

*Compiled from interviews with Wisconsin schools and districts*

# 6

## PRACTICAL WAYS TO MAXIMIZE SYSTEM ASSESSMENTS



We know that self-assessment is critical to the successful implementation of an equitable, multi-level system of supports. How do Wisconsin schools make sure system assessments remain a priority year after year?

We interviewed multiple schools and districts to discover their keys to successfully examining their systems. Six key themes emerged from our conversations.

# 1

## Clarify the language and vocabulary used on assessments



### THEME IN ACTION

- Clarify core vocabulary up front
- Provide a cheat sheet for what the questions mean and what the assessment acronyms stand for (sometimes the language is confusing)
- Break down the items on the assessments so everyone understands what they are actually asking
- Make sure your team knows what assessment tools you're using and what they measure

### SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- The Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) district team created Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) help guides, which are shared with teams for clarification, common messaging, and to build common understanding when assessing their system. These resources are shared by external coaches in relevant coaching sessions, trainings for new team members, boosters, networkings, and monthly newsletters. The documents are also accessible to anyone via the MPS website.

— Milwaukee Public School District

- The Chippewa Falls High School leadership team has rich conversations around the language and vocabulary on line items of the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR), within the high school context. For example, "This is what screening tools mean at the high school level." The clarity brought through these conversations helps the team to more accurately assess their implementation.

— Chippewa Falls High School

## Create an assessment plan and add the dates to the calendar

# 2

### SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- Waupaca Learning Center put together a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) handbook and outlined the assessments so they are not scheduled so closely together. Staggering them helps teachers keep things straight and not confuse the different surveys and assessments.

– *Waupaca Learning Center*

- Milwaukee Public Schools' district team supervisor and external coaches develop an annual district calendar for all behavior and academic-focused multi-level system of supports (MLSS) assessments. The calendar also includes other benchmark assessments to ensure assessment times do not overlap. External coaches share the calendars directly with school internal coaches and administrators. It is hyperlinked into monthly newsletters and is included in relevant district professional learning support sessions, such as a booster or networking session on systems assessment action planning.

– *Milwaukee Public School District*

### THEME IN ACTION

- Schedule the assessments and a regular time for reviewing assessment data on school's calendar
- Districts may wish to coordinate assessment times across their schools at the beginning of the school year
- Be sure your assessment timeline takes into consideration what else is happening throughout the year
- If assessments are taken about the same time each year, they become a predictable part of the schedule
- Assessments are part of the agenda for leadership team meetings

## THEME IN ACTION

- District provides time/ window during the year
- District coordinator can help ensure assessments are done at each school by reminding key school personnel about the deadline as it approaches
- Key people in a school building are responsible for overseeing and ensuring staff are completing assessments
- Principal supports the self-assessment process
- Designate roles to make sure the surveys get done each year

# 3

## Identify people who are responsible for ensuring assessments are completed

## SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- Oconomowoc Area School District's PBIS external coach and Director of Pupil Services work together to set the PBIS assessment calendar for the year. The external coach communicates the time frames for assessing to principals and internal coaches at the beginning of the year, checks to ensure that the assessments are taken during that time, and confirms staff are comfortable and knowledgeable on how to take the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) assessments. The external coach regularly connects with school internal coaches and principals to make sure the teams are supported in assessing their systems.

– *Oconomowoc Area School District*

- Holmen's two PBIS coaches provide their schools with checksheets that include times for assessing, reviewing, and revising action plans. The coaches encourage administrators to include that information in regular announcements. For the all-staff Self-Assessment Survey (SAS), they encourage staff to share photos of themselves taking the assessments and those are entered into a raffle for prizes.

– *Holmen School District*

## Build in structured time for completing assessments

# 4



### THEME IN ACTION

- Set aside specifically scheduled time for people to communicate and collaborate with one another about the assessments and data
- If your full team has limited meeting times, try to find a smaller group willing to meet

### SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- To ensure adequate time for rich conversation, the Eleva-Strum Middle/High School leadership team has increased the amount of time set aside for discussion of system needs and practices revealed through completion of the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR).

– *Eleva-Strum Middle/High School*

- At West Side Elementary School in the Elkhorn School District, the principal opens the window for PBIS assessments based on scheduled fall meeting times. Teachers are provided time during the first staff meeting or in-service to complete the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS), while support staff complete the SAS as a part of their monthly meeting. The PBIS team completes the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) at the team meeting time closest to when the full staff completed the SAS.

– *West Side Elementary School*

# 5

## Assessing is required and supported by the district



### THEME IN ACTION

- Self-assessment is required by district
- District ensures staff understand the purpose of the assessments, why they are taken, and makes use of the results
- Central office sends reminders to complete assessments
- District emphasis on the importance of assessing helps schools prioritize the value

### SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- The Sun Prairie Area School District provides time for school teams to examine and plan around PBIS self-assessment and student outcome data at the end of each school year. Teams outline a plan for addressing big implementation needs throughout the school year, and share their biggest successes, so that other teams can learn from them. School-based team members and PBIS coaches are provided monthly networking and collaborative learning opportunities to fine-tune plans based on data.

– *Sun Prairie Area School District*

- The Green Bay Area Public School district behavior support teachers (external facilitators) create a district fidelity assessment calendar which is shared with internal facilitators (IFs) every fall during the IF networking meetings. Purpose and directions for completing all fidelity surveys are reviewed at these meetings throughout the year to ensure consistent implementation. District behavior support teachers complete necessary survey walkthroughs starting a month before the window opens and are present when the surveys are being completed. The district behavior support teachers support school teams during their tier 1 and tier 2 meetings, to monitor and update implementation action steps based on survey data.

– *Green Bay Area Public School District*

# SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- The Kenosha School District uses PBIS system assessments as a data source for action planning and to determine next steps for implementation. A district-wide action plan template guides schools in integrating student outcomes and implementation data. Timelines for assessing, reviewing specific pieces of data, and reviewing plans are mapped out on the action plan.

– *Kenosha School District*

- The Berlin Area School District consistently uses the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) three times per year for progress monitoring of PBIS practices in each school, and the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR) is taken using both a mathematics and reading lens every fall. Regular use of these systems assessments facilitates the district continuous improvement planning. Results are used to set new Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles for behavioral and academic supports, and data is considered when identifying root causes through continuous improvement tools such as the 5-Why process and Fishbone diagrams.

– *Berlin Area School District*

- The district curriculum director organizes a date and time for every school to take the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR) annually for reading, and hires substitutes for that day. The curriculum director works with the district leadership team, school principals and school leadership teams, and with CESA and Rtl Center staff to facilitate the assessment process and to monitor implementation through action planning that involves determining areas of focus for coaching, professional development, and other implementation support.

– *Rhineland School District*

**Use system assessments to action plan and determine next steps for implementation**

## THEME IN ACTION

- A primary purpose for taking the behavior assessments is to use the data to create steps of action
- Use assessments to monitor progress and make any needed changes in implementation
- Assessment data helps identify and prioritize areas of need
- Identify areas of weakness and strength to share out to staff

6

