

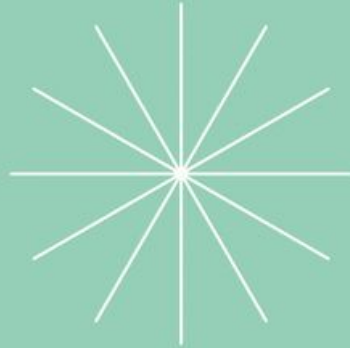
School Mental Health within an Equitable Multi-Level System of Supports (EMLSS)



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction
Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

Grounding

#DESTRESSMONDAY



BREATHE WITH THE SHAPE

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand key system features of the EMLSS Framework and how they can be infused into quality improvement efforts
- Identify the five stages of quality improvement outlined in the Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement
- Practice using the Roadmap stages and EMLSS key system features to improve a problem of practice

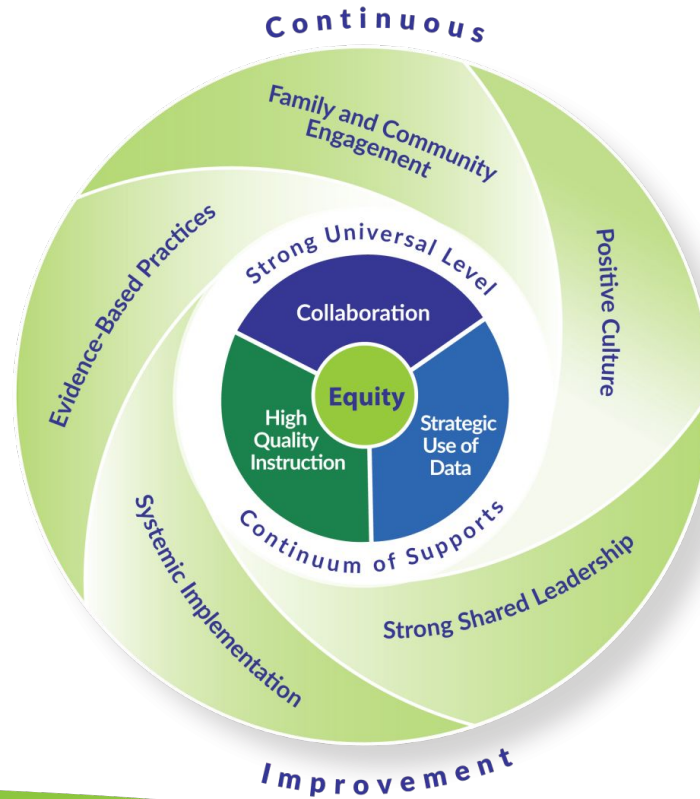
Reflection: Experience with Change Efforts

Think about recent improvement effort you have been involved in...

- Did you have the knowledge of what works and how to get it to work in diverse conditions?
- Did you possess the expertise and organizational resources to execute the change?
- Did you sense desire or eagerness for change within people involved in the effort?

