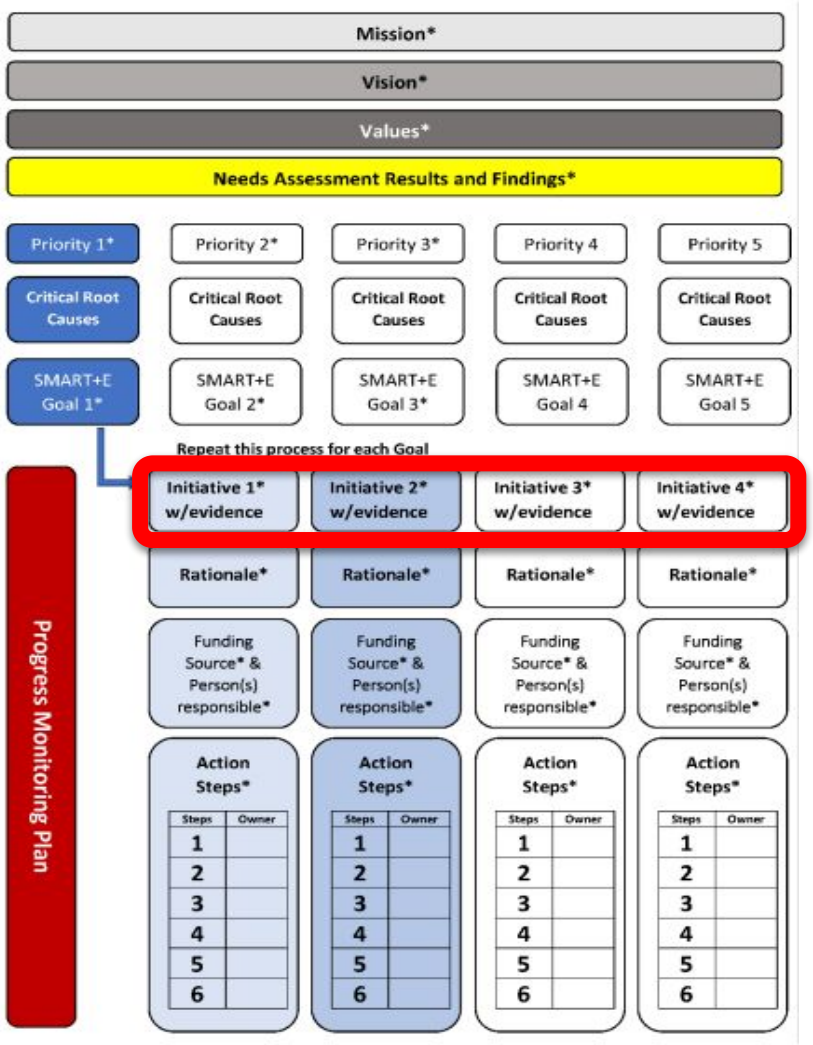
Module 3: Evidence Based Initiative Planning

