

Postsecondary Success MTSS and Continuous Improvement

Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Continuous Improvement Process

One of the Iowa Department of Education's leading priorities is **Postsecondary Success for All**. For birth through grade 12, this means the priority is to prepare learners for the next step in their future, whether that is a child entering childcare/preschool, a preschool child transitioning to kindergarten, a student being able to read by the end of the third grade, a student transitioning from elementary to middle school, or a student going into high school - our priority is to ensure they are ready for that next step. In order to ensure every student is future ready, Iowa supports the following within Differentiated Accountability:

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): a framework that uses data-based decision-making for continuous improvement to enhance academic and social-emotional-behavioral health outcomes for all learners, in order to prepare them for their future at every step of their educational journey.
- Continuous Improvement Process (CIP): Iowa's Process for Continuous Improvement

Heartland's Postsecondary Success Team has taken the [Iowa Framework and Process to Support Schools](#) and connected that specifically to the work of Future Ready for our students. For more information about the Iowa's Framework, please see the linked information above.

Why is this work important?

The "why" of this work is critical. Many resources have been developed regarding the changing landscape of the world of work:

[The 5 best jobs of the Future and How to Get them](#)
[The Top 10 Most In-Demand Skills for the Next 10 Years \(Forbes\)](#)
[Digital Transformations \(Video\)](#)
[What will the future of jobs be like? \(Video\)](#)
[The 5 Trends Shaping the Future of Work \(Video\)](#)

[The Future of Jobs Report \(World Economic Forum\)](#)
[High School and The Future Of Work](#)
[Metrics that Matter](#)

There are also resources regarding student's potential for postsecondary success:

[Trade School vs College Degree Salaries](#)
[US Income Gap: How Trade Schools Can Be A Vehicle To The Middle class.](#)
[Trade Schools, Not 4 Year College is a Better Bet to Solve the US Income Gap](#)

History

It is also important to review the work that has already been done and the people and groups critical to the success of this work

- [History of Postsecondary Success in Iowa](#)
- [Iowa's Definition of College and Career Readiness](#) (Iowa Board of Education approved in 2016; often referred to as the "Four Buckets")
 - [AEA PREP's Definition of CCR Video](#)
- [Authentic Learning Network](#)
- [Iowa College Aid](#)
- [ICAN](#)

After reviewing this information, with the leadership team, consider these [Coaching Questions and Processing](#). Also critical is to consider those conceptual areas within the MTSS Framework that require concerted focus for any continuous improvement effort. For more information about those five conceptual areas, see the [Iowa Framework and Process to Support Schools](#).

Iowa's Continuous Improvement Process [CIP]

CIP is a cyclical process that supports teams in a system to understand current needs, identify goals, prioritize evidence-based ways to improve, and develop, implement and evaluate a plan of action in a continuous cycle. Iowa has established a five (5) step Continuous Improvement Process as part of the ESSA plan, as shown in Figure 1. The process broadly follows the steps in nearly every widely used continuous improvement

process and is easily adapted to local contexts. The critical aspect of such a process is the discussion focused on answering a specific set of questions in order to effectively determine needs at the systems-level, match those needs with evidence-based solutions, and create a plan of action that is then implemented and monitored to evaluate impact over time.