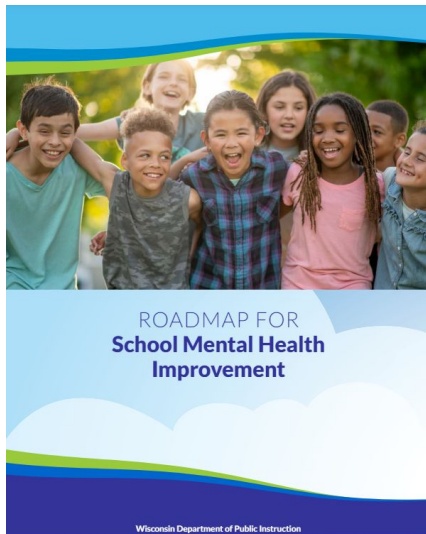


Key Features of an EMLSS



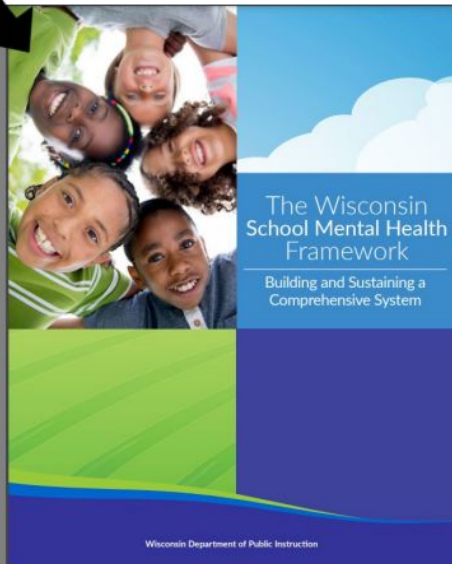
Roadmap for Improvement

- Flexible structure
- Uses Improvement Science
 - Approach to solving problems
 - Focus: learning by doing
 - Uses testing in real settings

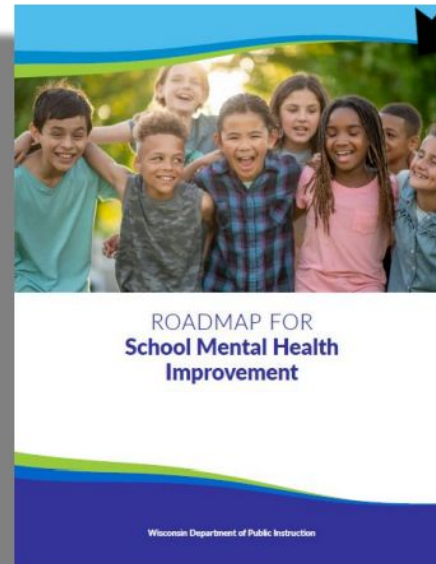


From Theory to Action

WHAT?



HOW?



[CSMH from Theory to Action](#)

What is Improvement Science?

Learning by doing

Focus on system design and operation (not individuals)

Attention to spreading effective practices through organizations

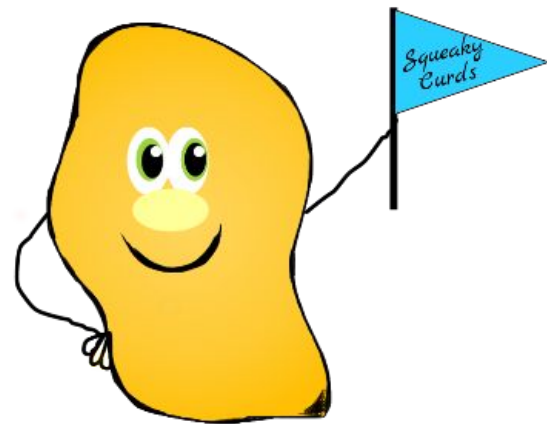
Emphasis on processes that produce the current outcome

Frontline workers uniquely situated to learn how to get ideas to work

Progress requires collective learning and discovery

Problem of Practice

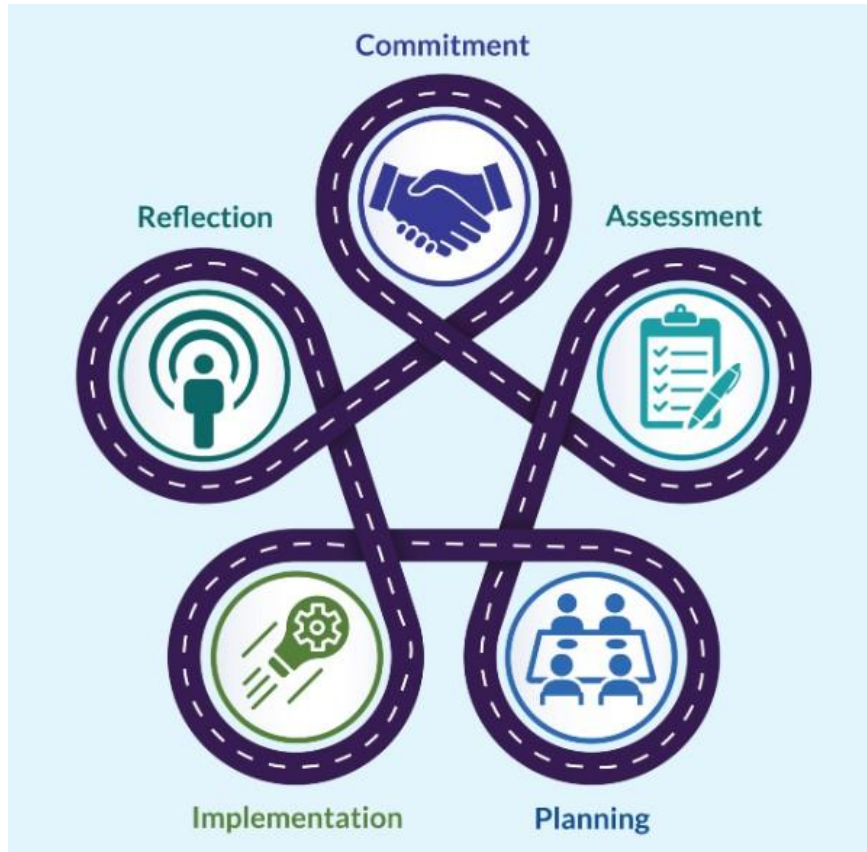
- In the past year, Cheddar Elementary has seen a 30% increase in unexcused absences in grades four and five, particularly for female students.
- Cheddar Elementary's improvement team is looking to explore this problem further and work to improve it.
- Where should they start?