March 2023

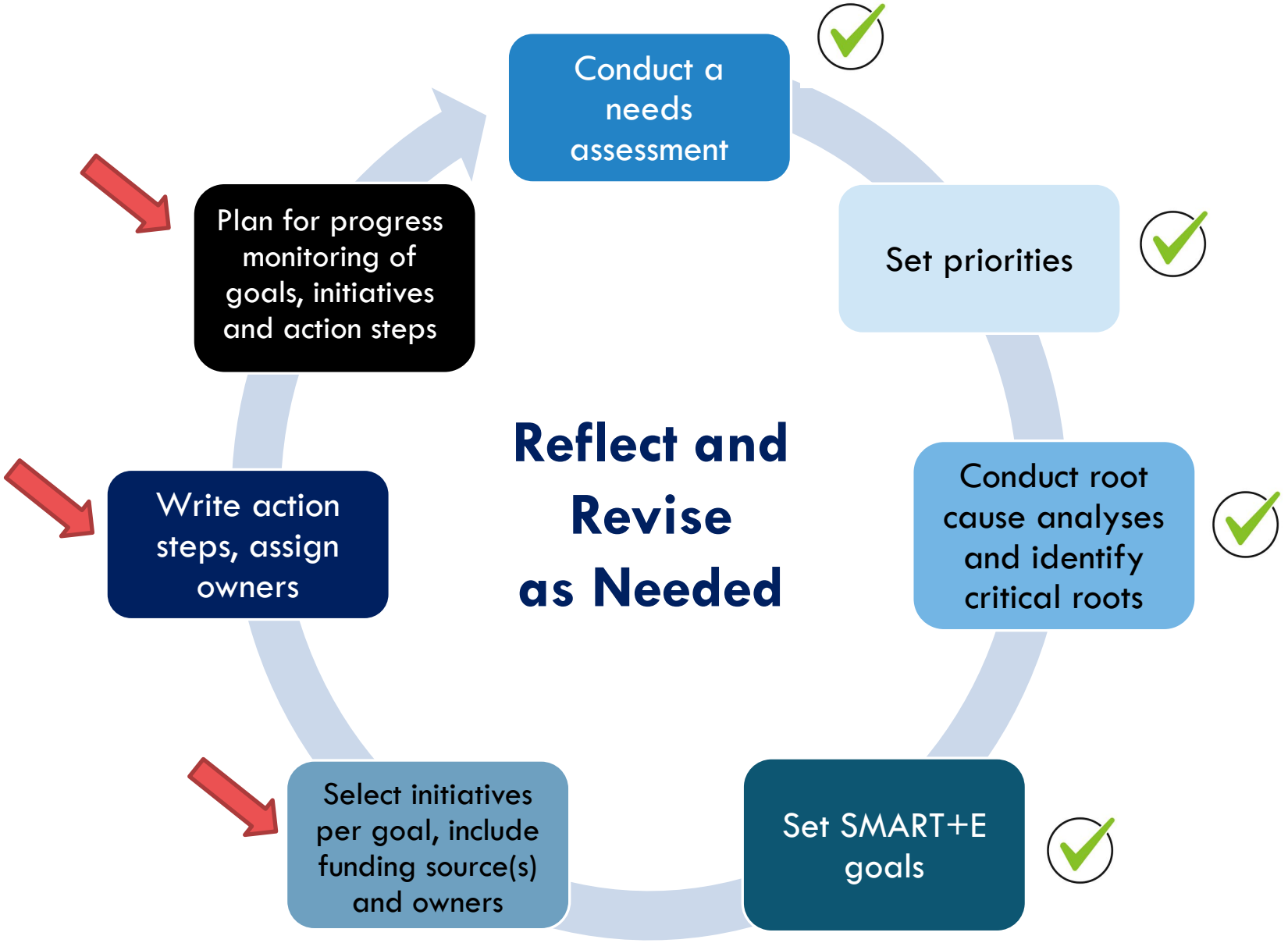
Meeting Objectives:

- Participants will use their identified critical roots & SMART+E goals to select initiatives
- Participants will learn about selecting evidence based initiatives
- Next steps

