups;
- Faith-based organizations.

[Ohio's Local Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit](#) can support schools and districts in the local stakeholder engagement process.

Establish Meeting Norms

Team norms are a set of rules or operating principles that shape team members' interactions. Team norms establish clear, agreed-upon behavior, how the work will get done and what team members can expect of each other. Meeting norms include:

- Scheduling regular meetings;
- Once dates and times for the meetings are established, establishing a neutral meeting space, such as a conference room or a local community space;
- Making sure the location is accessible to all members;
- Determining meeting norms and a format for taking and archiving notes, action steps and minutes;

- Preparing and distributing the agenda ahead of time, including a standing agenda item related to the school or district's whole child work;
- Preparing and distributing all data ahead of the meeting to inform decisions;
- Ensuring the correct participants are invited to ensure a well-rounded and productive forum where necessary decisions can be determined;
- Posting the meeting times on the public school calendar;
- Before the meetings, sending invitations or emails to make sure everybody has the meetings on their calendars.

Continuous Improvement Process

A continuous improvement process uses collaborative district, building and teacher teams to share the responsibility for improving student achievement. This collaborative decision-making process should include diverse stakeholder engagement and data analysis to determine the school or district's priority needs, including the tenets of the Whole Child Framework that will be included in the school or district's continuous improvement plan. The collaborative teams can utilize the five tenets and related school indicators during the improvement process to define whole child goals and outcomes.

Supporting implementation through an improvement process, such as the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP), lays the foundation for sustainable change. Supporting implementation consists of setting up the collaborative teams and processes districts and schools need to identify, research, plan, implement and monitor, and examine their improvement efforts. It also includes the communication, engagement, decision-making and resource management that thread through the process. To best align resources, districts should **coordinate policy, programs and practices, commit to cultural responsiveness**, deliberately focus on **equity** and dedicate time and resources to structured and active **continuous improvement**. This guide provides information about implementation of systemic practices for whole child education through the lens of the Ohio Improvement Process; however, the information provided can be transferred to any continuous improvement process schools and districts use to plan, implement and evaluate policies, programs and practices.



Successfully integrating Ohio's Whole Child Framework into the policies, programs and practices of a school is a whole-school effort. It requires dedication, patience and persistence, a team mentality, deliberate and data-driven actions and ongoing reflection. An improvement process is an organizational strategy to give schools a template through which focused and intentional planning and action can take place. An improvement process brings diverse individuals together through collaborative team structures to learn from each other, and it facilitates communication and decision-making between and across levels of the system (district, central office, school, grade levels, content areas, classrooms). The team structures at the core of the Ohio Improvement Process form peer-to-peer networks, giving more people voice in guiding each school's journey toward whole child education through organizational learning and continuous improvement.

The Ohio Improvement Process has five steps:

1. **Identify** critical needs;
2. **Research** and select evidence-based practices;
3. **Plan** for implementation;
4. Implement and Monitor;
5. **Examine**, reflect and adjust.

Step 1: Identify Critical Needs

To **Identify Critical Needs**, schools and districts should engage in a collaborative needs assessment process that involves staff, families, students and members of the community. The data provided from this effort will help identify strengths and areas of growth.

Assessing Whole Child Needs Through the One Needs Assessment

Ohio's One Needs Assessment, a comprehensive needs assessment tool, allows schools and districts to identify all their needs in a single location within a standardized timeline. The One Needs Assessment is part of the Ohio Department of Education's comprehensive planning tool, Education Department's System of Tiered E-Plans and Supports (ED STEPS) system. More information can be found on the [One Needs Assessment webpage](#).

Several sections of the One Needs Assessment align with the Whole Child Framework. Questions in the needs assessment examine key factors such as:

- **Community/Family Engagement** - Students benefit from knowing they are surrounded by caring adults in school, at home and within their community. Schools engage families and communities to best align efforts to support students' needs.
 - Example of question in the One Needs Assessment: 1. What data is used to evaluate family engagement activities? How often is that data used? What does data indicate about the successes and opportunities to improve the current family engagement activities for all families (English learners, homeless, foster, gifted, students with disabilities)?
- **School Climate and Supports** - Students learn best and thrive in safe and supportive learning environments. The components of a safe and supportive learning environment include creating a positive school climate, addressing students' emotional and physical safety and ensuring the school's physical environment and grounds are safe.
 - Example of question in the One Needs Assessment: What impact has the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports implementation had on the number of office referrals, suspensions and expulsions?
- **College and Career Readiness** - Students thrive when all aspects of their well-being are addressed, including physical, social, emotional and intellectual aspects. This will lay the groundwork and inspire students to identify paths to future success and provide multiple ways to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for high school graduation and beyond.
 - Example of question in the One Needs Assessment: How are students monitored to determine if they are not on track for graduation? What does the evaluation say about the effectiveness of monitoring and interventions moving students from not on track to on track?

