

# Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment for the Title I, Part A, Schoolwide Plan

**Kristi Bond  
Dr. Lynn Sodat**

*Virginia Department of Education  
Office of Program Administration and Accountability  
Coordinators' Academy  
July 2014*



# Agenda for Today's Session

---

## Welcome and Introductions

- Goals and Objectives for This Session
- Title I Schoolwide Planning Overview

## Conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- What is a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) and why is it so important?
- Identifying and Gathering Data
- Data Quality and Data Triangulation
- Contributing Factors
- Data Review Process
- Group Practice and Share-out

## Conclusion

- Timeline for Implementation
- Accessing Resources for Use in Your Division
- Feedback and Follow-up Training Opportunities



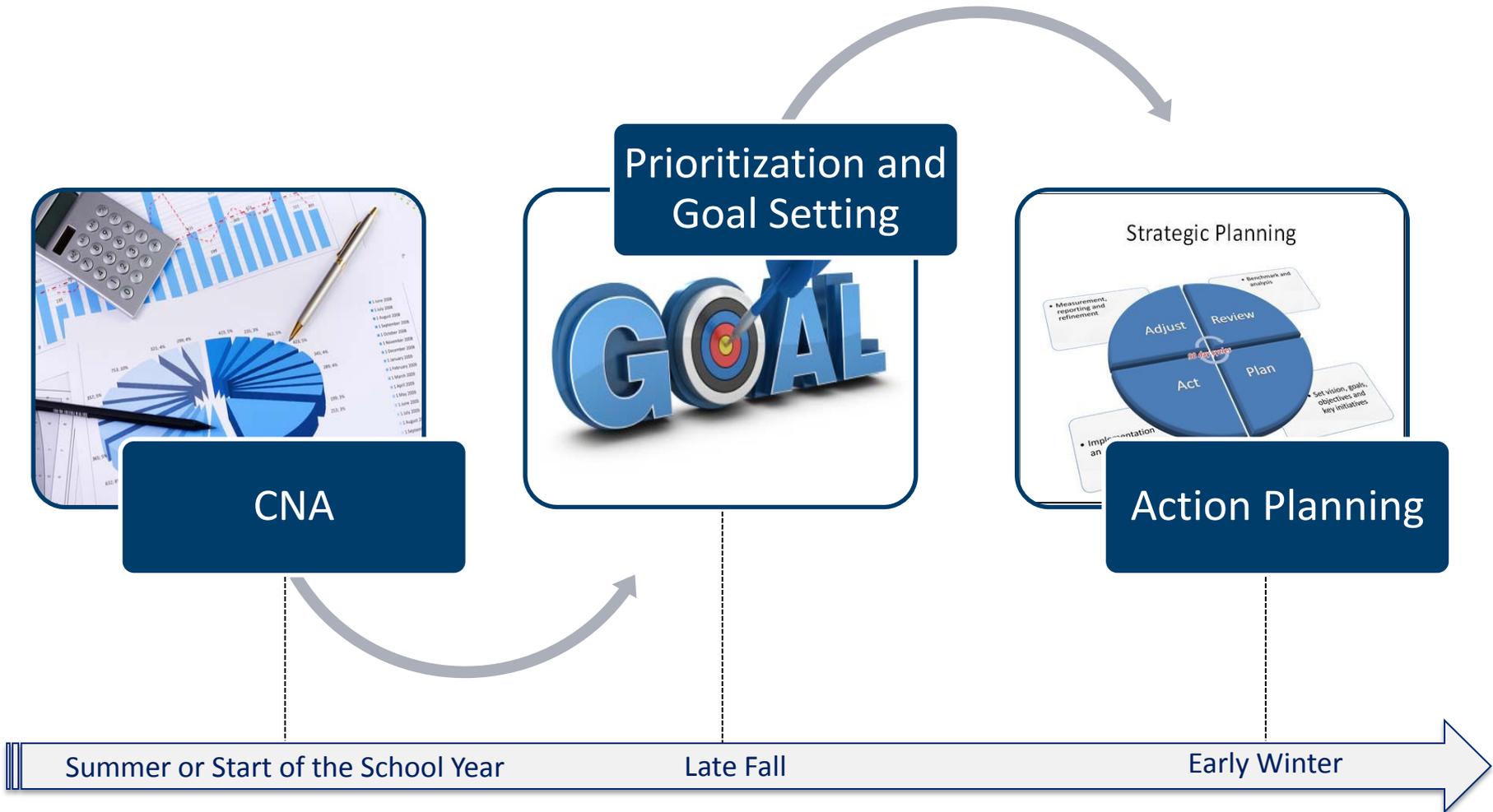
# Session Goals/Objectives

---

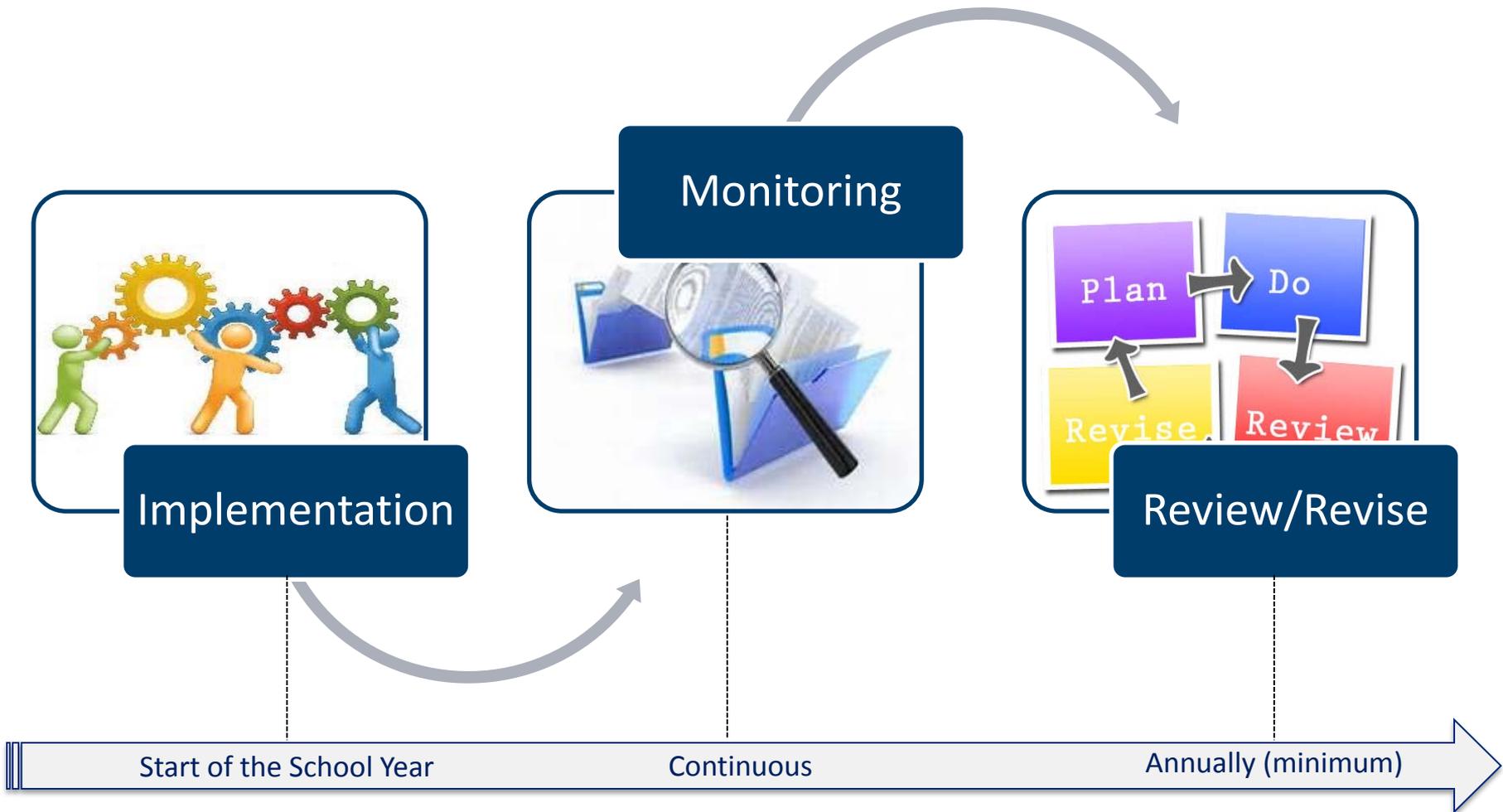
- Gain an understanding of what a CNA is and why it's crucial for school improvement planning
- Become equipped to facilitate a deep and meaningful CNA in your school through:
  - a process of data triangulation to identify areas of strength and challenge; and
  - discovery of root causes (contributing factors) impacting student outcomes
- Practice what you've learned by engaging in a simulated CNA process
- Gain access to tools and resources to help you engage in this process at your school (CNA Toolkit)