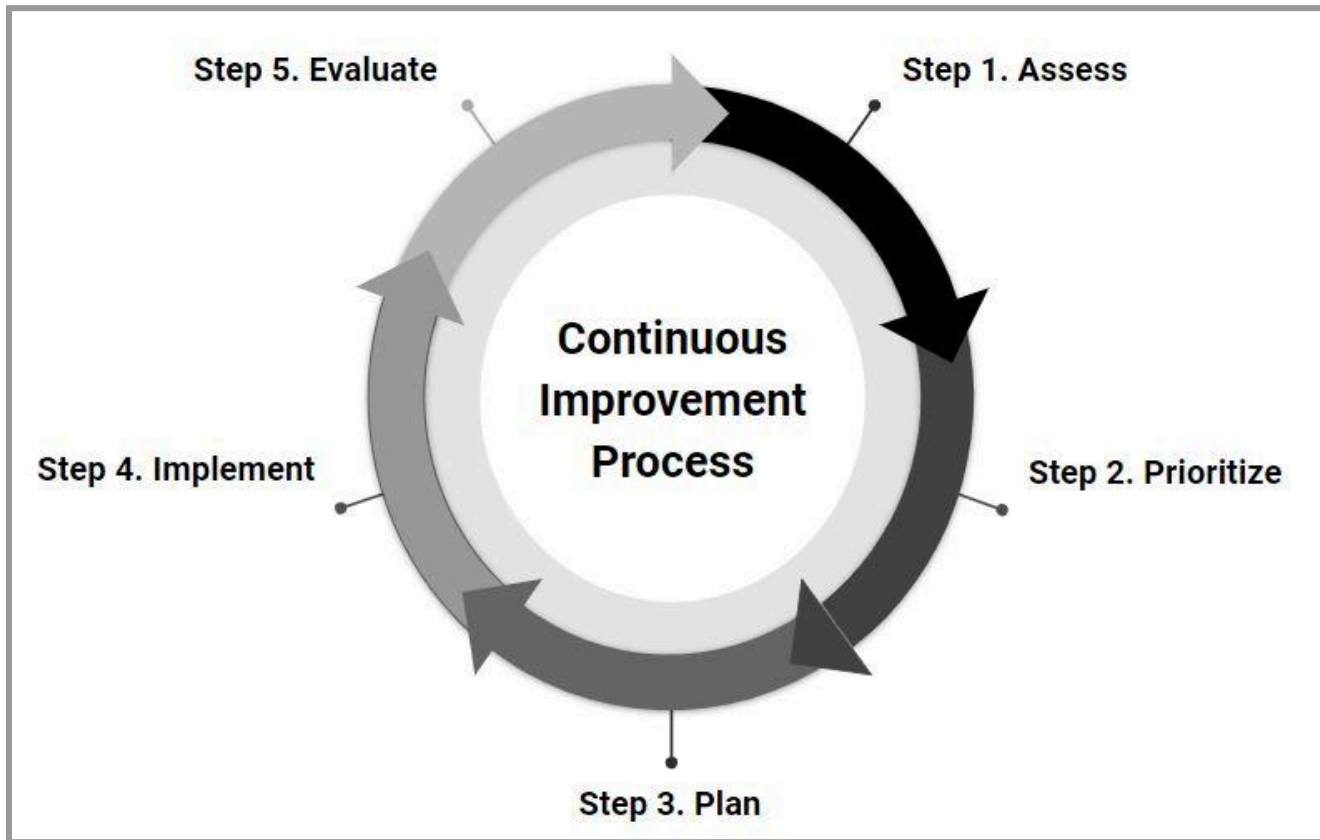


Figure 1. Iowa's 5-Step Continuous Improvement Process

Table 1. Iowa's 5-Step Continuous Improvement Process across the classroom, school/district and professional learning & coaching