Analyzing Whole Child Data Sources

The One Needs Assessment uses robust data submitted by schools and districts through the Education Management Information System (EMIS) to trigger required and recommended questions. One Needs Assessment questions prompt districts and schools to critically analyze their needs, explore root causes and determine priority needs. Schools and districts have an opportunity to analyze additional data when completing the One Needs Assessment. Using additional data is important when setting whole child priorities because it will assist in answering questions in the One Needs Assessment, including the root cause analysis for each required question. Supplemental data can provide a holistic picture of student needs. The collaborative teams can utilize the five tenets and related school indicators as a data source when completing the One Needs Assessment to identify existing gaps in whole child supports in alignment with Ohio's Whole Child Framework.

When reviewing data, collaborative teams should ask the following for each student group in the school to ensure data is analyzed through an equity lens (for example, Race/Ethnicity; Special Education Classification; Language status; Gender/Gender Identification; Sexual Orientation; foster care status, homeless identification and adjudicated youth):

- What trends are found in the data?
- What are strengths?
- Where are there gaps?
- By tenant, what does the data show about whole child education in your district?

Other whole child data sources to consider when completing the One Needs Assessment:

- Attendance:
 - Absences (both excused and unexcused) and tardies;
 - Absence intervention plans;
 - Court referrals for truancy;
 - Chronic absenteeism.
- Discipline:
 - Office discipline referrals;
 - Non-office discipline referrals, for example, class removals, visits to school counselors or a calming room;
 - Behavior incident reports for early childhood;
 - Suspension and expulsion reports;
 - School arrests;
 - Restraint and seclusion data.
- School Climate Data:
 - School Climate Survey provides information and measures student, teacher, administration, faculty and family perception of school climate ([School Climate Survey Suite](#));
 - School Safety Survey ([School Safety Survey](#)).
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Data:
 - Tiered Fidelity Inventory ([TFI](#)) - Valid, reliable and efficient measure of the extent to which school personnel are applying the core features of PBIS;
 - PBISApps: PBIS Assessment and PBIS Evaluator ([PBISApps](#)) - Monitors referral patterns for PBIS;
 - Schoolwide Information System: SWIS, CICO SWIS and I-SWIS: ([SWIS](#)) - Collects office discipline referrals and monitors behavior patterns;
 - Tier 1 Benchmarks of Quality ([BoQ](#)) - Measures Tier I implementation of interventions and supports;
 - Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality ([ECBoQ](#)) - Measures Tier I implementation of interventions and supports for Early Childhood PBIS;
 - Interconnected Systems Framework ([ISF](#));
 - District Systems Fidelity Inventory ([DSFI](#)).
- Social-emotional Learning Data:
 - Student visits to school specialists (for example, counselors, nurses or social workers), calls to community crisis centers and proportion of families in the community affected by substance abuse, incarceration or domestic abuse, surveys that measure students' social-emotional skills.
- Cultural Responsiveness Data:
 - [PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Field Guide: Resources for Trainers and Coaches Success Gaps Toolkit Success Gaps Toolkit](#) - Tool for implementation of systems to enhance equity in student outcomes;
 - [Harvard Implicit Association Test](#) - Implicit bias survey for individuals.
- Surveys:
 - Students;
 - Parents;
 - Staff;
 - Community.
- **Ohio Healthy Youth Environments Survey ([OHYes!](#)):**

- Free, voluntary, web-based survey to collect information that schools and communities can use to access resources to reduce risk behaviors and create healthy and safe community, school and family environments.
- **Healthy Student Profile Data:**
 - System of surveys assessing school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts and territories.
- **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBS):**
 - Provides valuable information about mental health needs and impacts at the state or district level.
- **Special Education:**
 - Special education eligibility referrals;
 - Special education eligibility determinations;
 - Out-of-school placements for special education students;
 - Out-of-district placements for special education students.
- **ASCD Whole Child School Improvement Tool:**
 - The ASCD School Improvement Tool™ (SITool) is a free, 20-minute, online needs assessment survey. Based on the ASCD Whole Child framework, the SITool provides aggregate scores of your school delineated by the five tenets of a whole child approach: healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged.