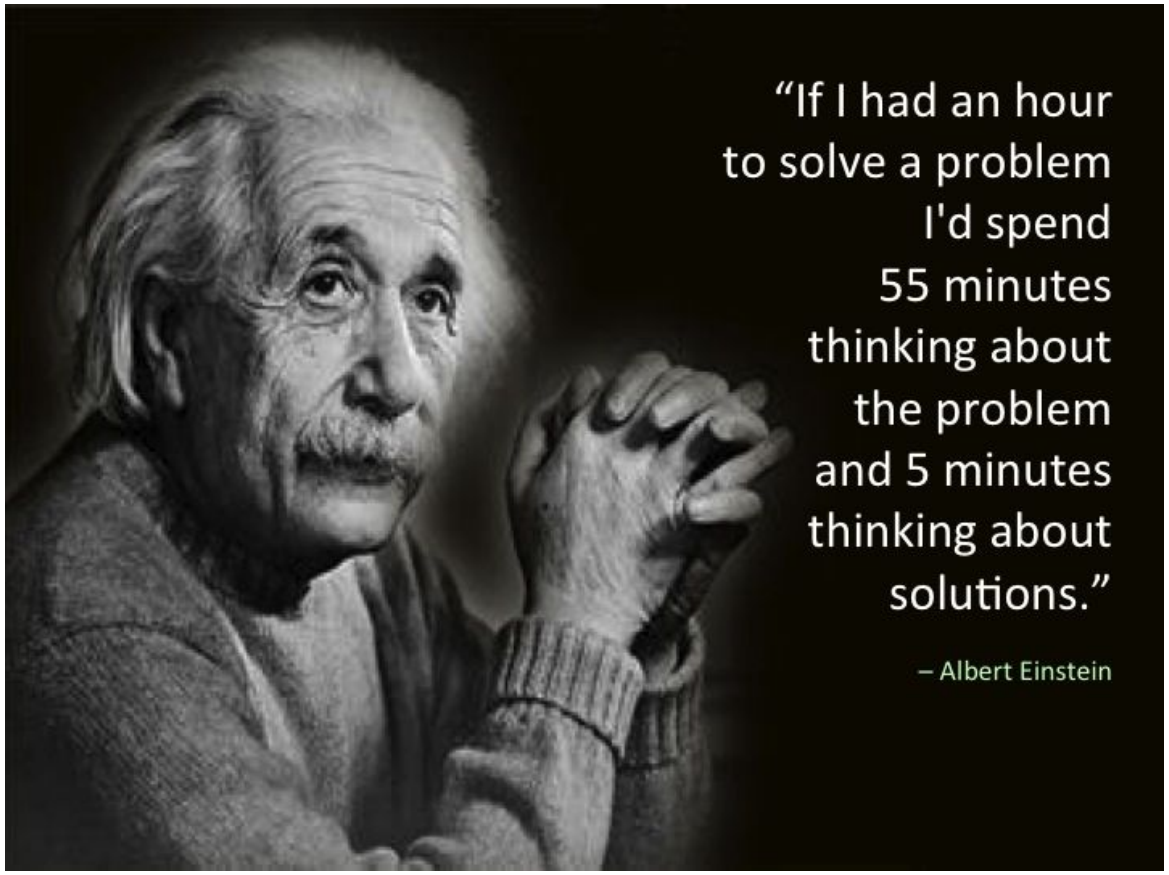
Where are we in the process?



Continuous Improvement Process



Root Cause Analyses



This should be a collaborative process with SIT Members

- For each problem statement, brainstorm the reasons behind the observed gap or need
- Find critical roots, based on feasibility and impact

