Reference Manual on Making School Climate Improvements

ACTIVITY SET 4 | Choosing and Implementing School Climate Interventions

Choosing and Implementing School Climate Interventions (ACTIVITY SET 4)

After you understand your school climate strengths and needs through data collection, analysis, and review, you are ready to select, plan for, and implement school climate interventions that target needs identified in your data.

Here, in Activity Set 4, you use a data-driven approach to choosing and refining school climate interventions. It also is important to leverage the work in Activity Set 2: Engaging Stakeholders in School Climate Improvements because interventions are more likely to be implemented as intended when members of the school community are involved in the process of selecting and implementing interventions.

This activity set is composed of two action steps: (a) choose, plan for, and implement programmatic interventions; and (b) evaluate and refine the choice of interventions and implementation strategies and continue planning for improvement and sustainability. In addition, strategies within this activity set help you begin thinking about how you will evaluate and sustain the selected interventions during an extended period. Doing this helps you to consider the systems, structures, and practices that make school climate efforts an institutionalized practice in your district, CMO/EMO, or school.

Choose, Plan for, and Implement Interventions (ACTIVITY SET 4, ACTION STEP 1)

It is likely that you already are implementing initiatives and interventions that address school climate. However, they are not always targeted to your specific needs (i.e., not informed by your school climate data), implemented with fidelity (i.e., not implemented as they were intended to be used), or connected or aligned with one another (i.e., not addressing all needs or not duplicating efforts).

The purpose of this action is to review your school climate data and identify the school climate interventions that will best fit your needs. Revisit the interventions already underway in your school(s) to determine whether you want to continue, modify, remove, or replace. Use your school climate data, your mission and vision, and your short- and long term- goals to guide your decisions.
The nine objectives within this action step help you carefully select, plan for, implement, and evaluate school climate interventions:

- 4.1.1. Review current interventions that address school climate at multiple tiers.
- 4.1.2. Review summary of results of data analysis to inform the selection of interventions from a multitiered perspective.
- 4.1.3. Assess whether current interventions are addressing your identified needs and goals at multiple tiers.
- 4.1.4. Assess readiness to implement interventions and specific innovations that support a multitiered approach.
- 4.1.5. Select or plan to modify interventions based on needs, priorities, and goals revealed by the data.
- 4.1.6. Participate in a thoughtful planning process for implementing the selected interventions.
- 4.1.7. Implement interventions, ensuring fidelity of implementation or appropriate adaptation.
- 4.1.8. Use data to monitor the fidelity of implementation of interventions.
- 4.1.9. Continue school climate messaging to districts/CMOs/EMOs and schools at different levels of implementation.

The suggested strategies provide guidance for reviewing and selecting interventions based on the needs identified in your data and implementing those interventions with fidelity.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.1: Review Current Interventions That Address School Climate at Multiple Tiers**

**Purpose of Reviewing Current Interventions at Multiple Tiers**

Conducting a review of current climate-related interventions helps you understand what climate-related interventions you currently implement and for whom, how the interventions relate to each other, and how well they are implemented across and within subgroups. In addition, you can review your current interventions based on the data collected during Activity Set 3: Collecting and Reporting School Climate Data.

These strategies will help you determine whether you have the organizational capacity to adapt or modify current interventions or implement new ones. (See Objective 4.1.5: Select or plan to modify interventions based on needs and priorities revealed by the data.) As you review your climate-related interventions, confirm that you offer interventions through a multitiered approach, providing supports to all students and other members of the school community. This approach will ensure that current interventions provide a foundation of universal supports to all students (Tier 1), extra support for those who need more assistance (Tier 2), and intensive and targeted supports.
for those who most need them (Tier 3). Also make sure that your interventions align with the needs, goals, and values from subgroups.

**Strategies for Reviewing Current Interventions at Multiple Tiers**

a. Refer to the current list of climate-related interventions previously identified (see Objective 1.1.5: Review data and current interventions being implemented at multiple tiers) to understand what is being implemented and the extent to which they are implemented as designed, as well as the impact of the interventions, if known.

b. Consider the scope and focus of climate-related interventions to determine (a) if interventions target the needs and goals identified from the data analysis and (b) if educators and school staff implement interventions as intended.

c. Determine the research base behind the climate-related interventions you currently implement. Utilize resources, such as What Works Clearinghouse developed and maintained by the IES to provide up-to-date evidence on education programs, products, practices, and policies.

d. Assess the effectiveness of current activities and interventions that are designed to address identified needs based on outcomes and implementation measures. Pay attention to how interventions are working for subgroups of students and respondent groups.

e. Develop a matrix that lists the current climate-related interventions and the needs and goals each intervention addresses. This approach helps determine if there are duplicative efforts, as well as how the interventions align to comprehensively support the topic areas of school climate. (You can use this framework when working on Objective 4.1.3: Assess whether current programs are addressing your identified needs at multiple tiers.)

f. Consider coherence when reviewing interventions. How does this intervention align with, add on, or duplicate the other activities in my school/classroom? You might consider external coherence as well: How does this intervention relate to other school-level or community-wide priorities and goals? For example, a new school safety initiative should align with a community youth violence prevention initiative.

**Related Resources for Reviewing Current Interventions at Multiple Tiers**

- **School Climate Improvement Online Module 6: Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions (NCSSLE):** This online module provides an activity to help think through how to choose an intervention.

- **Student Engagement (NCSSLE webinar):** This webinar presents specific methods for assessing existing programs for opportunities for students to engage in more meaningful ways in school, as well as ways of increasing those opportunities.

- **Resource Mapping Tool (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention):** This tool helps identify existing programs and the tiers they serve (universal versus targeted needs) in your school, district, and community that address the priority need or issue you identified in your review of quantitative and qualitative data.
Mapping resources supports many processes in school climate improvement efforts, such as identifying gaps in services, logic model development, and deciding which EBPs to implement.

- **Selecting Evidence-Based Practices** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This brief provides a framework for identifying key pieces of information you should know to select EBPs. It includes information on identifying EBPs, determining readiness to implement, tracking outcomes, and monitoring fidelity. In the appendix, key questions are summarized in a discussion guide, along with worksheets and resources to help you select an EBP that meets your needs.

- **Selecting Evidence-Based Programs for Schools Settings Module** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module presents strategies and tools for identifying and selecting EBPs for school settings.