The school or district also may engage stakeholders and community partners that represent student populations in the needs assessment process. A collaborative needs assessment process leads to more effective identification of underlying root causes and priority needs at each level of support. Stakeholders can bring context and additional information to the needs assessment process, including diverse qualitative and quantitative data about whole child needs. The Ohio Department of Education has released a toolkit for engaging stakeholders and community partners, called the [Ohio Local Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit](#).

After reviewing a diverse set of data, discuss the picture forming about the school that may explain the data. The data can identify the problems but cannot tell why the problems or gaps are occurring. A [root cause analysis](#) is an inquiry process that uses collaboration, data and an in-depth process to help stakeholders understand why the problems and gaps are occurring in the first place. For example, do changes (or lack thereof) in procedures, policy, activities, staffing, community environment and partnerships explain the results?

A root cause analysis is a tool to define the gap between the current problem and the desired results by identifying factors that contribute to the current problem within the collaborative team's control. The Five Whys and the Fishbone are root cause analysis techniques, and more information can be found on the [Ohio Department of Education's webpage](#). After completing the root cause analysis, the collaborative team will identify interventions to get to the desired goal. If helpful, the collaborative team may bring in additional school or community data to enrich the discussion and provide a fuller picture.

Teams should decide, as a result of the data, the specific tenets and indicators the school will focus on this improvement cycle. Ideally, teams will focus on no more than five indicators at a time. How will these indicators help the school achieve current goals or policies toward which they are working?

A strong needs assessment process will help the school or district determine Priority Needs and Strategy Areas in the One Needs Assessment that lead to SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable and Achievable, Realistic and Relevant and Timely) goals, strategies and action steps in the school or district's One Plan.

The process for completing the One Needs Assessment is highlighted in this video titled [Navigating the One Needs Assessment](#).

Step 2: Research and Select Evidence-based Practices

To turn this opportunity into action, schools need to be empowered by evidence and know what culturally responsive strategies and supports work. Evidence-based strategies can help a school achieve this. The collaborative team must consider the distinct needs of students in its school and implement the evidence-based strategies most likely to meet those needs.

Evidence-based strategies are strategies, practices or activities that have been evaluated and shown to improve student outcomes. Embedding evidence-based practices into a comprehensive continuous improvement plan can sustain implementation of whole child supports within a district or school.

Evidence-based whole child supports are a part of a framework, like Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) or a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). These frameworks build supports for all students (Tier I, universal supports); provide early interventions to small groups of students who need additional supports (Tier II); and individual interventions provided to students demonstrating persistent challenges (Tier III).

Tap into Ohio's Empowered by Evidence resources

Ohio is committed to assisting educators in selecting and using evidence-based strategies and ensuring Ohio's [Empowered by Evidence](#) initiative will serve as a dynamic and growing resource that is practitioner-focused and responsive to the needs of educators. The initiative will serve as a dynamic and growing resource that is practitioner-focused and responsive to the needs of educators. The Ohio Department of Education's Office of Research, Evaluation and Advanced Analytics has provided the following information.

The [Ohio Department of Education's website](#) offers detailed FAQs, step-by-step instructions on how to find evidence-based strategies and other state and national resources. Resources like [Ohio's Evidence-Based Clearinghouse](#) can help educators find the right evidence-based strategies for particular needs. Ohio's clearinghouse provides background on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) levels of evidence and the primary sources of rated strategies. School climate and supports, as well as community engagement, are among the content focus areas in Ohio's Evidence-Based Clearinghouse. Through the Ohio Department of Education's partnership with The Ohio State University, evidence-based strategies and related resources will continue to be added the clearinghouse with a major development push in 2022. The [Getting Started](#) page includes a tutorial for using Ohio's Evidence-Based Clearinghouse.

The [Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning](#) (CASEL) provides information for educators, school staff and administrators on best practices of implementation of social and emotional learning. The collaborative offers [research-based information](#), [implementation strategies](#) and [trainings opportunities](#) for schools interested in integrating evidence-based social and emotional learning to support all students' learning and development. [CASEL's Evidence-Based Program Guide](#) is designed to help educators and school administrators select social and emotional learning programs that best meets the need of their communities.

The [What Works Clearinghouse](#) is a resource for research-based programs, practices and policies that have proven to be successful in the school environment through the U.S. Department of Education. Educators and administrators can access [practice guides](#), effectiveness ratings and intervention reports for [academic](#) and [behavioral curriculum](#) to inform implementation decisions.