Traditional Approach

- **The Attendance Team (principal, dean of students, and school social worker) meets to discuss the problem and come up with a plan.**
 - Attendance team looks at school-level data to understand trends
 - Principal mentions something she's done in the past to address attendance
 - With direction from Principal, the group decides to implement this process
- **The team spends a few months making a plan that details every step they will take to implement the plan.**
- **The team announces this plan at the monthly all-staff meeting and it is fully implemented the next day.**
 - The new process is implemented well by some staff, but not others.
 - The team collects outcomes data but no process data.

Roadmap



Roadmap for Improvement: Commitment

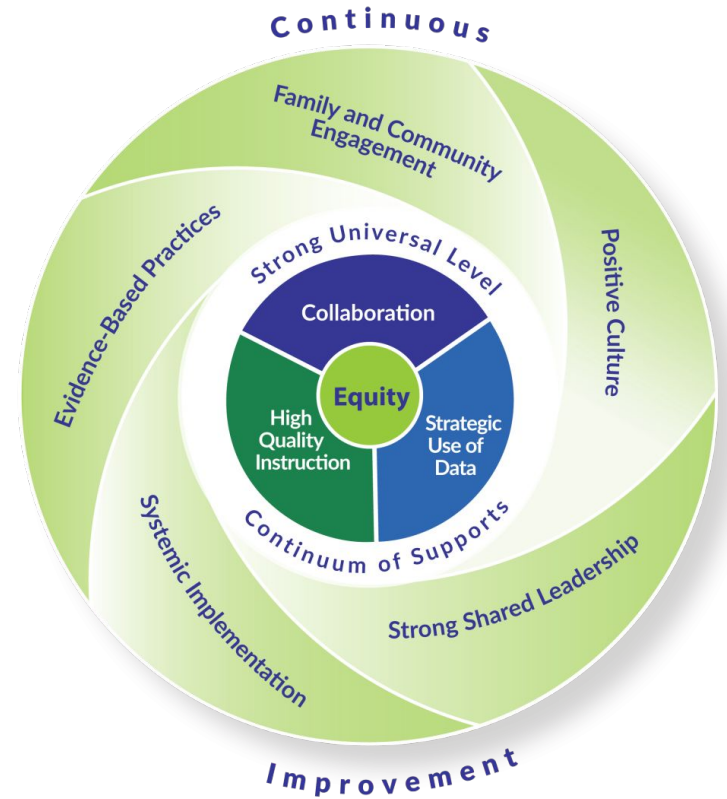
- Building support from shareholders
- Assembling a representative team, coalition, champions
- Increasing mental health literacy
- Communicating a shared vision for well-being, based in an accurate understanding of mental health



Commitment: Integrated Systems Approach

Consider our problem of practice...

- What ideas do you have for building commitment in this scenario?
- What EMLSS key system features could you center in this stage?