Critical Roots

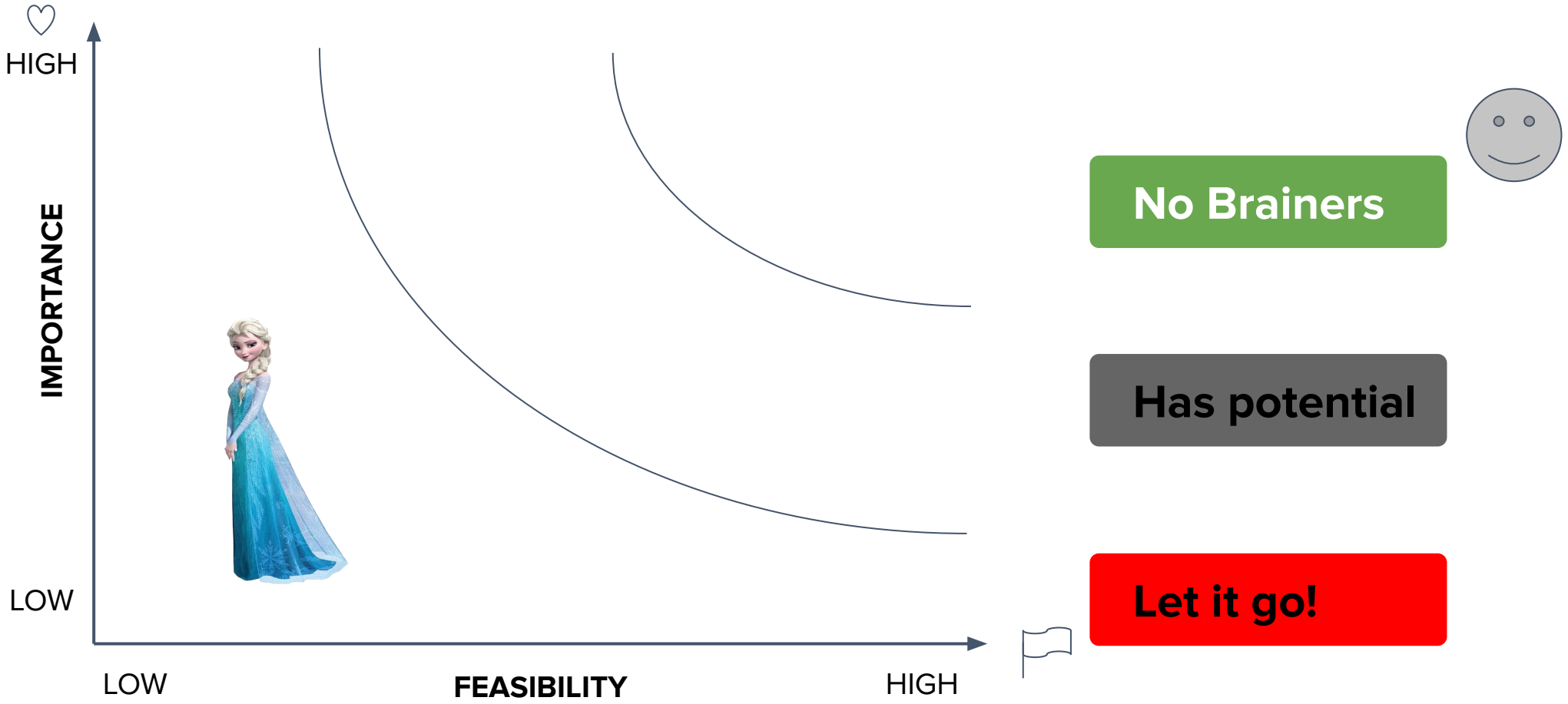
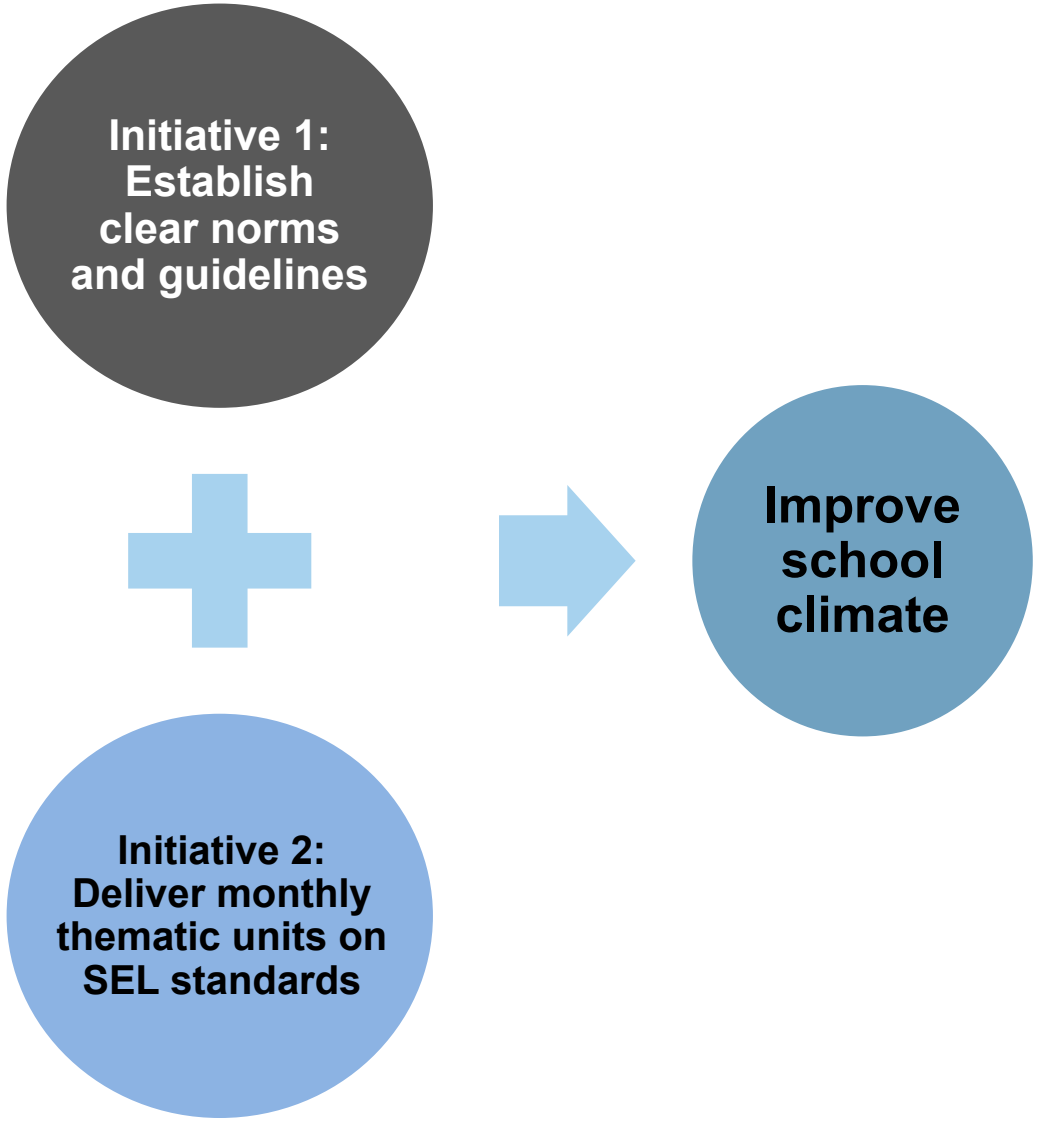