The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) supports prevention, treatment and recovery support services for mental and substance use disorders. [The Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center](#) provides information and tools to incorporate evidence-based practices into various settings. The resources can be filtered by topic, audience, population and resource type to best guide audiences to meet their needs.

Step 3: Plan for Implementation

Once a district or school has identified Priority Needs in the One Needs Assessment and researched evidence-based strategies, it can begin to **Plan for Implementation**. The school or district must develop SMART goals,

strategies and action steps within Ohio's One Plan system. Developing a robust improvement plan will allow the district to leverage fiscal and programmatic resources to meet the needs of the whole child.

Completing the One Plan

The One Plan is a systemic consolidated district planning tool for all district operations, strategically aligned to funding and resources and focused on improving outcomes for all students. Currently, the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan tool is being used to pilot the One Plan to prepare for the development of the ED STEPS system.

The One Plan builds on the Priority Needs and Strategy Areas that were identified in the One Needs Assessment. The school or district sends the Priority Needs and Strategy Areas to the One Plan and builds SMART goals, strategies and action steps. Walkthrough videos for completing the One Plan are available on the [One Plan webpage](#).

As the district or school is completing the One Plan, the collaborative team should consider the following questions:

- Do proposed goals, strategies and action steps address the Priority Needs and root causes identified in the One Needs Assessment?
- Will proposed student and adult implementation measures have a measurable impact on the school, community, students and staff? Are they suitable for students' holistic development?
- Do the goals, strategies and action steps address the identified Priority Needs, and are they culturally responsive and equitable?
- What are the barriers to implementing the goals, strategies and action steps to reach the desired student and adult implementation measures? Does the plan consider how to address those barriers?
- Does the One Plan reflect a whole child approach to education and include strategies and action steps aligned to Whole Child tenets and indicators?

Review the Plan

The collaborative team should gather stakeholder input on the plan. Stakeholders should include the individuals identified as thought partners during the [Organize for Success](#) phase and the diverse group representing the student populations who will be needed to implement the plan. Key questions to ask stakeholders include:

- What are the greatest strengths of the plan?
- What areas of the plan need improvement?
- What is missing?
- What barriers might the school encounter?
- Does the plan provide equitable supports for all students in the building?
- Is the plan culturally responsive for students and families?

Give stakeholders adequate time to review the plan and ask questions and consider gathering feedback both virtually and through in-person feedback sessions. The collaborative team should review the feedback and make any necessary changes to the plan. The stakeholder feedback also should inform the subsequent implementation of the plan.

Step 4: Implement and Monitor

After a district or school creates its One Plan, it will begin to **implement and monitor**. Monitoring is collaborative learning through observing the implementation of adult practices and their impact on student outcomes. An important part of the One Plan is identifying the student and adult implementation measures within each goal. These measures will be crucial to effectively implementing and monitoring the district or school's progress toward achieving the goals in its One Plan.

Implementation requires changes in adult behaviors and practices to achieve whole child goals. Collecting ongoing adult and student data gives implementers immediate feedback for course corrections and informs implementation and monitoring efforts. A rapid cycle of data analysis, such as formative assessments, measures the effectiveness of a strategy more quickly than a traditional assessment, such as a unit test or quarterly assessment. This gives implementers ongoing feedback in real time to support continuous quality improvement.

Data will tell the impact of strategies. By evaluating how interventions affect student learning and wellness, collaborative teams learn what interventions are working and for whom they are working. Through this information, teams can adjust practices, renew the plan and try again; therefore, continuously improving. Data collection and analysis allow adults to make course corrections based on evidence. Implementers should base course corrections on all evidence and whether the strategy is having the intended impact. If the strategy is not having the intended impact, corrections could include additional training, coaching or resources based on the identified need.

During the [Plan for Implementation](#) step, the collaborative team will identify data sources to monitor for selected evidence-based strategies. The team should collect implementation evidence that shows the level of impact. This evidence can include existing data sources such as attendance, [the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory](#), family engagement and school climate surveys. Using additional data is important when monitoring the process and effectiveness of whole child supports. See the [Analyzing Whole Child Data Sources](#) section of this guide for more information on data to consider when implementing and monitoring whole child supports.

Data collection and analysis allow the collaborative team to make course corrections based on evidence. The team should base course corrections on all evidence and whether the strategy is having the intended impact. If the strategy is not having the intended impact, corrections could include additional training, coaching or resources based on the identified need.