- **School Climate Practices for Implementation and Sustainability** (National School Climate Center): These 11 briefs contain research and effective practices for implementing school climate improvements, based on the National School Climate Center’s extensive work with the academic community. The practice briefs link specifically to school climate topic domains such as equity, bullying prevention, dropout prevention, and social development.

- **Stages of Implementation Analysis: Where Are We?** (National Implementation Research Network): This implementation and planning tool helps you assess, plan, and track implementation activities to improve the success and fidelity of your school’s or district’s selected EBPs.

- **ImpleMap: Exploring the Implementation Landscape** (National Implementation Research Network): This planning tool facilitates the evaluation of the capacity of your school or district to actively implement programs and helps you clarify what you want to achieve with your intervention and identify which EBPs to use, who will support implementation and how to select and train those individuals, and how you will make the intervention happen.

- **Safe, Supportive, and Successful Schools Step by Step** (AIR) This guide provides easy-to-follow steps for educators wanting to know more about planning, implementing, and evaluating schoolwide improvement. It includes strategies to address social, ethical, and emotional change for all students; early interventions for some students who exhibit minor behavioral issues; and intensive interventions for the few students in the school who have significant emotional or behavioral issues.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.2: Review Summary of Results of Data Analysis to Inform the Selection of Interventions From a Multitiered Perspective**

**Purpose of Reviewing Summary of Results of Data Analysis to Inform the Selection of Interventions From a Multitiered Perspective**

In Activity Set 3: Collecting and Reporting School Climate Data, you may have developed data reports to disseminate to your stakeholders. During that process, you began to review your data to determine your areas of strength and need, helping you identify school climate priorities and goals.
The strategies within this objective help you review results to select interventions to meet identified needs at multiple tiers of support, including how to review multiple types of data (e.g., survey data, focus groups, school administrative and incident data) to inform the climate-related interventions you select. Multiple pieces of data can help you identify the effectiveness of current and previous interventions. Quantitative data (from surveys and administrative data sources) can help you identify what needs to improve (e.g., which topic areas), whereas qualitative data (from focus groups) can help inform why those needs exist and, potentially, ways to improve those identified needs.

In addition, review your results by respondent characteristics. This step helps determine whether you have appropriate interventions in place to address the needs of all members of your school community or only certain groups. Analyzing data by respondent group and subgroups also helps you with strategies in the next objective. (See Objective 4.1.3: Assess whether current interventions are addressing your identified needs at multiple tiers.) For example, students who are English learners may perceive the instructional environment as less supportive than other groups of students. In this case, you might target certain interventions to your English learners to increase instructional environment supports.

**Strategies for Reviewing Summary of Results of Data Analysis to Inform the Selection of Interventions From a Multitiered Perspective**

a. Review multiple types of data (e.g., survey data, focus groups, school administrative, and incident data) to determine what your needs are and why they might exist, as well as to identify potential solutions you can implement. Review data by respondent characteristics and for stakeholder subgroups, if available.

b. Identify your primary areas of strength and areas of need at multiple tiers. This approach helps you assess what current interventions may be working well that you may choose to continue, as well as areas of need for which you will want to implement interventions. (Review the Data Interpretation Guide referenced in Collecting and Reporting School Climate Data [Activity Set 3] for recommendations on examining data in relation to universal and targeted needs.)

c. Identify what future shifts in the data you want to see as evidence that interventions are having an impact on documented needs at multiple tiers.

d. Set goals for improving data points; use specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound (SMART) goals.

**Related Resources for Reviewing Summary of Results of Data Analysis to Inform the Selection of Interventions From a Multitiered Perspective**

- **School Climate Improvement Online Module 6: Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions** (NCSSLE): This online module provides an activity to help think through how to choose an intervention.

- **Using Data to Identify Programmatic Interventions** (NCSSLE Webinar): This webinar discusses strategies for connecting your data to interventions, including how to use school climate data to identify needs, how to identify types of programmatic interventions that can address these needs, and how to select programmatic interventions that can be implemented effectively within a school or district.
Introduction

Planning for School Climate Improvements (ACTIVITY SET 1)

Engaging Stakeholders in School Climate Improvements (ACTIVITY SET 2)

Collecting and Reporting School Climate Data (ACTIVITY SET 3)

Choosing and Implementing School Climate Interventions (ACTIVITY SET 4)

Monitoring and Evaluating Overall School Climate Improvements (ACTIVITY SET 5)

Related Resources From the Field

- Data-Based Decision Making (National Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Center): These presentation slides can inform how you use data to develop decisions, design problem statements, determine what data sources you need, and define solutions.

- Selecting Evidence-Based Practices (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This brief provides a framework for identifying key pieces of information you should know to select EBPs. It includes information on identifying EBPs, determining readiness to implement, tracking outcomes, and monitoring fidelity. In the appendix, key questions are summarized in a discussion guide, along with worksheets and resources to help you select an EBP that meets your needs.

- Evidence-Based Module Series (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This self-paced learning module series provides guidance on selecting, preparing for, and implementing EBPs in school settings.
  - Selecting Evidence-Based Programs for Schools Settings Module (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module presents strategies and tools for identifying and selecting evidence-based programs for school settings.

OBJECTIVE 4.1.3: Assess Whether Current Interventions Are Addressing Your Identified Needs and Goals at Multiple Tiers

Purpose of Assessing Whether Current Interventions Are Addressing Needs at Multiple Tiers

The strategies within this objective use the strategies within the two objectives discussed previously and will guide the rest of your work throughout this activity set. Through Objective 4.1.1: Review current interventions that address school climate at multiple tiers, you assessed the degree to which your current climate-related interventions met the needs of your students and other stakeholders from a multitiered perspective, and through Objective 4.1.2: Review summary of results of data analysis to inform the selection of interventions from a multitiered perspective, you reviewed your school climate data from a multitiered perspective to identify priorities and goals. In the current objective, you combine those efforts to assess whether current climate-related interventions address your needs, as identified by the data at multiple tiers of support. Even if your current climate-related interventions intend to address identified needs, implementation does not automatically translate into effectiveness. During this process, you can identify whether there are multiple climate-related interventions that meet the same needs, or if there are any gaps between current interventions and needs. In addition, this process helps identify those interventions that you want to continue, modify, replace, or add. Furthermore, by examining how well educators implement current interventions, you identify what you and your staff do really well—expertise that can be leveraged to implement new or adapted interventions. You might also identify the coherence between current interventions and
the rest of what is happening in the classroom; characteristics of both educators and interventions may be simultaneously driving implementation success.

