Set Yourself Up for Success With Root Cause Analysis

Significant Disproportionality Summit
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Joanna Bivins, IDC
Rachel Wilkinson, IDC
Elizabeth Graichen, New Hampshire Department of Education
Hannah Krajcik, New Hampshire Department of Education
Agenda

• Introductions
• Systems planning process
• Conducting root cause analysis
  – Before a meeting
  – During a meeting: Use of data and identifying contributing factors
  – After a meeting
• Resources
Introductions

• Joanna Bivins, IDC
• Rachel Wilkinson, IDC
• Elizabeth Graichen, New Hampshire Department of Education
• Hannah Krajcik, New Hampshire Department of Education
Welcome

Who is in the room?
Real World Example

Personal Goals

• Think of a personal goal
• What’s one word to describe your progress toward your personal goal?
Typical Planning Process

Where are we going?

Where are we now?

How will we get there?

Desired outcome

Initial Analysis

Strategy selection

Implementation
Embedding a Root Cause Analysis

- Where are we going?
- Where are we now?
- What factors must change?
- How will we get there?

- Desired outcome
- Initial Analysis
- In-depth root cause analysis
- Strategy selection
- Implementation
So What Is Root Cause Analysis?

Root cause analysis is a problem-solving method for uncovering the factors that, if addressed appropriately, will prevent the problem from recurring. Identifying root causes is necessary to identify appropriate solutions.
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How have you historically approached root cause analysis work with local education agencies (LEAs)? How has the work changed?
Benefits of Root Cause Analysis

• Encourages systemic thinking
• Can eliminate wasted efforts on potential solutions that will not dissolve root causes of problems or challenges
• Spurs reflection on current processes and practices
• Provides rationale for strategy selection
Preparing for Root Cause Analysis

• Use a team approach (include diverse stakeholder group)
• Clearly define the issue to address
• Use data to make informed decisions
• Use a multi-step approach to test assumptions and dig further into data before determining solutions
State Planning for Co-Facilitated Root Cause Analysis

State Education Agency (SEA)
- Provide an overview of root cause analysis
- Provide connections to state and federal requirements
- Provide state-level data
- Provide documentation templates
- Coach LEA on root cause analysis process and action plan development
- Facilitate meetings
- Debrief and problem solve with LEA leadership

Local Education Agency (LEA)
- Develop a leadership team
- Gather and prepare district-level data
- Document meeting discussions, rationale, and decisions
- Develop action plans
- Implement action plans
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What differences do you see in LEAs completing root cause analysis work independently as opposed to using a co-facilitation model?
Root Cause Analysis Process Planning

Before the meeting

During the meeting

After the meeting

Determining Root Cause resource
Before the Meeting
Developing a Team for Root Cause Analysis

- **Parents and students** representing the group of concern and the children and youth experiencing success.
- **Support staff** such as school psychologists, school counselors, and others.
- **General and special education professionals** who work with the target group and who work with students who are succeeding.
- **Community members** from organizations that support youth and families and local business representatives.
- **Leaders** with the influence and authority to make changes.
Data Preparation

Obtain information on the data literacy and culture of the LEA to determine the level of support needed to do the following

• Disaggregate data
  – Gender, grade level, school, duration of incidents, etc.

• Identify types of data and determine the most appropriate to use
  – Percentages
  – Raw counts
  – Comparison groups
  – Qualitative data

• Document data for the leadership team (data visualization)
Using data is imperative not just to identify problems or challenges but also to identify the causes of these problems and challenges

- Often, there are many causes
- We must dig into the data to get to the roots of the problem
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While working with LEAs, what challenges have you observed or experienced as LEAs prepare and analyze their data and what was helpful in addressing those challenges?
During the Meeting
Best Practices

• Provide introduction to the root cause analysis work and review key messages
• Present the data
• Discuss
  – Observations of the data
  – Interpretations of the data
  – Implications of the data
• Walk through root cause analysis steps and determine next steps for the group
• Reflect on the meeting’s effectiveness
Increase graduation rates for students with disabilities to 100%.

High School A (most non-graduates)
- Special education students coming from Middle School C not prepared for high school
- Inadequate multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) system in Middle School C
- Special education students coming from Elementary School D not prepared for middle school
- Reading instruction for all children in Elementary School D is inadequate

High School B (second most non-graduates)
- High turnover in special education staff
- Inadequate support for new sped teachers
- Special education students not in regular class
- Inadequate training on appropriate individualized education program (IEP) teamwork
What Should You Include in Root Cause Analysis?

• Statewide data
  – State targets, averages, and regional information

• LEA data
  – Results from policy, procedure, and practice reviews
  – Comparison data (e.g., students without disabilities)
  – Disaggregated subgroup data (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity)

• School-based data
  – Subgroup data
  – Student-level data
  – Grade-level data

• Diagnostic trees and/or flow charts

• *Success Gaps Toolkit* rubric findings
Questions to Ask About Data

• **Observations**
  - What are your initial thoughts or reactions?
  - What do you know about the data?
  - Is it a change or a trend?
  - Do the data surprise you?
  - What do you want to know?

• **Interpretations**
  - What do the data tell you?
  - What thoughts or assumptions do these data confirm?
  - What are the limitations to your conclusions?
  - What are your next questions?
  - What further data do you want to see?

• **Implications**
  - What are the implications?
  - Why does this matter?
  - What is/are the root cause(s)? Do you know them yet?
  - What do you still need to find out? Do you have enough data/information to move forward?
Factors include characteristics of the school or district culture, curriculum, instruction, and/or physical environment.

Multiple contributing factors are typically the result of a single root cause.

Multiple contributing factors may have multiple root causes.

Addressing the root cause dissolves associated contributing factors.
After the Meeting
Steps After the Meeting

• Distribute notes
• Confirm next steps and timeline for additional activities, as appropriate
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What are some ways NH has discussed using this process moving forward?
Resources

- **Data Meeting Toolkit**
- **Success Gaps Toolkit: Addressing Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunity**
- **IDC State Liaison**
Contact Us

• Joanna Bivins, joannabivins@westat.com
• Rachel Wilkinson, rachelwilkinson@westat.com
• Elizabeth Graichen, elizabeth.j.graichen@doe.nh.gov
• Hannah Krajcik, hannah.m.krajcik@doe.nh.gov
For More Information

Visit the IDC website
http://ideadata.org/

Follow us on Twitter
https://twitter.com/ideadatacenter

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http://www.linkedin.com/company/idea-data-center
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**Project Officers:** Richelle Davis and Rebecca Smith