Education Delivery Institute's logo

The Education Delivery Institute (EDI) is a nonprofit organization that works with states, districts and schools across the country to support implementation of key education reforms. By employing an approach known as [*delivery*](http://www.deliveryinstitute.org/delivery-approach) – a proven methodology for effective implementation in the public sector – we help leaders maintain the necessary focus to drive change.

EDI has been working in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for over four years. As part of the support offered to districts within the PLN, EDI conducted one-day delivery consultations to help district leaders reflect on their district’s capacity to implement a high-quality educator evaluation system. Each consultation involved a short site visit to conduct focus groups with key stakeholders, including a self-assessment exercise with relevant staff.

The self-assessment process involves using a tool called the Assessment Framework, which is a set of common criteria for measuring the progress of any strategy or initiative. The criteria are centered on one crucial question: *What is the likelihood of delivery?* That is, what’s the likelihood that a particular strategy will make its promised contribution to an identified goal?

The likelihood of delivery is determined by three elements:

* **Quality of planning**: Does the strategy or initiative have a leader and team who will be responsible for implementation? Does it have a written plan for implementation with clear measures of progress? Most importantly, does that plan actually drive the team’s day-to-day work?
* **Capacity**: Have leaders specified the roles that everyone will need to play, at the district, school, and classroom level, in order to deliver real results? How well are leaders engaging with these people to support them in playing these roles? How confident are leaders that these people have both the skill and the will to play these roles at sufficient scale?
* **Evidence of progress**: Do leaders have and regularly review robust evidence of any type – outcomes, leading indicators, achievement of milestones, or other qualitative information – that shows whether progress is being made? Does this evidence suggest that strategy or initiative is on track to deliver its promised results?

Teams evaluate each of these elements on a four-point scale (from weak/red, to green/strong) which prevents a regression to the middle and forces a decision about whether something is more on track or off track. These elements are captured in a rubric that poses key questions for each element and gives a clear description of both the weak and strong ends of the scale.

The Sample Output (on Page 3) shows what a typical output from the self-assessment might look like: a rating or judgment for each of the criterion, with a few sentences describing the rationale for each. Notice that the “rationale” section is as specific as possible about the data or information that support the rating, without showing all of the underlying raw data.

On page 4 and 5, please read the detailed exercise guide for conducting a self-assessment with your leadership team.

In summary, the assessment framework allows your team to rigorously make use of all of your evidence about implementation – both quantitative and qualitative – through the application of objective criteria and the power of comparison.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Implementation Element** | **Rating** | **Rationale** |
| Quality of Planning | 3 | * Clearly articulated who is responsible (Supt. and LT) * Good relationship with the association * However, connection with the goal is still tenuous and we are still fleshing out the targets, milestones and timelines |
| Capacity | 2 | * People have clear understanding of general operation of education evaluation. * We are engaging with more people and have more effective & appropriate conversations * People are still not clear of the nuances of the system and improvement plans and the union still does not fully understand the system. * The challenge is building trust. * We are also not consistent in engaging capacity in teachers and principals and still have a ways to go on buy-in. * There is also some untapped capacity we can target. |
| Evidence of implementation progress | 2 | * We use trend data as a team. * Learning walks are also helpful to look at systemic issues at the school. * We have a good process of using data at the classroom level. However, we have not linked student data to overall goals. * There is not enough reflection at the district level; the trends are inconsistent and we are not as confident that our data is accurate. * We are also not sure if there is accountability. |
| Overall likelihood to deliver | 3 | * There are still some unknowns about capacity and relationships but we are on the right track. |

Sample Output

Exercise Guide – Self-Assessment

* Time: 45 minutes
* Objective: Use the Assessment Framework to assess implementation progress and likelihood of success
* Participants:
  + Leadership team (or anyone else responsible for implementation of the specific initiative)
  + Neutral facilitator (someone who can push and challenge the team members)

| **Time** | **Exercise Instructions** | **Facilitator Notes** | **Materials** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * 7 minutes | * Individually, review the “questions to consider” for *quality of planning*. Come to your own judgment (1 to 4) about the current state and record a few notes of rationale. * As a group, share out your ratings (you can use flip chart with tally marks or you can have everyone hold up fingers indicating their rating). Share out rationale and come to consensus about a judgment. | * You can choose to read aloud the “questions to consider” to encourage participants to carefully consider each of the points * You are responsible for pushing the group to avoid “group think” and encouraging everyone to share their insight. Remind the group that 1 (red) does not mean terrible and 4 (green) does not mean perfect. In fact, red can simply mean that you haven’t made the progress you would like and you need to focus on that area. * You can ask people to say their numbers aloud or hold up their fingers representing their judgment. Then, record notes as individuals share their evidence. Once you have heard enough rationale, push the group toward consensus. Record their final judgment and a concise 1-2 sentence rationale for the rating. | * Printed copies of the assessment framework * Flip chart paper |
| * 15 minutes | * Repeat the process for “capacity” and “evidence of implementation progress.” | * Continue to engage all of the participants in sharing, asking questions like:   + We haven’t heard from \_\_\_\_, would you share your evidence?   + Does anyone else agree with what \_\_\_\_ said? Why or why not?   + \_\_\_\_ says this is a \_\_. Does anyone else who gave the same rating want to share additional evidence? |  |
| * 10 minutes | * Finally, given the picture of the 3 above elements, consider the likelihood of success overall for the strategy. | * Review the ratings and rationale out loud for the group * Ask the group to consider the overall picture that emerges:   + At this point in time, how likely do you think we are to successfully implement this initiative? * Record the final judgment for “overall likelihood of success” and 1-2 sentence rationale |  |
| * 13 minutes | * Now, use the overall assessment to determine next steps to strengthen implementation. Consider where the areas of greatest challenge are and what the rational suggests needs to be improved. | * Ask the group to consider how some of the “redder” areas might move toward the green side of the spectrum:   + Where do we need to focus right now?   + What are the key actions we need to take? * Record next steps on flip chart and assign accountable owners |  |