**Strategies for Assessing Whether Current Interventions Are Addressing Needs at Multiple Tiers**

a. Map intended goals and outcomes of the school climate efforts with current climate-related interventions at multiple tiers.

b. Develop a matrix that maps the intended goals and outcomes and achievements of current climate-related interventions by the identified strengths and needs at multiple tiers. (See Objective 4.1.2: Review summary of results of data analysis to inform the selection of interventions from a multitiered perspective.)

c. Identify gaps between goals, needs, strengths, and current interventions at multiple tiers using the matrix map of intended outcomes of interventions.

d. Identify interventions that are working as intended at multiple tiers (e.g., examine fidelity-tool or checklist and school climate data). (See Objective 4.1.8: Use data to monitor the fidelity of implementation of a multitiered system of behavioral support.)

e. Determine why current climate-related interventions may not be working as intended at multiple tiers (e.g., Were implementation resources sufficient? Was training provided? Were interventions implemented with fidelity? Are the interventions a good fit for the socio-cultural characteristics of the students?). This can be done by collecting additional data about implementation (e.g., teacher focus groups or teacher logs about their levels of implementation and supports, school or classroom observations, or resource check).

f. Identify interventions that are redundant across goals and needs at multiple tiers.

g. Identify those interventions you want to continue, modify, or substitute for current interventions at multiple tiers.

h. Identify interventions that should be discontinued (“de-implemented”). It can be difficult for educators to let go of interventions, and you may need to work with the school community to help people understand why de-implementation is the right choice – for example, perhaps there is a more effective option, or it is taking up time and resources that could be better spent elsewhere, or your data show that it is simply not providing sufficient benefits.

**Related Resources for assessing Whether Current Interventions Are Addressing Needs at Multiple Tiers**

- **Using Data to Identify Programmatic Interventions** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar discusses strategies for connecting your data to interventions, including how to use school climate data to identify needs, how to identify types of programmatic interventions that can address these needs, and how to select programmatic interventions that can be implemented effectively within a school or district.

- **Violence Prevention** (NCSSLE webinar featuring Dr. Denise Gottfredson): This webinar provides practical recommendations on how to develop, manage, implement, and sustain a violence prevention strategy. During the presentation, Dr. Gottfredson, an expert in
delinquency and delinquency prevention at the University of Maryland, shared research she conducted about assessing program implementation that can be applied generally.

- **Resource Mapping Tool** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This tool helps identify existing programs and the tiers they serve (universal versus targeted needs) in your school, district, and community that address the priority need or issue you identified in your review of quantitative and qualitative data. Mapping resources supports many processes in school climate improvement efforts, such as identifying gaps in services, logic model development, and deciding which EBPs to implement.

**Related Resources From the Field**

- **Continuum Mapping Guide**: This guide describes how continuum mapping helps schools or districts view the myriad learning supports that are available to students (e.g., activities, programs, initiatives, and services) and identify which students receive those supports.

- **Decisions in Motion: Iowa S3 Toolkits for Improving School Climate**, Step 3: Selecting Our Strategy: These toolkits are designed for schools that want to get moving right away to improve school climate. They cover a range of topics—from discipline to improving relationships—and can help schools and districts use data to develop a plan and create clear expectations. Each toolkit provides a sample plan and a step-by-step process of creating that plan to support your efforts to improve the climate in your school.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.4: Assess Readiness to Implement Interventions and Specific Innovations That Support a Multitiered Approach**

**Purpose of Assessing Readiness to Implement Interventions and Specific Innovations That Support a Multitiered Approach**

While an organizational capacity assessment determines district, CMO/EMO, and school implementation abilities (e.g., resources, human capital), a needs and resources assessment identify the structures, practices, and materials you need to promote or more fully implement your theory of action. Based on that information, you can then assess general readiness to continue and sustain those efforts and innovations you need to implement to support a multitiered approach. For example, are you ready and able to invest the necessary resources such as time, materials, and training to support school climate efforts over the long haul? Are you aware of the differentiated supports that are needed for all students (Tier 1); those interventions needed for students who need further assistance (Tier 2); and the intensive, individualized interventions for those students who need more targeted support (Tier 3)? By ensuring that you have the capacity and readiness to implement and support needed interventions, you will be more likely to implement them with fidelity.

Organizational capacity includes creating or expanding the structures within your district or school to determine how various interventions are working together to support not only universal approaches but also those for Tiers 2 and 3: Are existing interventions an extension of your universal approaches rather than disconnected interventions? Furthermore, your organizational capacity includes the motivation and belief structure of those who are implementing the interventions, as well as those
who are receiving them. Do your students, staff, and families believe that the interventions are needed and useful? Is anyone being left behind? Because the successful implementation of interventions you select depends on your readiness and capacity, the strategies for this objective may be accomplished in tandem with those for the following Objective 4.1.5: Select or plan to modify interventions based on needs and priorities revealed by the data.

**Strategies for Documenting Needs and Assessing Readiness to Implement Interventions and Specific Innovations That Support a Multitiered Approach**

a. Develop and administer a needs and resources/assets assessment.

b. Conduct focus groups with students, staff, and families that ask about needs and assets. Focus group protocols should attempt to garner information about their motivation to participate in the efforts and their perceptions about the general organizational capacity (e.g., climate, culture, leadership, and resources) to engage in the efforts.

c. Document the strengths that support a positive school climate as shown in your data to assess what you do well in implementing interventions. Analyze why you implement specific interventions well (e.g., examine fidelity tool/checklist data).

d. Consider the characteristics of educators, the intervention, and the school’s supportive environment.

e. Identify available resources (e.g., time, materials, and training) and additional resources that could be secured or reallocated to meet needs at multiple tiers.

f. Assign individuals to reach out to potential external partners in your school climate efforts (e.g., universities, colleges, or community-based organizations) as well as other resources to support implementation.

g. Conduct a readiness assessment to evaluate general and innovation specific readiness for implementation of multitiered interventions (see Willing, Able → Ready brief below in the Related Resources section). Determine if your students, staff, and families have the motivation to engage in the climate-related interventions.

**Related Resources Documenting Needs and Assessing Readiness to Implement Interventions and Specific Innovations That Support a Multitiered Approach**

- **Sample Safe and Supportive Schools LEA Needs Assessment Template** (S3): This template connects data from teachers/staff, students, and parents to domains, interventions, and communication by creating a space that summarizes what data they have and may need.