# Schoolwide Planning Stages



# Schoolwide Planning Stages



# Schoolwide Plan – 10 Components

---

## Schoolwide Plan

1. **Comprehensive Needs Assessment**
2. Schoolwide Reform Strategies
3. Highly Qualified Teachers
4. High Quality Professional Development
5. Strategies to Attract High Quality Teachers
6. Parental Involvement
7. Transition Plans – Preschool to Kindergarten
8. Teacher Participation in Assessment Decisions
9. Timely Additional Assistance
10. Coordination of Services and Programs



# What is a Needs Assessment?

---

**Title I regulations § 200.26 state:** *Core elements of a schoolwide program. (a) Comprehensive needs assessment. (1) A school operating a schoolwide program must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school that—(i) Is based on academic achievement information about all students in the school, including all groups under § 200.13(b)(7) and migratory children as defined in section 1309(2) of the ESEA, relative to the State’s academic standards under § 200.1 to—(A) Help the school understand the subjects and skills for which teaching and learning need to be improved; and (B) Identify the specific academic needs of students and groups of students who are not yet achieving the State’s academic standards; and (ii) Assesses the needs of the school relative to each of the components of the schoolwide program under § 200.28. (2) The comprehensive needs assessment must be developed with the participation of individuals who will carry out the schoolwide program plan. (3) The school must document how it conducted the needs assessment, the results it obtained, and the conclusions it drew from those results.*



# What is a Needs Assessment?

---

A **needs assessment** is the *first step* in developing a schoolwide or school improvement plan. It is a process of looking at data and information about the school to develop a clear picture and understanding of what is and has been occurring at the school.

A **needs assessment** is a *process* to help school teams learn about the areas they are good at (strengths) and the areas in need of improving (challenges).

A **needs assessment** includes more than just scores - it provides the opportunity to *hypothesize about the causes* of student achievement.



# The Needs Assessment is a Critical First Step in the Planning Process

*The needs assessment should serve as the foundation for the schoolwide plan. All strategies and activities must be informed by and aligned with the data.*



