



WNC Resilience Project Playbook - Module 2

Validating the Current State & Refining the AIM

Module Purpose

This module is designed to be completed after the Onboarding Session and before your first facilitated school meeting. It provides structure and prompts to help your team validate the insights from your empathy map and AIM Statement you developed during the onboarding workshop - and refine them based on real-world input.

Important: *This is your chance to check your assumptions, ensure alignment with stakeholder experience, and ground your innovation efforts in a clear, credible understanding of the Current State.*

Two Key Outcomes:

1. Validate and document a student-centered “Current State” — in the form of a clear, equity-rooted Problem Statement.
2. Revisit and refine your team’s AIM Statement to ensure it reflects a compelling vision of success rooted in lived experience.

Step 1: Revisit Your Draft Empathy Insights

Begin with the Student Empathy Map and Insight Carousel takeaways from Module 1:

- *What assumptions did your team make during onboarding?*
- *What surfaced as the most pressing challenge or need?*

Pro Tip: Before moving forward, confirm these insights with broader input.

Step 2: Validate the Current State

Use student voice, educator feedback, and any data or lived experience artifacts to test whether your initial sense of the challenge is still accurate.

Suggested Sources:

- Student listening sessions, focus groups, or surveys
- Teacher reflections or PLC discussions
- Attendance or behavior trends

- Classroom artifacts, observations, or informal interviews

Important: Try to confirm or adjust your empathy-driven insights using what you see and hear locally.

Step 3: Define the Problem

Your goal here is to define the problem, not the solution.

Problem Statement Template:

"[Target population] **are experiencing** [specific outcome], **as evidenced by** [data and/or stakeholder input]."

Example:

Students in our alternative program are missing more instructional time than peers due to systemic gaps in transportation, as evidenced by attendance logs and student feedback.

Optional Step: Draft a "How Might We..." Question

While not required, some teams may benefit from using or reframing their problem into a generative design question.

HMW Template:

How might we [support/empower/increase] [student need] **so that** [desired outcome]?

Important: Avoid jumping to solutions. Stay rooted in the lived experiences and systems shaping the challenge.

Step 4: Revisit Your AIM Statement

Now that you've validated the Current State (aka Problem Definition), revisit the draft AIM you created in Module 1.

Ask:

- *Does our AIM still reflect what students, educators, and community members say matters most?*
- *Is it bold but grounded? Measurable and time-bound?*
- *Does it clearly point toward the change we hope to see by June 2028?*

Use the Litmus Test:

- ☐ Student-centered and equity-focused
- ☐ Reflects current needs and priorities
- ☐ Measurable and time-bound
- ☐ Aligned with lived stakeholder input

Pro Tip: If needed, refine your AIM collaboratively using staff input, community insight, and student feedback.

Next Steps:

In your first facilitated school meeting, you'll build on this validated foundation to:

- Finalize your full Driver Diagram
- Break your AIM into a SMART format
- Prioritize early Change Ideas for testing

Note: This validation step ensures your innovation effort stays anchored in what matters most: students' real-world experience.

Empathy without validation is just assumptions. Let this step ground your team in credibility, clarity, and shared purpose.