- **Willing, Able → Ready: Basics and Policy Implications of Readiness as a Key Component for Implementation of Evidence-Based Interventions** (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): This brief defines organizational readiness and the three components readiness is composed of: motivation of people in the organization, organizational capacities (general functioning), and intervention-specific capacities (conditions that support a specific intervention).

- **Implementing New Programs: The Impact of Current Practice** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar helps you identify supports and barriers in your current practices, policies,
and programs that would affect the success of a new program; steps to create more stable organizational structure; and tasks that will help incorporate new strategies into existing practices.

- **School Climate Practices for Implementation and Sustainability** (National School Climate Center): This brief contains research and effective practices for school climate measurement and assessment based on the National School Climate Center’s extensive work with the academic community.

- **Stages of Implementation Analysis: Where Are We?** (National Implementation Research Network): This implementation and planning tool helps you assess, plan, and track implementation activities to improve the success and fidelity of your school’s or district’s selected EBPs.

- **ImpleMap: Exploring the Implementation Landscape** (National Implementation Research Network): This planning tool facilitates the evaluation of the capacity of your school or district to actively implement programs and helps you clarify what you want to achieve with your intervention and identify which EBPs to use, who will support implementation and how to select and train those individuals, and how you will make the intervention happen.

- **Selecting Evidence-Based Practices** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This brief provides a framework for identifying key pieces of information you should know to select EBPs. It includes information on identifying EBPs, determining readiness to implement, tracking outcomes, and monitoring fidelity. In the appendix, key questions are summarized in a discussion guide, along with worksheets and resources to help you select an EBP that meets your needs.

- **Preparing to Implement Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module provides strategies and tools for getting ready to implement EBPs in schools.

- **Implementing Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This interactive, self-paced learning module presents strategies and tools for implementing, evaluating, supporting, and sustaining EBPs in schools.

- **NCSSLE Webinar Series: Implementation** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar series includes four webinars covering implementation topics, including how to use data to identify programmatic interventions, strategies for program implementation, the impact of current practices on new programs, and how to use evidence-based registries to select programs.

- **Implementation** (NCSSLE webpage): This webpage provides definitions, resources, and systematic recommendations for implementation.

- **The National Implementation Research Network Website**: This website provides implementation resources as well as modules and lessons that you can use to guide your program implementation. Some topics covered in the resources, modules, and lessons are the implementation of age-specific programs such as Early Childhood programs, developing stages and teams, and measuring implementation capacity and success at the school and district levels.
**Key Takeaways: Environments Filled with Safety and Belonging** (SoLD Design Principles): This resource outlines guiding principles for equitable whole child design to ensure learning environments are safe, trauma-informed, and healing-oriented, as well as inclusive and culturally responsive. In tandem with the above, these steps can be incorporated to ensure everyone is considered throughout the implementation process.

**Related Resources From the Field**

- **TCU Organizational Readiness for Change Scale** (TCU Institute for Behavioral Research): The Organizational Readiness for Change scale by the TCU Institute for Behavioral Research has two scales, one designed for counseling staff and the other designed by directors and supervisors. The scale focuses on needs, resources, staff qualities, and organizational climate.

- **Sample S3 Local Education Agency Needs Assessment Template**: This tool helps you connect data from school teachers and staff, students, and parents to domains, interventions, and communication by creating a space that summarizes what data you have, data you may need, what needs the data suggest there are, and how much those data are being used to choose and evaluate programs, as well as communicate needs to the district.

- **Statement of Need Data Worksheet**: This tool helps you determine what your school needs by comparing data to other data sets, such as the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, using this worksheet.

- **Team Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS) SCHOOL Readiness Checklist** (PBIS): This checklist can be used by schools to determine implementation readiness through identifying district commitment, school team commitment, and access to data.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.5: Select or Plan to Modify Interventions Based on Needs, Priorities, and Goals**

**Purpose of Selecting or Modifying Interventions Based on Data**

The strategies within this objective are enhanced when combined with the strategies in Objective 4.1.3: Assess whether current interventions are addressing your identified needs and goals at multiple tiers in which you aligned current climate-related interventions with the issues revealed by your data and goals identified by your efforts. Carefully review this work to identify (a) those climate-related interventions that have a demonstrated evidence base for improving your priority areas, (b) which interventions have a strong research base but are not being implemented with fidelity, and (c) the interventions that need to be modified to fit your particular needs. If the concern is implementation fidelity, the decision to continue this intervention would require understanding and addressing barriers to implementation, whereas determining to keep the interventions that need to be modified would require discussing, documenting, implementing, and evaluating necessary adaptations to the intervention. Though it can be difficult for educators, sometimes it is also necessary to change interventions entirely if another model is more coherent, efficient, and related to goals.
You can review registries of EBPs to understand the array of options and compare similar types of programs. There are many considerations when selecting interventions, including aspects of “contextual fit” such as need, precision, evidence base, efficiency, skills/competencies, cultural relevance, resources, and administrative and organizational support. Other aspects that contribute to a contextual fit include the match between the strategies, procedures, or elements of an intervention with the values, needs, skills, and resources available in a setting. If the evidence base does not fit the needs, you should review promising interventions with clear rationales as to why they may be effective in addressing the identified needs.

**Strategies for Selecting or Modifying Interventions Based on Data**

a. Use all available data to select interventions based on needs, priorities, and goals.

b. Engage all members of your school community in the selection process to support buy-in, aligns to cultural values, and meets their school climate goals.

c. Review evidence-based registries to identify those interventions that research has shown to be effective with your population of students. Potential registries include the What Works Clearinghouse from ED; youth.gov from the U.S. government; the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Blueprints for Healthy Development from the University of Colorado–Boulder Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence; the Model Programs Guide from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Guide for elementary, middle, and high school social and emotional learning programs.

d. Consider multiple aspects of the interventions being selected to determine fit, such as how well the core components are defined, what skills and competencies are required of people implementing the intervention, how culturally and linguistically relevant the intervention is for your school community, and what resources are required to implement it effectively (e.g., training, including coverage for substitute teachers, coaching, and materials).

e. Narrow the list of interventions to a few options and conduct a more detailed analysis of contextual fit for each with your school community.

f. Contact developers of potential interventions to determine if you have the organizational capacity (logistics and resources) to implement them with fidelity. (Use readiness documents developed earlier in Objective 4.1.4: Assess readiness to implement interventions and specific innovations that support a multitiered approach to help in determining organizational capacity.)

g. Reach out to districts, CMOs/EMOs, or schools that are implementing an intervention you are considering, so you can learn about their successes and challenges with implementation.

