

Learning Bites: Getting Ready for Continuous Improvement



Building Your Team

The power of a team lies in its capacity to perform at all levels, and deliver results greater than the sum of its parts” (The Leaders Institute). Team-based leadership is critical to a high-quality continuous improvement process. Building an effective team that works at different levels and achieves results takes time and planning. Building an effective team also requires having the right people who have the right knowledge and skills. The district might reflect on the following question:

Does the team represent the following key stakeholders’ perspectives?

- at least one key leader with the ability to make executive-level decisions
- central office personnel
- building leadership
- instructional staff, including those from various grade levels/content areas from both general and special education
- non-instructional staff
- various student subgroup populations
- various systems (curriculum/instruction/assessment, data, technology, finance, student support, human resources, transportation, facilities management, food service, etc.)
- educational and health components of the Whole Child (physical, social and emotional health, nutrition, etc.)
- board members
- parent, community and, where appropriate, student representatives

It is important to note that having various perspectives represented does not necessarily mean having a different individual for each perspective. Particularly in smaller districts, individuals can represent more than one perspective. It may also not be practical to have all perspectives represented at every meeting; in that case, it is important to bring in the various

perspectives at particularly relevant times. Having appropriate levels of access to the MICIP platform allows all team members to stay up-to-date with the ongoing continuous improvement work.

Working as a Team

It is also important that members of the team have the necessary knowledge and skills as well as a commitment to continuous improvement. Ensuring that these expectations are established and communicated will significantly increase the chances that the continuous improvement process will be successful. Districts should consider and communicate the following:

- The expectations for team members, including:
 - attending and actively participating in meetings
 - providing input based on their perspective(s)
 - following through on assigned tasks
 - communicating information as requested
- Team norms for how to share and solicit input based on the perspective they represent.
- The district vision, mission, and beliefs and how they impact the work of continuous improvement.
- The continuous improvement mindset, process, and platform—including the technical, financial, and legal requirements.
- Change processes and how they impact the continuous improvement process.
- Multiple sources and types of data and how data will be used for decision-making.
- How decisions will be made and how those decisions will be communicated to both internal and external audiences.