Step	Classroom Learner	School/District	Professional Learning & Coaching
1. Assess	- What do my assessment data tell me about the current performance of all learners in my classroom? - Which learners are proficient/have the skill being taught? - Which learners might need more support, in which areas? - Is the instruction sufficient for 80% of learners to be proficient/have the skill being taught? - What skill(s) are being missed by learners? - Why are the skill(s) being missed by learners - and how can I verify this?	- What do our current data tell us about learner outcomes? - What are our shared expectations of where all learner outcomes should be in our school/district? - Is there a gap between current outcomes and our shared expectations for all learners? - Why are learner outcomes not where we want them to be - what is the problem or need? - How will we verify that our hypothesis around why - or what is needed - is correct?	- What do our current data tell us about: (a) learner outcomes and (b) staff knowledge and needs? - What are our expectations for (a) learner outcomes and (b) staff knowledge and needs? - Is there a gap between current data and expectations for (a) learner outcomes, and (b) staff knowledge and needs? - Why is there a gap? - How will we verify our hypothesis around why - or what is needed - is correct?
2. Prioritize	- What skills do I need to prioritize? - What evidence-based strategy or intervention(s) do I need to prioritize to build learner skills?	- What areas are most critical for us to prioritize our resources and efforts around? - What evidence-based strategies or system-wide interventions, services and supports will address the identified areas? - What do we need to do to support/remove barriers for this work?	- What areas are most critical for us to prioritize our professional learning and coaching around? - What evidence-based strategies or interventions need to be trained & coached? - What do we need to do to support/remove barriers to our Collaborative Learning Communities (CLCs) and schedules to support this work?
3. Plan	- How will I provide the time and space for continued learning of the identified skill? - When, where and how long will I need to provide this to my class? - How will I know the skill is taught - and learned?	- What is our plan to address the priority area(s) of need? (what, when, how, where) - How will we know that we are making progress on our plan? - How will we know that what we are doing has an impact?	- What is our professional learning & coaching plan to address learner/staff needs? How is this built into our school/district plan? - How will we know that staff have learned and are using the new skills taught? - How will we know what we are doing has an impact on instructional practices and student outcomes?
4. Implement	- Am I implementing the strategies needed with fidelity? - If not - why not - is it too difficult, did the learners figure it out before completing it, was it the wrong strategy?	- Are we following the plan as it is intended? - Are we implementing strategies, services, interventions - with fidelity? If not, why not?	- Are we following our professional learning & coaching plan as it is intended? - Are staff implementing strategies/interventions with fidelity as trained? If not, why not?
5. Evaluate	Did the strategy work to help learners gain the identified skill?	Did our plan work to help address the identified priority areas?	Did our plan work to help address the identified staff needs?

Continuous Improvement Process and Future Ready Indicators

To be helpful, the table below outlines each step in the Continuous Improvement Process with outlined purpose/questions that step is designed to answer, what needs to be completed in order to answer the stated question, tools that might be used to address the question and the results of those tools.

Step	Purpose (Question to answer)	What to do to answer the question	What tools could we use?	What are the results of the tools?
Step 1. Assess	<u>Where are we now and where do we want to be?</u>	A. <u>Collect and Analyze Data</u> B. Create Data Statements C. Determine Area(s) of Focus	(1) <u>Resource Allocation Review - District</u> and <u>Notecatcher</u> (2) <u>Data Review - Building</u> (3) <u>SAMI - Building</u> and <u>Notecatcher</u>	→ Priority Resource Inequity Data Statement. → Priority Data Statement - Content Area(s) → Priority Summary Statement-Conceptual Area(s)
Step 2. Prioritize	<u>Why?</u>	A. Describe the why (<i>Priority Statements</i>) B. Establish and Implement Verification Plan (<i>Only if needed</i>) C. Establish the why and create a final outcome or goal (<i>Put it altogether</i>)	(1) RAR, DR and SAMI (<i>see above</i>) (2) Verification Plan if needed (<i>in SAMI Coaching Guide</i>)	→ See above - reflecting on all the statements to determine your final desired outcome or goal → Verified data, if needed
Step 3. Plan	<u>What are we going to do, and how are we going to do it?</u>	A. <u>Identify the Evidence-Based Practice(s) to address the Goal</u> B. <u>Develop the Plan</u>	(1) Selecting EBPractices & Learning Concepts	→ Evidence-based practice/intervention(s) selected based on need and desired outcome or goal
Step 4. Implement	<u>Are we doing what we said we would do?</u>	A. Prepare Progress Data B. Reflect and Adjust C. Communicate progress	(1) Fidelity of Implementation from the EBPractice selected* (2) ESSA Action Plan Progress (3) Monthly-Quarterly Check-ins	→ Evidence of effective implementation → Evidence of movement on ESSA Action Plan → Evidence of implementation
Step 5. Evaluate	<u>Did our plan work?</u>	A. Prepare Impact Data B. Reflect and Adjust C. Communicate Impact	(1) RAR, DR, SAMI data review (2) Selected other short-term/ intermediate measures	→ Evidence of impact on data used for RAR/DR and SAMI ratings → Evidence of impact on other selected measures

*EBPractice-specific tool/materials; not a Network tool/materials