h. Determine if potential interventions are feasible based on information gathered from developers and ideally experiences settings similar to yours.

i. Coordinate, as much as possible, with interventions that you already implement well and that have a positive effect on your school climate.
j. Select interventions using their definition of school climate (topic areas), school climate data (identified needs), and school climate goals to coordinate and integrate efforts, as appropriate (e.g., use the review of current programs and potential interventions).

k. Enhance implementation of interventions already implemented well (as evidenced through data analysis) and meet the goals of the school climate improvements.

l. Modify implementation of interventions that meet the goals but may not be implemented effectively (as evidenced through data collection). Be careful to not assume interventions will work better when modifying implementation; use evidence from prior studies or the school’s monitoring to ensure effectiveness of any changes made.

m. Remove interventions that are currently implemented but do not meet identified needs or align with school climate goals.

n. Implement new interventions if current interventions are not meeting all identified needs, ensuring fit and readiness of the new interventions.

o. For sites that implement interventions across several schools in a district or CMO/EMO, analyze the interventions to determine commonalities and differences to help you differentiate your supports.

Related Resources for Selecting or Modifying Interventions Based on Data

- School Climate Improvement Online Module 6: Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions (NCSSLE): This online module provides an activity to help think through how to choose an intervention.

- Selecting Evidence-Based Programs (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This brief provides guidance on how to review and select EBPs. The guidance includes where to look for EBPs, the types of questions you need to answer to select programs, and how to monitor the implementation of programs.

- Selecting Evidence-Based Programs for Schools Settings Module (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module presents strategies and tools for identifying and selecting EBPs for school settings.

- Using Data to Identify Programmatic Interventions (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar discusses strategies for connecting your data to interventions, including how to use school climate data to identify needs, how to identify types of programmatic interventions that can address these needs, and how to select programmatic interventions that can be implemented effectively within a school or district.

- The Importance of Contextual Fit When Implementing Evidence-Based Interventions (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): This brief provides information regarding the importance of contextual fit for intervention implementation. The brief includes core elements that you can use to determine whether there is contextual fit for interventions in your school(s) and guide practice and policy.

- Unpacking the complexities of de-implementing inappropriate health interventions (Implementation Science): This research article published through Implementation Science...
highlights the importance of and complexities around de-implementing ineffective and inappropriate health interventions. Though it speaks to health care and public health interventions specifically, the larger points around strategies for de-implementation, outcomes, and unintended consequences can apply to education interventions as well.

- **The Hexagon Tool—Exploring Context** (The National Implementation Research Network): This research-based tool helps you identify contextual fit by exploring your school(s) or district context. The tool enables you to examine six factors relating to an intervention you are considering: need, fit, resources, evidence, readiness, and capacity.

**Topic-Specific**

- **Bullying Prevention** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar covers practical strategies focused on how improved school climate reduces bullying and provides initial training in recognizing, responding to, and preventing bullying, as well as how to assess for risk of bullying.

- **Violence Prevention** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar covers practical direction on how to develop, manage, implement, and sustain a violence prevention strategy. Important to violence prevention is the interplay between positive school climate and strong relationships with and among students.

- **Substance Abuse Prevention** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar covers current effective practices for designing and managing a substance abuse prevention intervention that can be used to adjust current strategies and policies and improve school climate and student academic outcomes.

- **What Works Briefs** (California Safe and Supportive Schools): This webpage includes a list of briefs addressing a variety of school climate topics that include suggested strategies districts, schools, and families can implement based on the latest research.

- **A Discussion on Adapting Program and Implementation Strategies During a Pandemic and Beyond** (National Implementation Research Network): This podcast covers implementation and adaptation of evidence-based programs and practices during the pandemic, given the changes in education and society.

**Related Resources From the Field**

- **MDS3 Resource Binder: Bullying Prevention**: This resource includes information such as training materials, flyers, bullying pledges, sample activities, sample logos, sample forms, and tools for evaluating bullying programing.

- **MDS3 Resource Binder: Cognitive Behavioral intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)**: This resource includes materials such as overviews and frequently asked questions about CBITS, sample progress notes, sample forms (i.e., consent), a sample case summary, worksheets, sample letters for teachers and parents, and more.

- **Decisions in Motion: Iowa S3 Toolkits for Improving School Climate**, Step 3: Selecting Our Strategy: These toolkits are designed for schools that want to get moving right away to improve school climate. They cover a range of topics—from discipline to improving relationships—and can help schools and districts use data to develop a plan and create
clear expectations. Each toolkit provides a sample plan and a step-by-step process of creating that plan to support your efforts to improve the climate in your school.

- **S3 Strategy Guide: Quality Rubric:** This guide provides direction on how to use a rubric to score the degree of quality of your programs and strategies.
- **Case Study: Student Discipline and School Climate in Charter Schools** (NCSRC): This series of videos profiles four charter schools nominated by experts in their effort to make school climate and discipline improvements.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.6: Participate in a Thoughtful Planning Process for Implementing the Selected Interventions**

**Purpose of Thoughtful Planning for Implementing Selected Interventions**

After you have identified those climate-related interventions that you want to implement in your school(s), engage key stakeholders in a thoughtful planning process. The planning process should take into account the readiness to implement the intervention and ensure that staff members have the necessary time, resources, and professional development to implement the selected interventions. When you provide these types of supports, staff members know that school climate is a priority and take the implementation of the intervention more seriously. Furthermore, these supports provide staff the development of the skills needed to effectively implement the intervention(s) with fidelity. Along with collaborating with key stakeholders, collaborate with the intervention developers and with other districts or schools implementing the same interventions. Engage with these collaborators about the necessary logistics and supports to implement the interventions.

Furthermore, your school-level climate team (developed through Objective 2.1.3: Develop school-level climate team[s]) is essential to successful program implementation because it handles oversight of the intervention. The team should meet on a regular basis to address implementation challenges and concerns. These meetings should include the development of agendas and follow-up activities that define action steps to ensure continued progress toward successful implementation.