Roadmap for Improvement: Assessment

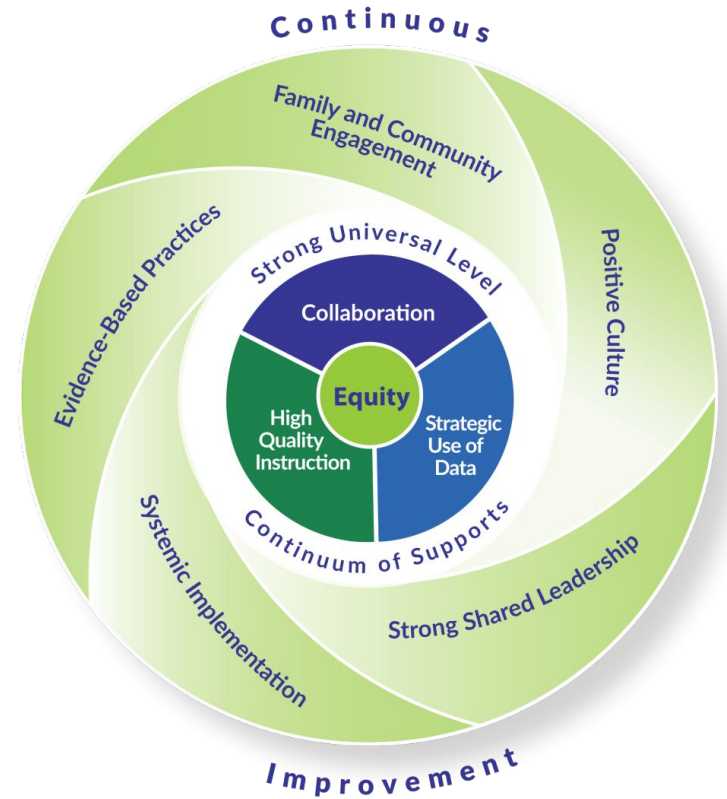
- CSMHS are shaped by the strengths and needs of the community & the local context
- Needs assessment help us remain user centered
- System assessment helps identify areas of improvement, track progress, and measure improvement
- Can occur at the beginning and throughout the improvement process



Assessment: Integrated Systems Approach

Consider our problem of practice...

- What are some sources of data or assessment that could help you better understand the problem (and how to improve it)?
- What EMLSS key system features could you center in this stage?



Assessment Tool: Empathy Interviews

- Qualitative data collection strategy
- Semi-structured interviews to understand an experience from interviewee's perspective
- Shaped by the themes and topics brought up by the interviewee.

Centering User Voice with Empathy Interviews

Purpose: An empathy interview is a qualitative data collection strategy that uses semi-structured interviews to understand an experience from the perspective of the interviewee and bring to light their unacknowledged needs (Bennett et al 2022). This helps teams remain user-centered or see the school mental health system from the perspective of students, families, and staff to ensure that their diverse lived experiences are centered in the improvement process (Hinnant-Craford 2020). Unlike traditional interviews, empathy interviews do not ask for opinions on narrow topics but are shaped by the themes and topics brought up by the interviewee.

Framing: DPI's [Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement](#) outlines five steps for increasing the quality of their school mental health system. Empathy interviews can be helpful during any step in a team's improvement journey. For example, empathy interviews can be used in the assessment step to better understand the system, or in the planning step to define the problem, generate change ideas, or elicit feedback when changes to the system are tested. Whatever way teams choose to use them, empathy interviews provide a powerful method for elevating those voices that might be muted by power dynamics present in group settings (Hinnant-Craford 2020). This strengthens collaboration in Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems by centering the voices of those most impacted by the problems that improvement teams are working to solve.

Improvement teams can use the [Empathy Interview Planning Tool](#) to prepare for empathy interviews, including determining a purpose for the interviews, planning interview logistics, writing an interview protocol, and making meaning from the interview data.