Step 5: Examine, reflect and adjust

During the planning process, the collaborative team will create SMART goals. The team will use collected evidence to determine if the school met, exceeded or did not meet its goals.

Thorough implementation occurs when schools implement the set of actions and strategies as designed, with accuracy and consistency. When examining, evaluating and reflecting, ask the following questions:

Examine Implementation

- Are strategies being implemented as intended?
- Are critical actions or tasks missing?
- Are all buildings consistently implementing action steps?
- Are there sufficient resources to support implementation, such as human, financial, material and technical?

Evaluate and Reflect on Implementation

- Why was implementation fully, partially or not successful?
- Has the strategy had enough time or support for implementation to have an impact?
- Are the actions occurring as planned? For example, are timelines being met and resources available and in use?
- Is the timeline for adult implementation and student performance indicators realistic and attainable?
- Was the strategy the correct strategy to reach the goal?
- Moving forward, what can the organization do to ensure effective implementation?

Adjust for Future Plan Improvements

Based on the team's examination, evaluation and reflection of goals and implementation, it recommends continuing, modifying or eliminating practices. This recommendation could include changes to tools, professional learning, resource allocation and human capital alignment.

If the analysis shows that implementation was not systematic across the school, the team must identify gaps and include in the plan action steps to ensure effective implementation.

If the practices are meeting or exceeding expectations, the organization should continue them and expand the plan to include additional classrooms.

The collaborative team may decide to modify or eliminate strategies when it confirms the strategies were fully implemented as intended yet expected improvements did not occur. The collaborative team should consider eliminating a strategy when the resources or efforts needed for full implementation exceed the benefit received.

Additional Considerations

The Whole Child Framework Start-up Guide for School Leaders is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Every school has unique populations, local context and existing programming to consider. ESSA emphasizes educational stability for vulnerable youth. By requiring states to report data on students with disabilities, English learners, homeless students, students with parents in the military and students in foster care, ESSA acknowledges the unique circumstances of vulnerable youth. These additional considerations will support implementation in unique circumstances.

For more in-depth considerations for engaging diverse stakeholders and community partners, review the Ohio Department of Education's [Ohio Local Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit](#).

Rural and Appalachian Communities

- Rural and Appalachian communities often are rich in history and pride for their local schools. At the same time, rural and Appalachian schools are often isolated geographically and may have fewer resources than other schools. Many times, families in rural areas do not earn as much income as their urban counterparts, may have lower education levels and experience poverty and high mobility.
- Rural and Appalachian schools often face unique challenges for getting families more involved. On the other hand, these schools have other factors that work in their favor. Schools in rural and Appalachian areas often serve as community centers where people gather for sporting events, celebrations or special programs. Teachers and administrators in small schools also may be able to give more personal attention to their students. For these reasons, rural and Appalachian schools need unique strategies to build effective partnerships with families and communities.
- The [U.S. Department of Education Rural Education Resource Center](#) provides news, programs and grant resources for schools.

Students with Disabilities

- When creating an individualized education program (IEP), consider how the student will be healthy, safe, supported, challenged and engaged.
 - The IEP consists of individualized annual goals that align with each student's areas of need and strengths and provides direction for appropriate specially designed instruction that directly relates to those goals.
 - Create measurable annual IEP goals that align to state standards.
- Ensure there is collaboration between general education and special education to guide instruction and oversee delivery of services in all settings.

- All staff members should understand what Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) means and how to provide it.
- Understand that some students might not need IEPs.

Vulnerable Populations

Children and youth who experience more frequent changes in educational programming and stability are particularly vulnerable. These vulnerable populations include students [involved in the court system](#), [experiencing homelessness](#), in [foster care](#), [English learners](#) and in [military families](#). Vulnerable student populations benefit from whole child supports that are responsive to their particular circumstances. ESSA puts protections in place to preserve educational stability for these populations, but the education community can and should do more for these students. To effectively serve vulnerable student populations using a whole child approach, districts and schools can provide the following:

- An established a system to regularly identify vulnerable students;
- Ongoing professional development for school personnel about meeting the unique needs and circumstances of each population;
- Established partnerships with community-based organizations and local service providers to provide wraparound supports;
- Opportunities for two-way communication between the school and vulnerable students and families.

Schools and districts take a whole child approach when they create systems and networks of support for vulnerable populations that ensure integration in the school community and access to individualized, whole child supports. Schools and districts should include vulnerable populations in the continuous improvement process by looking at data specific to identified students, reviewing for representation on school-based teams and assessing and strengthening partnerships with agencies serving these populations.