Random Acts of School Improvement

**No Needs Assessment**

Aligned Acts of School Improvement

**Needs Assessment Completed**

# The Needs Assessment Narrows our Focus

---

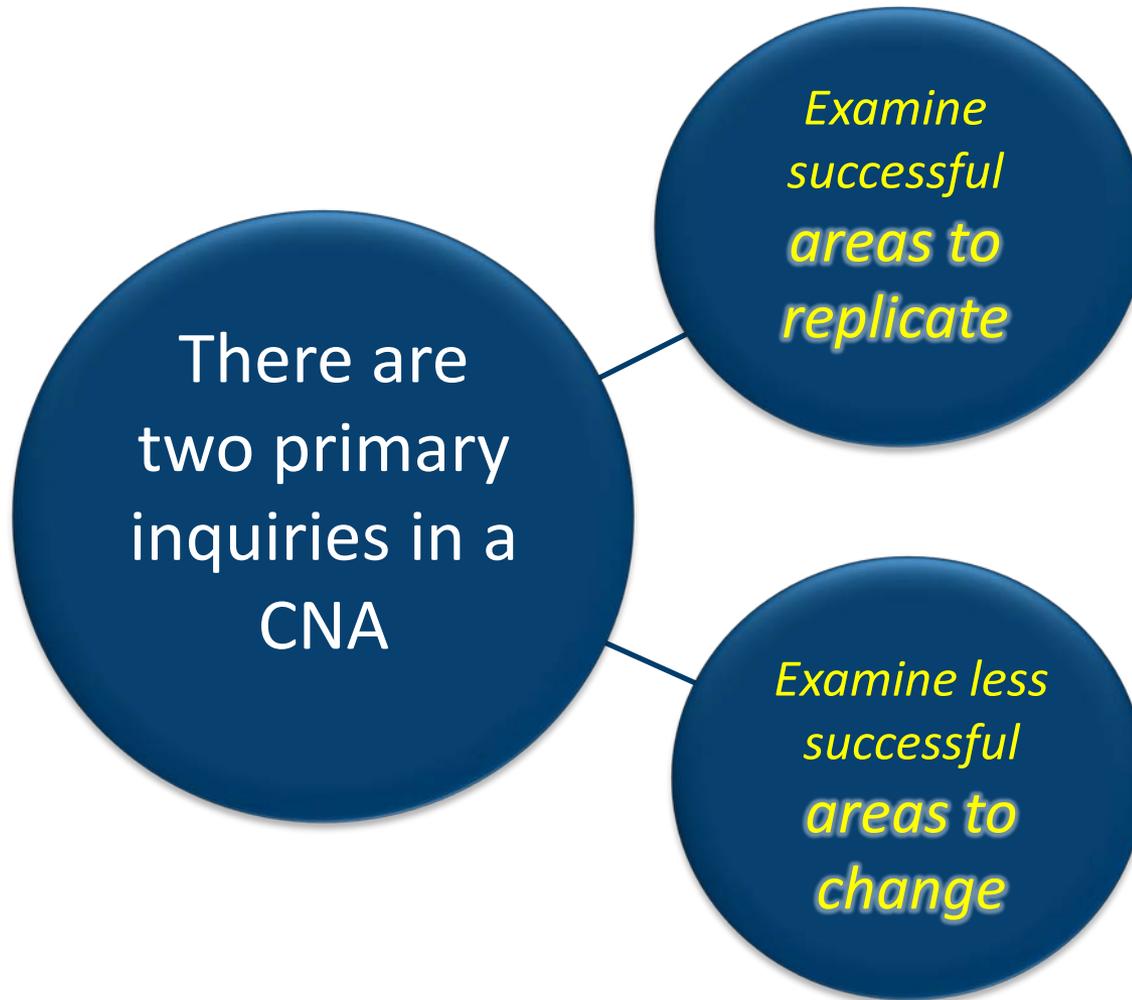


*Inquiry process produces a strong beam of thought directed to illuminate a focused area of student need and adult practice.*