Roadmap for Improvement



[Link](#)

Roadmap for Improvement: Planning

Teams interpret needs assessment and system data to better understand areas of strength and need within the school mental health system to:

- Identify a problem and aim
- Identify drivers (things that will impact aim)
- Identify possible changes that will lead to improvement



Planning: Integrated Systems Approach

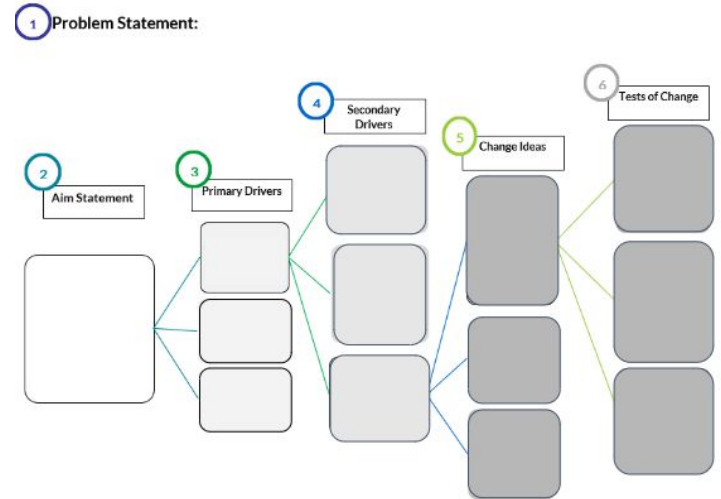
Consider our problem of practice...

- What factors could be contributing to this problem?
- What EMLSS key system features could you center in this stage?



The Driver Diagram: What is it?

- Used to visually represent a team's working theory of improvement.
- This visual map is a key collaboration tool for improvement teams
- Should be viewed as a working document, “Possibly wrong, definitely incomplete”



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Roadmap for Improvement: Implementation

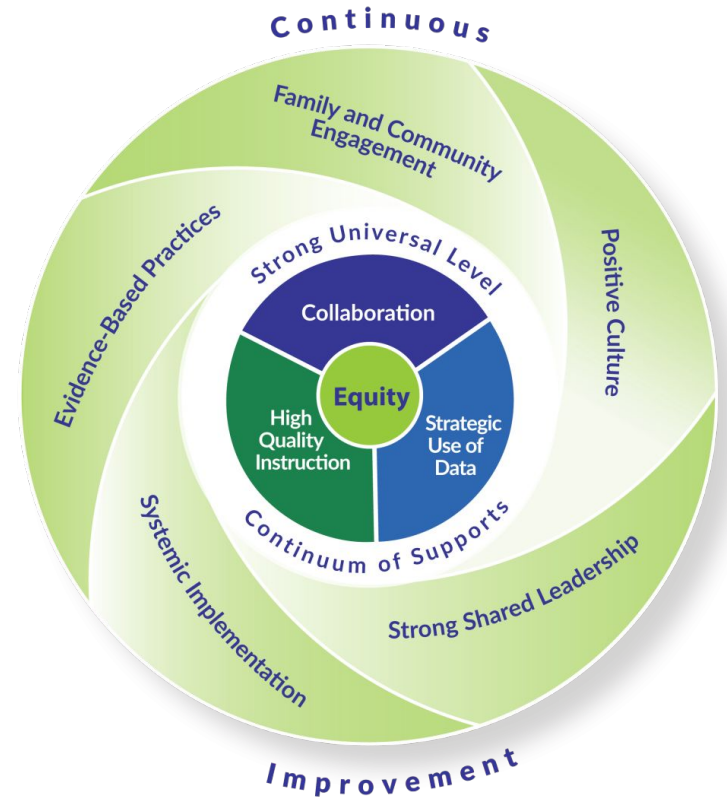
- LEARNING BY DOING
- Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles test your hypothesis by:
 - observing the impact in real-time,
 - identifying unintended consequences,
 - deciding whether or not the change has moved the system closer to its goals.
- Teams LEARN from each PDSA, adjust their theory, and continue to test.



Implementation: Integrated Systems Approach

Consider our problem of practice...

- From your list of driving factors, brainstorm possible changes you could test out.
- What EMLSS key system features could you center in this stage?