Image: Prioritization Map from Mural

Initiatives

Initiative Planning may be done with your SIT or another school-based team and presented to SIT for input

- Initiatives are to support the school with achieving a goal
- Initiatives should aim to address the critical roots
- Schools are required to:
  - include a general funding source and the amount allocated
  - assign owners for each initiative



What are Evidence-Based Initiatives?

"Evidence-based interventions are practices or programs that have evidence to show that they are effective at producing results and improving outcomes when implemented as intended. Generally, findings about evidence have been produced through published peer-reviewed studies and research"

– MA Department of Education, "How do We Know" initiative

Initiatives: (also known as interventions, strategies, or practices) the discrete set of activities designed to change the trajectory of a target population of students, in order to achieve a desired outcome.

Evidence-based: grounded in research, usually published in scholarly journals by academics

Initiatives

Why use Evidence-Based Initiatives?

In a world of many options and limited resources, we must find ways to choose the interventions best aligned to our priorities and goals for students. Evidence helps us do this.

One of the first fields to adopt standards of “evidence-based practice” was medicine, why do you think that was?

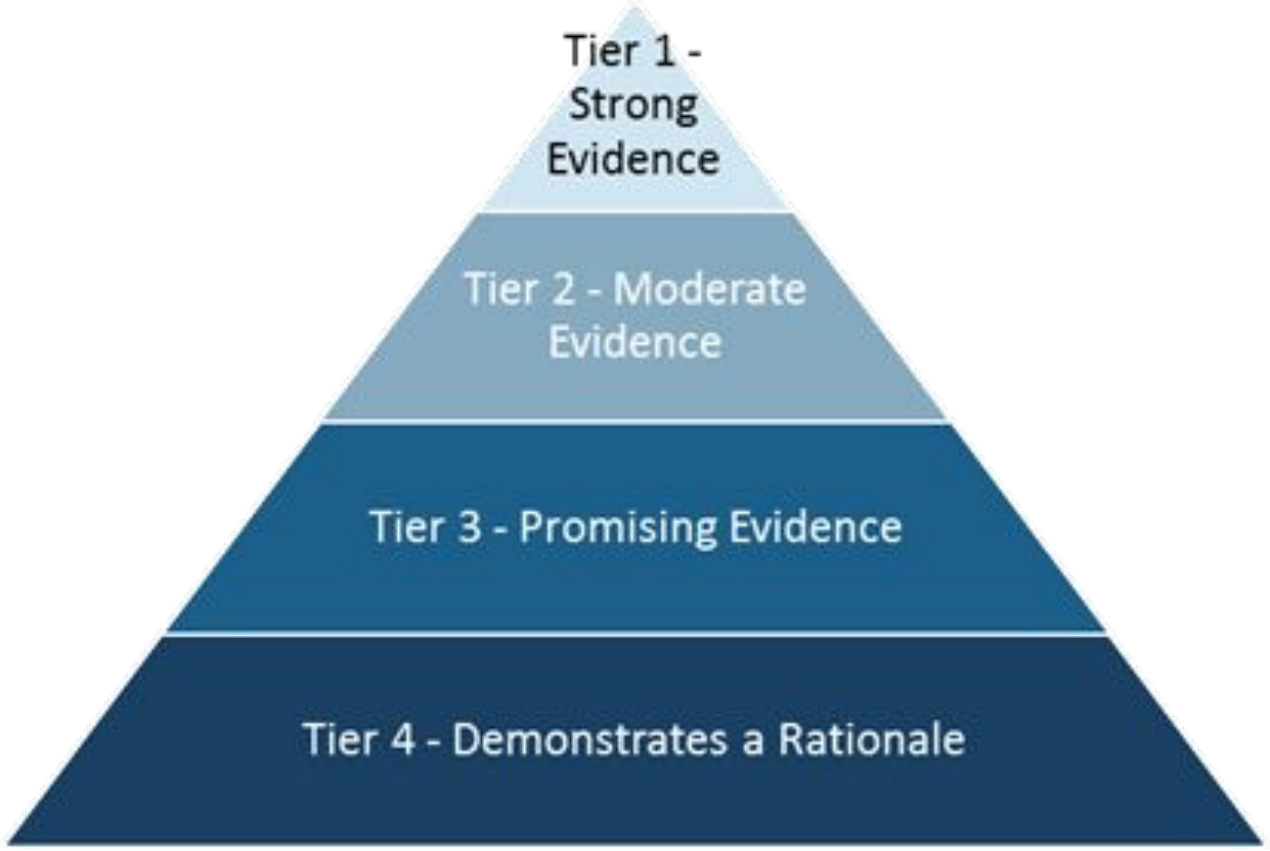
- High-stakes for patients
- Potentially life-long consequences
- Sometimes hard to know right away if something was working or not
- Gut decisions aren’t always right