**Strategies for Thoughtful Planning for Implementing Selected Interventions**

a. Plan for time, space, equipment, technology, and materials to roll out the climate-related intervention(s) effectively during a sustained period.

b. Train all staff (not just teachers) on the intervention(s) and develop a sustainability plan to train staff hired later. Embed training materials in staff orientation packets. (See Objective 1.2.4: Include relevant school climate and student support materials in orientation packets.)

c. Diversify training plan for those who have expertise versus those who are new to the intervention(s) selected.

d. In the early stages of implementation, have coaches meet regularly and frequently with school leadership and other stakeholders involved in implementation. Ensure adequate time and support for these meetings to occur.
e. Determine how you will provide opportunities for coaching and feedback to educators to ensure consistent and continued implementation of the intervention over time, leading to increased fidelity.

f. Develop professional learning communities for those schools with similar needs and identified interventions.

Related Resources for Thoughtful Planning for Implementing Selected Interventions

**General**

- **School Climate Improvement Action Guides**, Section 4 (NCSSLE): Each guide includes a section on how a stakeholder can support the selection and implementation of interventions.

- **Integrating Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) Within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Ensuring Fidelity of EBPs** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar focused on integrating EBPs within a multiltiered system of supports, collecting data and information to understand if EBPs are being implemented as intended, and using that information to inform future practice.

- **Safe, Supportive, and Successful Schools Step by Step** (AIR): This guide provides easy-to-follow steps for educators wanting to know more about how to implement a three-tiered approach to student support. Strategies presented address social, ethical, and emotional change for all students; early interventions for some students that exhibit minor behavioral issues; and intensive interventions for the few students in the school who have significant emotional or behavioral issues.

- **Management Factors for Successful Program Implementation** (California Safe and Supportive Schools): This guide presents factors that influence program success, including day-to-day management, administrative level support, training/professional development, and the at-risk student referral system.

- **Effective Planning Strategies for Program Implementation** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar addresses the components of an effective program implementation. Specifically, it discusses what data, policies, and systems you need for successful implementation and sustainability and how to adjust current or develop new policies and systems to support the effort.

- **Preparing to Implement Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings Module** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module provides strategies and tools for getting ready to implement evidence-based programs in schools.

**Topic-Specific**

- **Establishing Supportive Relationships Between Teachers, Staff, Students, and Families** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar presents ways to build a foundation of strong relationships among everyone in school to minimize conflict, improve conflict management, bolster students’ developmental strengths, and improve school climate.

- **Addressing Risk Behavior Through Positive Youth Development Strategies** (NCSSLE webinar): This webinar presents strength and evidence-based strategies to support positive development of students at various developmental stages that can be incorporated into the school day and reduce risk-taking behaviors.
■ **The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies From the Field to Keep Students Engaged in School and Out of the Juvenile Justice System** (The Council of State Governments Justice Center): This report presents data and research based on real-world, multidisciplinary strategies to reduce discipline practices that take students out of school and improve safe, supportive environments in schools.

■ **Active Implementation** (National Implementation Research Network webpage): This webpage provides information on how to actively implement programs with planning steps, stages, and quality measurement. Resources on the page include articles, modules, webinars, and research.

■ **Stages of Implementation Analysis: Where Are We?** (National Implementation Research Network): This implementation and planning tool helps you assess, plan, and track implementation activities to improve the success and fidelity of your school’s or district’s selected EBPs.

■ **ImpleMap: Exploring the Implementation Landscape** (National Implementation Research Network): This planning tool facilitates the evaluation of the capacity of your school or district to actively implement programs and helps you clarify what you want to achieve with your intervention and identify which EBPs to use, who will support implementation and how to select and train those individuals, and how you will make the intervention happen.

■ **The Importance of Quality Implementation for Research, Practice, and Policy** (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): This brief presents the core components, specific steps, and supports necessary to achieve quality implementation of EBPs.

### Related Resources From the Field

■ **S3 Action Plan**: This sample action plan from Wisconsin includes is a template to enter findings from a needs assessment, measurable objectives based on those findings, and specific strategies and respective action steps to address those objectives. In addition, the plan includes who will lead each strategy, collaborative partners, how to monitor each strategy, and which data leaders need to monitor it.

■ **Case Study: Student Discipline and School Climate in Charter Schools** (NCSRC): This series of videos profiles four charter schools nominated by experts in their effort to make school climate and discipline improvements.

### OBJECTIVE 4.1.7: Implement Interventions, Ensuring Fidelity of Implementation or Appropriate Adaptation

#### Purpose of Implementing Interventions With Fidelity or Appropriate Adaptation

After you have selected your school climate interventions and developed your implementation plan, it is time to implement your intervention(s). From the start, take steps to ensure that your staff implements the interventions with fidelity. For example, you can provide feedback loops for your staff members to verify that they are implementing the core components of interventions as designed. You might also create check-in points with your staff to see how well implementation
is going and determine if they are receiving the necessary training and support to implement the interventions in ways that meet the needs of all students. If staff members report concerns about fidelity criteria that do not seem to fit your school environment, be prepared to discuss adaptations to the intervention. Because staff members will vary in their ability to implement interventions across multiple tiers, the training and support they need also will vary. By differentiating your supports to various staff (e.g., creating master teachers or teacher leaders who can lead efforts), you will maximize the effectiveness of the intervention and eliminate barriers to implementation.

**Strategies for Implementing Interventions With Fidelity or Appropriate Adaptation**

a. Continually provide coaching, monitoring, and communities of practice to ensure progress.

b. Consult with developers to determine levels of support and tools needed to assess fidelity of implementation.

c. Use tools to monitor implementation across stakeholders (e.g., How are staff and students responding to the intervention? Does the intervention work for all intended beneficiaries, or just some?).

d. As appropriate, involve students, families, and other community stakeholders in implementation plan.

e. Provide educators, families, and community members with support and feedback as they implement interventions (e.g., through observations, feedback loops, peer mentoring, and coaching).

f. Provide educators with job-embedded professional learning and ensure they have access to ongoing professional development and support (e.g., educators participate in school climate professional learning communities and have access to coaching).

g. Provide time during meetings for staff to bring up their school climate concerns.

h. Create opportunities for teacher leaders and master teachers to become experts in the practice and support other educators or create peer learning opportunities to provide one another feedback and support.

i. Build a component for monitoring fidelity into the initial RFP for participating schools and ask how they would continuously monitor for improvement or adapt specific interventions to better fit their school environment.

**Related Resources for Implementing Interventions With Fidelity or Appropriate Adaptation**

- **School Climate Improvement Online Module 6: Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions (NCSSLE):** This online module provides an activity to help think through how to choose an intervention.

- **Integrating Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) Within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Ensuring Fidelity of EBPs (NCSSLE webinar):** This webinar is focused on integrating EBPs within a multitiered system of supports, collecting data and information to understand if EBPs are being implemented as intended and using that information to inform future practice.

