How to A.C.E. School Improvement:
<u>A</u>ction, <u>C</u>ommitment & <u>E</u>quitable Ownership

School improvement requires a collective commitment on an individual level from all roles in the building. Country Meadows shares their story of collaboratively designing and implementing an action-oriented school improvement plan owned, in part, by each staff member. Through an ongoing commitment creation, feedback, and refinement cycle, individuals support the collective progress toward the goal of improved student growth.

[Watch the recording](#)

PRESENTERS

[Meghan Bird](#)
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[Jackie Griffin](#)
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After earning her degree in elementary education at the University of Iowa, Jackie Griffin joined the teaching field as a first grade teacher in Bellwood, Illinois. Jackie found her passion teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students and joined the team of Language Development Coaches at Kildeer School District 96. She has been working as a Language Development Coach for the past ten years. In addition to her undergraduate degree in elementary education, Jackie earned a masters degree in curriculum and instruction with an ELL endorsement and a masters degree in the principal preparation program from Concordia University, Chicago.

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[Jason Williams](#)
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Jason Williams began his teaching career as a seventh-grade science teacher in Poplar Grove, Illinois. After a few years, he came to Country Meadows as the Technology Coach. For the last three years, he served as the Coordinator for Teaching and Learning at North Shore School District 112 in Highland Park, Illinois. Jason graduated from Northern Illinois University with a degree in Elementary Education with Middle School Endorsements in General Science, Language Arts, Physical Science, Social Science, Speech/Theatre, and Theatre/Drama and holds three Masters of Education Degrees in Curriculum Design and Education Reform from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Literacy Education with an emphasis in ELL/Bilingual Education from Northern Illinois University, and Educational Leadership from American College of Education. He is now pursuing his doctorate in Educational Leadership at Concordia University, Chicago.
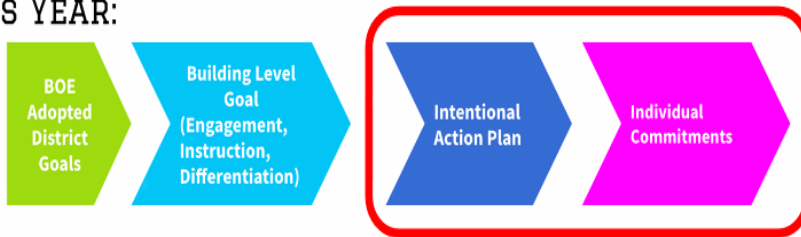
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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Goal Writing in D96

Previously:

BOE Adopted District Goals → Building Level Goals & Admin Action Plan → Team Goals & Intentional Action Plan → Individual Goals & Formal Evaluation Process

This Year:

BOE Adopted District Goals → Building Level Goal (Engagement, Instruction, Differentiation) → *Intentional Action Plan → Individual Commitments*

Meaningful relationships and a culture of collaboration are essential for school improvement.

Our goals are connected to engagement, instruction, and differentiation. Now, we have intentional action plans that are much more connected to the collective efficacy of the staff.

Working toward getting comfortable being uncomfortable.

- We've always put student learning and instruction first, while thinking through the roles of the various teams in the agency.

- First action is engagement, then we look at our lead indicators of success based on our student need and data we had.

Action Step #1

ACTION STEPS	LEAD INDICATORS OF SUCCESS How will I know that we are making progress towards our goal?	EVIDENCE
ACTION 1: **Engagement**: We must do whatever it takes to ensure that ALL students are engaging in instruction.	**Lead Indicator Statement:** Students will attend virtual and in person learning sessions and actively engage (camera on, respond to check ins) during instruction.	Utilizing the tracking system and documentation created (used to report out during leadership meetings) we will see an overall increase in the student engagement of students while participating in remote learning (i.e. cameras on, responding to teachers, asking/answering questions)

Action Step #2

ACTION STEPS	LEAD INDICATORS OF SUCCESS How will I know that we are making progress towards our goal?	EVIDENCE
ACTION 2: **Instructional Practice-** We MUST keep the focus on high-quality instruction in both environments, and expect to see it in practice.	**Lead Indicator Statement:** The various components of the instructional practices checklist will be utilized in whole and small group lessons, and UDIP conversations will specifically reflect and focus on data of underperforming subgroups/students projected not to meet to ensure ALL students are making adequate progress and closing the gap with well planned and delivered instruction.	Administrators will be able to utilize the formal and informal evaluation process to determine if components of the instructional checklist are used through domains 1 and 3. Informal walk through data com(leted by admin and staff will indicate overall growth (related to instructional practices checklist usage) The UDIP tabs for LEP, IEP, and Students PNTM will indicate overall growth (blue) for specific learning targets which will result in closing the learning gap and reaching overall mastery levels

Action Step #3

ACTION STEPS	LEAD INDICATORS OF SUCCESS How will I know that we are making progress towards our goal?	EVIDENCE
ACTION 3 **Differentiation-** We MUST assist teachers in learning how to structure differentiation to meet individual student needs	**Lead Indicator Statement:** Small group instruction will be utilized regularly and will be planned based on current, student specific academic and behavioral data. Each small group lesson will focus on a specific learning objective identified through the data analysis process.	Formal/informal evaluation process conducted by administrators UDIP conversations Instructional plan after reviewing and analyzing data - specific instructional lesson ideas developed for skills) Staff meeting review document

Even though we came up with those actions, we came up with feedback loops asking, **"What do you need from administrators to be engaged in this process?"**

- We had staff review improvement goals. They needed to know that we as a team have an expectation that we are all in this together

- Careful coordination and consideration of action for each of the roles was part of the action planning and improvement process.