Why use Evidence-Based Initiatives (cont.)

Making well-informed and supported choices for our students is also a means to ensure prudent use of public funds and to ensure we are doing what works best for students who are struggling.

ESSA's Four Tiers of Evidence

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) establishes expectations for use of evidence-based initiatives and four tiers of classification.



ESSA Evidence-Based Interventions

The criteria for identifying evidence-based interventions based on each of ESSA's four levels are as follows:

- **Strong evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented *experimental study;*
- **Moderate evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented *quasi-experimental study*; or
- **Promising evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented *correlational study* with statistical controls for selection bias*; or*
- **Demonstrates a rationale** based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

ESSA's Four Tiers of Evidence (cont.)

	Evidence Type	Description	Power	Sample	Outcomes
Tier 1	Strong Evidence: Randomized Control Experiment	Has treatment and control group, uses random assignment.	Demonstrates Convincing Causation	Multi-site with at least 350, from similar context as school wishing to implement	Statistically significant, positive results
Tier 2	Moderate Evidence: Quasi-Experiment	Has treatment and control group, but they are NOT randomly assigned.	Demonstrates Probable Causation	Multi-site with at least 350, from similar context as school wishing to implement	Statistically significant, positive results
Tier 3	Promising Evidence: Correlational Study	Examines relationship between treatment and outcome but does not establish causation.	Demonstrates Probable Relationship	Statistical controls for selection bias applied	Statistically significant, positive results
Tier 4	Theory Under Evaluation: Logic Model	Identifies key components of proposed intervention, describes relationship between components and relevant outcomes.	Cannot Demonstrated Causation		Ongoing effort to study

How to Find Evidence

Generate key words, concepts, or outcomes of interest using your needs, root causes, and/or SMART + E goals.

Curated Clearing Houses:

- What Works Clearinghouse (Practices Guide)

Websites for Evidence Based Initiatives

- Connecticut Department of Education
- Ohio Department of Education

Multi-faceted resource for evidence-based interventions:

- The “How do we know” Initiative (Mass. DESE)

Another good resource, but not curated and not specific to education:

- Google Scholar

Taking Stock

Assess your current initiatives. For each consider:

- Does it match your root cause and new goal?
- Is it being implemented according to plan?
- Are you seeing student outcomes aligned to the initiative improve?

➔ If the answer is **yes** to all three of these questions, keep the initiative.

➔ If the answer is **no** to any of these questions, you'll need to revise or replace the initiative by researching evidence to inform updates.

Next Steps

- Meet with school improvement team to identify initiatives that support each of your goals
- Ensure each initiative is supported by at least one qualifying piece of evidence (Tier I, Tier II or Tier III to support use of 1003 SIG funds)
- Questions? Feel free to contact us

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