- **Selecting Evidence-Based Practices** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This brief provides a framework for identifying key pieces
of information you should know to select EBPs. It includes information on identifying EBPs, determining readiness to implement, tracking outcomes, and monitoring fidelity. In the appendix, key questions are summarized in a discussion guide, along with worksheets and resources to help you select an EBP that meets your needs.

- **Evidence-Based Module Series** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This self-paced learning module series provides guidance on selecting, preparing for, and implementing EBPs in school settings.
  - Selecting Evidence-Based Programs for Schools Settings Module (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module presents strategies and tools for identifying and selecting EBPs for school settings.
  - Preparing to Implement Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings Module (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This module provides strategies and tools for getting ready to implement EBPs in schools.
  - Implementing Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings Module (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This interactive, self-paced learning module presents strategies and tools for implementing, evaluating, supporting, and sustaining EBPs in schools.

- **Laying the Foundation: A Discussion on Moving Fidelity of Implementation From Compliance to Capacity Building** (NCSSLE, S3 Training): This presentation overviews the definition of fidelity, the challenges of maintaining implementation fidelity, and the strategies to overcome those challenges.

- **Program Fidelity and Adaptation: Meeting Local Needs Without Compromising Program Effectiveness** (What Works, Wisconsin—Research to Practice Series): This practice brief covers strategies for maintaining fidelity during program adaptation and adapting programs to your school’s needs.

- **Monitoring Fidelity of Implementation** (Center on Innovation and Improvement): This handbook outlines research-based action principals behind implementation of interventions with fidelity.

- **Fidelity Monitoring Tip Sheet** (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau): This tip sheet contains useful information about what an EBP is and why monitoring the fidelity of it is important.

- **Making Adaptations Tip Sheet** (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau): This tip sheet contains useful information about how to decide when to make adaptations to certain EBPs, as well as how to plan and implement the adaptation.

- **Charter School Discipline: Examples of Policies and School Climate Efforts From the Field** (NCSRC): The report profiles four charter schools with innovative approaches to discipline. The report presents each school’s culture, discipline programs, results, and emerging issues.

- **White Paper: An Honest Approach to Discipline** (DC Public Charter School Board): This white paper examines DC Public Charter School Board’s approach to supporting decreased out-of-school suspension rates and highlights strategies put in place by three DC public charter school networks.
Related Resources From the Field

- **Innovation Spotlights: Assessing Fidelity of Implementation in Arizona** (S3): This brief discusses the guiding principles of the Arizona Safe and Supportive Schools (S3) initiative, which provides services and programming to 26 high schools in 14 districts aimed at creating and maintaining safe and supportive learning environments. A core part of the initiative involves using data to implement appropriate programming and measuring the fidelity of implemented programs.

- **Innovation Spotlights: Assessing Fidelity of Implementation in Louisiana** (S3): This brief shares information about Louisiana’s Positive Approaches for Safe and Supportive Schools program, which offers a foundation to implement integrated and comprehensive prevention programs in 43 high schools across the state. The team developed a fidelity checklist through a web-based platform that teachers and other staff who are implementing the interventions and curriculum using a multitiered approach could easily complete.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.8: Use Data to Monitor the Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions**

**Purpose of Using Data to Monitor the Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions**

Along with using data to assess your school climate needs, you can use data to monitor the fidelity of implementation or how well the climate-related interventions are being implemented. You also can use the fidelity data to identify successes and challenges with implementation, including documenting which core components of the intervention are being implemented consistently, the use of materials, and the success of training and support. Furthermore, fidelity data help you improve your school climate interventions by understanding if the interventions are working for all students or subgroups of students. Fidelity data also helps to identify those staff members who need increased support with tiered approaches. Finally, use the data to determine how implementation fidelity relates to student outcomes.

**Strategies for Using Data to Monitor the Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions**

a. If available, use the fidelity tool/checklist prepared by the developer. Determine if adaptations need to be made to these fidelity tools for your school community. If a developer’s fidelity tool/checklist is not available, design your own tool/checklist.

b. Refine and target support strategies identified earlier through **Objective 4.1.7: Implement interventions, ensuring fidelity of implementation or appropriate adaption** based on fidelity data.

c. Institute regular meetings with the school-level climate team and key stakeholders to discuss implementation and fidelity data.

d. Determine if further adaptations need to be made to interventions based on the fidelity data.
Related Resources for Using Data to Monitor the Fidelity of Implementation of Interventions

- **School Climate Improvement Action Guides, Section 5** (NCSSLE): Each guide includes a section on how a stakeholder can support the monitoring and evaluation of school climate improvements.

- **Laying the Foundation: A Discussion on Moving Fidelity of Implementation From Compliance to Capacity Building** (NCSSLE, S3 Training): This presentation provides an overview of the definition of fidelity, the challenges of maintaining implementation fidelity, and the strategies to overcome those challenges.

- **Fidelity Tools** (National Center on Intensive Intervention at AIR): The tools listed on this page can be used to assess and support fidelity of data-based individualization implementation at student, school, and intervention levels.

- **Implementing Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings Module** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This interactive, self-paced learning module presents strategies and tools for implementing, evaluating, supporting, and sustaining EBPs in schools.

Related Resources From the Field

- **Fidelity Guidelines and Checklists** (California Healthy Kids Resource Center): This webpage provides guidelines and checklists to assess the fidelity of a selection of programs commonly implemented to address school climate.

- **Innovation Spotlights on Implementing With Fidelity** (S3): These short briefs describe how two states, Arizona and Louisiana, supported schools in implementing EBPs with fidelity.

**OBJECTIVE 4.1.9: Continue School Climate Messaging to Districts/CMOs/EMOs and Schools at Different Levels of Implementation**

**Purpose of Continuing Messaging to Districts/CMOs/EMOs and Schools at Different Levels of Implementation**

Throughout the implementation process, continue stakeholder communications about the progress made on school climate improvements. This messaging can include your fidelity data, which will inform your stakeholders on the progress made to date, as well as where you could use additional support. Modifying your message based on your audience’s level of implementation is important (e.g., schools just starting to train staff will need different supports than staff who have been implementing the intervention[s] across multiple years). Continuing your communications to all stakeholders is critical to maintaining buy-in to the process, as well as promoting the sustainability of your school climate efforts.