PDSA Tool

Parts of the Planning Tool :

- Key definitions
- Equity check questions
- Example change ideas by component of CSMH
- Example PDSA cycle
- PDSA cycle template

Testing Changes in School Mental Health System Improvement

Purpose: The purpose of this tool is to help teams plan and test changes to their school mental health system with the goal of improvement. A Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle involves making a small change to day-to-day processes or procedures while observing the impacts in the real world (Bennet et. al 2022). It helps teams organize their work and make steady progress towards improvement goals. PDSA cycles also help teams move from ideas about how to improve the school mental health system to action. When schools engage in multiple, iterative PDSA cycles over time, they are engaging in continuous improvement. A PDSA cycle includes:



- **Plan:** In the Planning step, teams examine existing needs to determine the aim of their improvement work, make predictions about what will happen and why, and determine the logistics of testing the chosen change idea and collecting needed data.
- **Do:** In the Do step, teams make one small change to day-to-day operations. Teams should record observations so when tests are successful, they can pinpoint what change has made that impact. These observations also shape future PDSA cycles.
- **Study:** In the Study step, teams set aside time to study the results of their test by comparing their observations to predictions, creating a summary of what was learned, and reflecting on learning.
- **Act:** In the Act step, teams decide how to incorporate their learning to inform next steps. Teams may choose to:
 - **Adopt** the change idea (go back to planning and select a new change idea).
 - **Adapt** the change idea (make small modifications to it before testing again).
 - **Abandon** the change idea (standardize the change by spreading and scaling it). Teams should only choose to adopt a change idea after it has been tested multiple times, in many different conditions.

Rapid Cycle Testing: Rapid cycle testing involves implementing PDSA cycles in quick succession. When schools use rapid cycle testing, they select and implement a small-scale change, run a short test to learn what they can, and use the learning to get better in the next iteration of the test (University of Wisconsin-Madison 2024). Rapid cycle testing helps teams quickly bridge the gap between research and knowing what best practices are in school mental health and being able to overcome local challenges when trying to implement those best practices. Doing multiple, quick PDSAs on a small scale is beneficial because it



[Link](#)

Roadmap for Improvement: Reflection

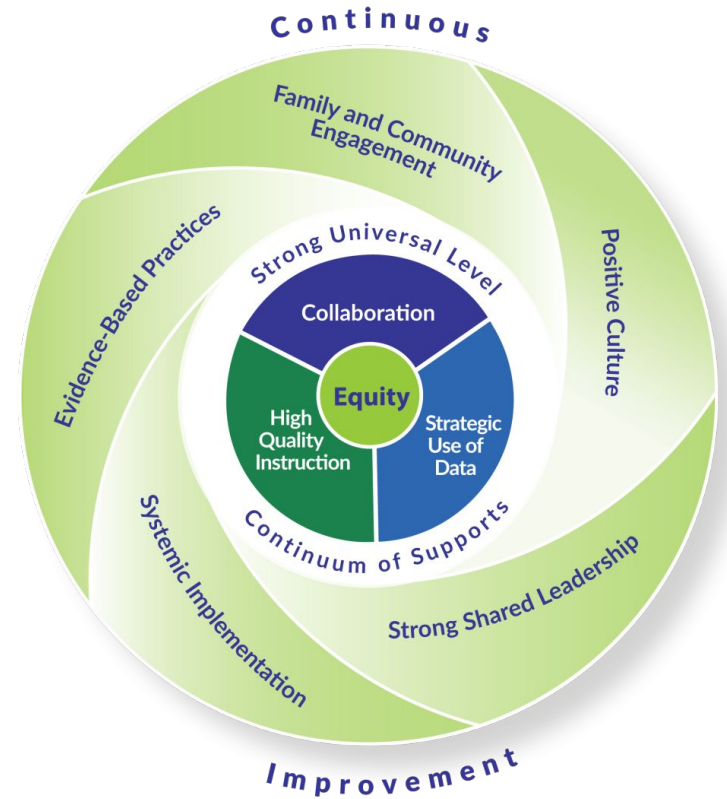
- Evaluate data
 - Revisit your needs assessment & system assessment data
 - Review your PDSA cycle data
- Plan for sustainability
 - Hear from all shareholders and plan for any necessary changes needed to move forward
- Celebrate successes!