We had to go slow to go fast!

COUNTRY MEADOWS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOAL

| Reviewed New Goal Structure with staff | Principal/AP initial brainstorm of action step indicators | Leadership & Instructional Coaches Review & provide feedback | Staff Review and Reflection on Admin/ Leadership/ Instructional Coach indicators | Staff reflect on Grade level /PIT indicators & provide feedback |

- Facilitating problem-solving when there wasn't engagement was essential to increase staff involvement

- It is important to build the capacity of our staff to empower them to do their job by sharing commitments

  - Every week we would make a new commitment and determine if it worked. Revisiting this regularly

WHAT ARE PERSONAL COMMITMENTS?

- They are SPECIFIC
  - Over-clarify (which strategy? What student(s)? When? How will you communicate or collect information?)
- They are MEASURABLE
  - How will you know you are successful? (Data, How many, deadline, etc.)
- They are INTENTIONAL
  - Is this something that would occur without you intentionally taking action? If so, challenge yourself with a different commitment.
- They are SHORT TERM
  - Is this something that is feasible to accomplish this week?
- They are PUBLIC
- They are NOT THE ONLY FOCUS OF YOUR INSTRUCTION
- When implemented they will MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

PURPOSE/NON-PURPOSE

PURPOSE:

- Build staff capacity to increase specificity and intentionality while writing biweekly commitments
- Increase staff to staff accountability & comfort having critical conversations
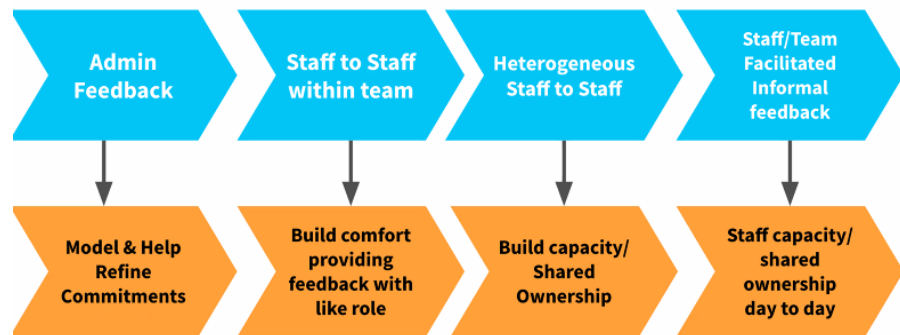- Small action steps lead to big change!

NON PURPOSE:

- Create an administrative facilitated process that requires compliance and constant administrator supervision

Increase staff to staff accountability. Small action steps lead to big change
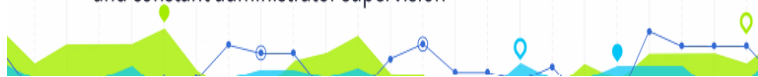
Feedback is important. We modeled this from the top down and created a foundation for staff to provide feedback with one another to discuss, reflect, and improve upon commitments

FEEDBACK EVOLUTION

Admin Feedback	Staff to Staff within team	Heterogeneous Staff to Staff	Staff/Team Facilitated Informal feedback
Model & Help Refine Commitments	Build comfort providing feedback with like role	Build capacity/ Shared Ownership	Staff capacity/ shared ownership day to day

- Co-creation is the cornerstone to effective implementation

- We kept our goals at the forefront, and were intentional about being inclusive of all roles

IMPACT FRAMEWORK

Inclusion	Meaningful Leadership	Professional Learning	Assess & Adjust	Collective Efficacy	Team
Development of look-fors for each team/role with direct input	Leverage already existing protocols and mechanisms to facilitate learning and analysis around SIP	All learning at Staff Meetings directly connected to areas of SIP; intentionally designed experiences to be staff led	Micro commitments to measure, gather feedback, reflect, and alter course while unwavering our focus on goals	Built capacity of staff to develop measurable commitments and provide meaningful feedback to sustain ownership and collective efficacy	Relied on districtwide administration teams, coaching team, grade level teams, and heterogeneous teams to provide perspective and help guide the work

"We can make a difference when we all work together and we are part of the same engine."

REFLECTIONS

- **When implementing new goals, programs or practice, what is it that you need from administration to help increase engagement?**

- **What reflective questions do you have that would help improve feedback and encourage conversation?**

Competencies for Implementation Facilitators

Competencies addressed in this webinar:

➔ Motivation Facilitating Change
➔ Diagnosis and Data Analysis
➔ Implementation Team
➔ Building Relations
➔ Knowledge Evidence-Based Intervention Implementation Methods

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