**Strategies for Continuing Messaging to Districts/CMOs/EMOs and Schools at Different Levels of Implementation**

a. Engage key stakeholders in districts and schools throughout the intervention selection, planning, and implementation process.
b. Using the communication strategies you developed through Objective 2.1.1: Develop messaging to schools on school climate improvement efforts, continue your messaging efforts during the implementation process.

c. Hold regular stakeholder meetings to disseminate and discuss fidelity data. Receive input from stakeholders about how to sustain practices or improve implementation (e.g., If school climate data have not moved in a positive direction, is this caused, at least in part, by poor fidelity of implementation?).

d. Modify your message based on the level of implementation in your schools (e.g., messaging for schools just starting to train staff versus those partially implementing versus those who have fully implemented an intervention).

Related Resources for Continuing Messaging to Districts/CMOs/EMOs and Schools at Different Levels of Implementation

- School Climate Improvement Action Guides, Section 5 (NCSSLE): Each guide includes a section on how a stakeholder can support the monitoring and evaluation of school climate improvements.

- The Importance of Quality Implementation for Research, Practice, and Policy (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): This brief presents the core components, specific steps, and supports necessary to achieve quality implementation of EBPs.

Evaluate and Refine the Choice of Interventions and Implementation Strategies and Continue Planning for Improvement and Sustainability (ACTIVITY SET 4, ACTION STEP 2)

This action step has one objective:

- 4.2.1 Plan how to assess fidelity of implementation across time (e.g., during a 5-year period).

At the end of each activity set, reflect on, assess, and refine your efforts with any eye toward institutionalizing good practices. At the end of Activity Set 4: Choosing and Implementing School Climate Interventions, it will be useful to evaluate the implementation of your chosen school climate interventions and the support you provide to educators and staff to implement those interventions. Evaluating your efforts in choosing and implementing interventions will help you not only get better with each cycle of implementation but also sustain the structures and processes you are creating. It is important for you to constantly reflect on your implementation efforts to determine what is working well, what is not working well, why this may be the case, and how to improve. It also provides opportunities to better understand who interventions are working for and under what conditions. Although much of this work is embedded throughout this activity set, it is important to stop periodically and take stock of how the intervention(s) are being implemented and how multiple school climate interventions are working in concert with one another, and with other initiatives, to support a positive school climate.
**OBJECTIVE 4.2.1: Plan How to Assess Implementation With Fidelity Across Time (e.g., During a 5-Year Period)**

**Purpose of Planning How to Assess Implementation With Fidelity Across Time**

Throughout this activity set, the objectives contained strategies to identify interventions that meet school climate needs and goals, as well as monitor the fidelity of implementation of your chosen school climate interventions. Although assessing fidelity is particularly important when you first implement the intervention, monitoring the implementation across time supports sustainability, ensures the interventions have their intended effect, and allows for adjustments as needed for successful implementation.

Implementing new interventions can be expensive and difficult, so you also may want to spend the time and resources planning for and implementing strategies to support institutionalization of the intervention. As your needs change, also expect that how you implement the intervention will change too; thus, it is important to document and report on how implementation evolves. Determine cost-effective ways to continuously monitor implementation, such as combining implementation monitoring with other initiatives (e.g., educator effectiveness).

**Strategies for Planning How to Assess Implementation With Fidelity**

a. Determine a set of core outcomes and core components of the program that you can assess with fidelity across time.

b. Establish biannual markers to assess sustainability; if that is not possible, establish markers at least annually.

c. Determine cost-effective structures that can be used to monitor fidelity. For example, embedding school climate metrics within your school improvement plans or data that you collect for accountability systems.

d. When selecting variables to incorporate in your sustainability plan, you can apply Fixsen’s model, which recommends assessing whether you are (a) implementing tasks brilliantly, (b) making everyone more effective than they would ordinarily be, and (c) providing feedback so you can implement effectively.

**Related Resources for Planning How to Assess Implementation With Fidelity**

- **Using Evidence-Based Constructs to Assess Extent of Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices** (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services): This brief provides constructs on how to manage your implementation of interventions. By applying the constructs within this brief, you create a plan for monitoring your implementation using data and comparing your intervention to the brief’s suggested time frame for each component of implementation.

- **Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature** (National Implementation Research Network): This research paper synthesizes literature on implementation to create a framework for implementation that includes clear stages with suggested timelines, a focus on readiness for change, and an eye toward sustainability and fidelity in implementation.

- **Core Intervention Components: Identifying and Operationalizing What Makes Programs Work** (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department
of Health and Human Services): This research brief contains information that will help you better understand what “core components” are and how to identify, operationalize, and implement them.

- **Implementation Support Practitioner Profile: Guiding Principles and Core Competencies for Implementation Practice** (National Implementation Research Network): This implementation guide lays out key principles and competencies practitioners and communities need to successfully implement interventions and improve related outcomes. Key principles include empathy, curiosity, equity-driven implementation, and cross-disciplinary approaches to create and sustain change.

- **Selecting Evidence-Based Programs** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): The brief provides guidance on how to review and select EBPs. This guidance includes where to look for EBPs, the types of questions you need to answer to select programs, and how to monitor the implementation of programs.

- **Implementing Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings Module** (National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention): This interactive, self-paced learning module presents strategies and tools for implementing, evaluating, supporting, and sustaining EBPs in schools.

### District or State Example of Implementing Programmatic Interventions Activity Set

**Kansas**

The Kansas S3 Initiative first identified 10 priority areas for schools to focus on in its school climate improvement efforts. These included academic achievement/school attendance, substance abuse prevention and intervention, bullying/violence prevention/conflict resolution, truancy/dropout prevention, and mental health/emotional support, to name a few.

Kansas then prepared a list of EBPs available for implementation and the level of intervention for each, as aligned with the multitiered system of supports model, mapped onto its priority areas. This approach allowed for a broad focus, knowing that not all local education agencies would identify the same climate needs, and ensured as much as possible that they were choosing strategies that were proven effective.

Kansas S3 used survey data collected each spring and its most recent administrative data to inform schools’ selection and implementation of interventions and approaches. Schools were required to develop action plans and implement strategies that impacted all students in the school (universal), as well as students who were either at risk (selected) or students who were at high risk (indicated). For more information, see [http://www.kansasmtss.org/](http://www.kansasmtss.org/).

To ensure that interventions were in fact meeting the needs demonstrated by the data, Kansas S3 provided ongoing (at least quarterly) technical assistance regarding program implementation, helped school teams complete fidelity-of-implementation checklists, and monitored schools’ progress toward fulfilling their action plans and goals.