Reflection: Integrated Systems Approach

Consider our problem of practice...

- How can the Roadmap be used to move beyond the “traditional approach”?
- What EMLSS key system features could you center in this stage?

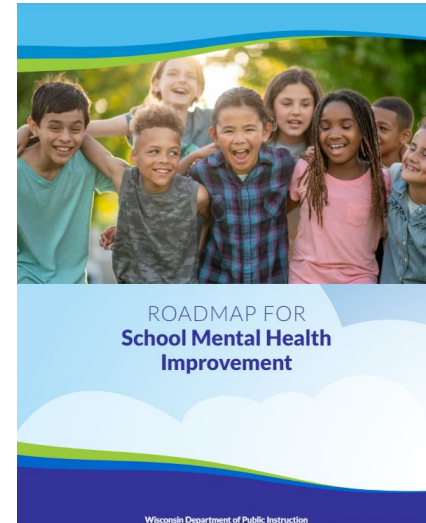


REVISIT: Traditional Approach

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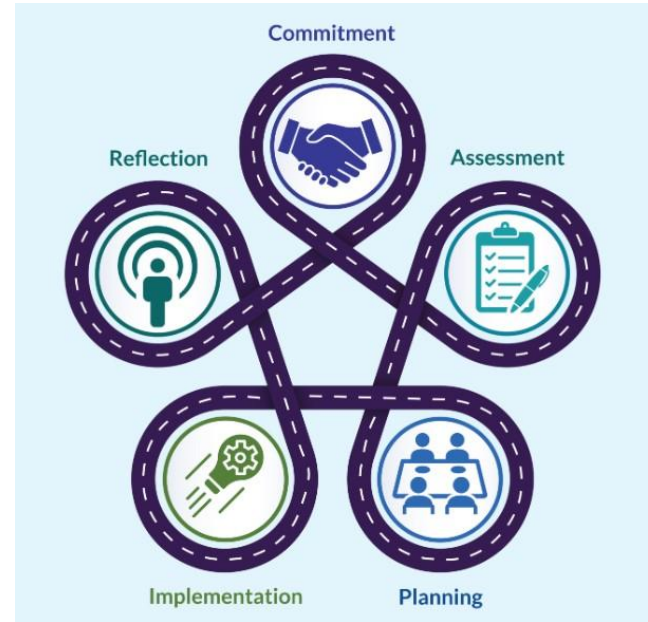
The Roadmap and Equity

- Offers an opportunity to examine and change the aspects of systems that lead to inequitable outcomes
- Testing theories and realizing they are not producing the intended outcome creates an opportunity to interrupt assumptions and biases about what “will” work.
- Testing provides opportunities to amplify the voices of those most affected by improvement work

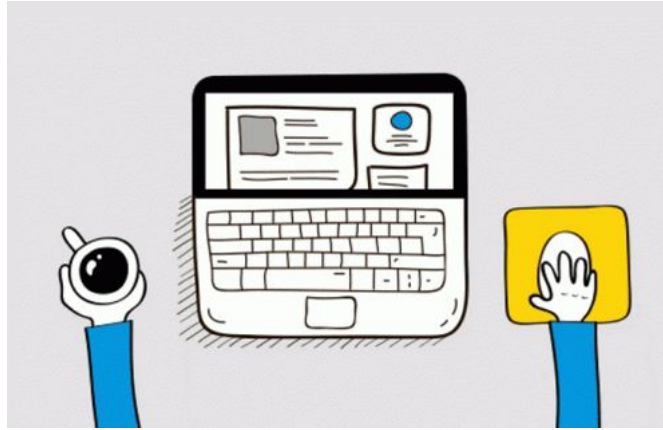


Reflection: What is Your Role?

- What points of connection do you see between your work and school mental health system improvement efforts?
- What support would your school or district need in order to engage in school mental health quality improvement?



DPI Roadmap Website Tour



[Link](#)



Questions?



Contact Information

Barb Novak // barb.novak@dpi.wi.gov // 608-266-5181
www.dpi.wi.gov/emlss

Jess Frain // jessica.frain@dpi.wi.gov // 608-266-0986
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health>