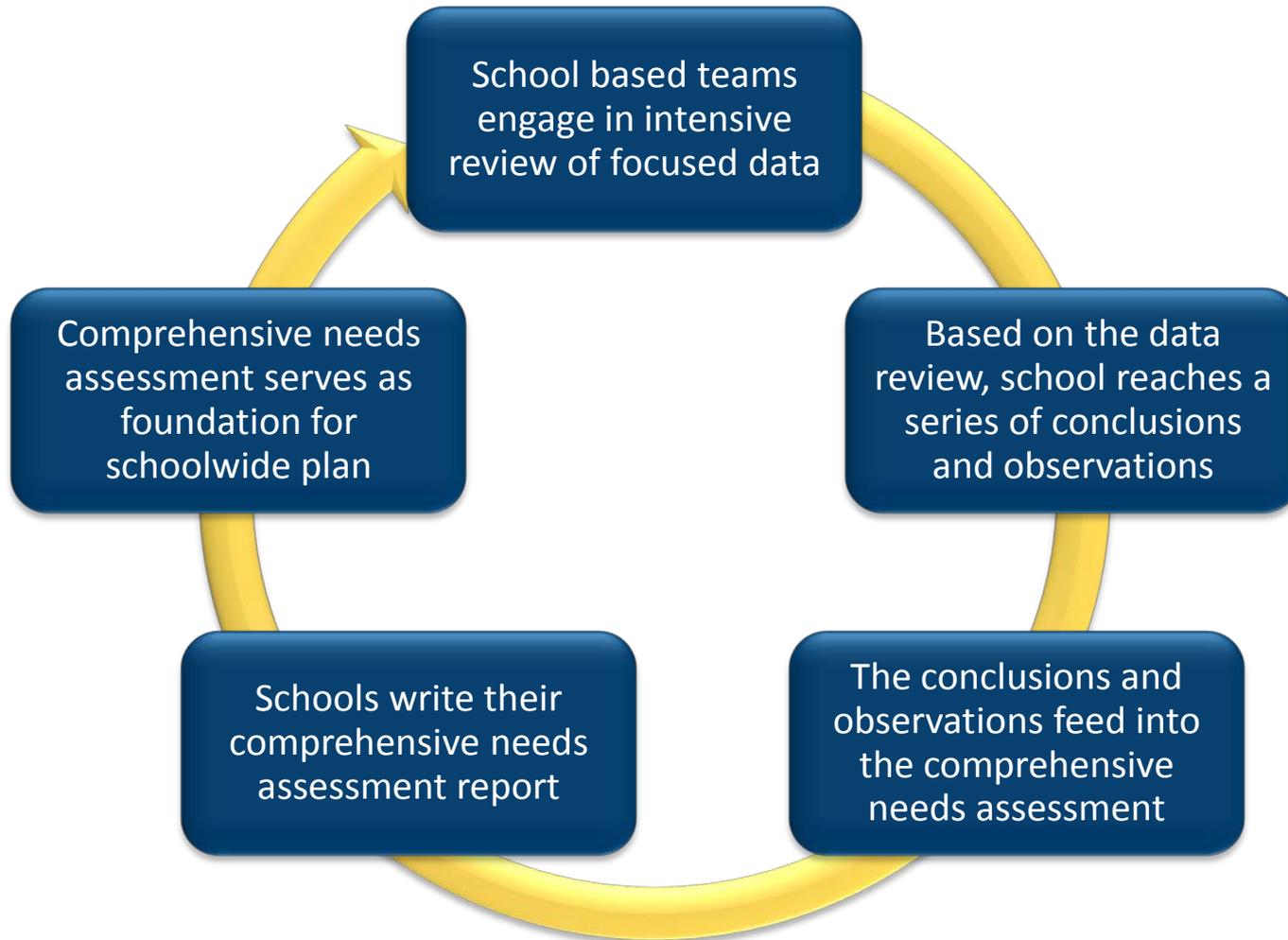
# Purpose of a CNA

---



# CNA at a Glance

---



# CNA Process



- Identify Data Sources & Gather Necessary Data Points



- Data Review by Subcommittees



- Identify & Articulate Patterns/Trends in Key Data Points



- School Planning Team Review of Findings



- Write the CNA Report: Foundation to the SWP



# Step 1a: Establish a Team

Who should participate in the needs assessment process?



All school stakeholders!



Faculty & Staff



Students at the Secondary Levels



Parents and Family Members



School and Division Administrators



Community Partners



# Step 1b: Divide Team into Sub-Committees by Domain

---

## Possible Domains for Study

*English/Language Arts*

*Mathematics*

*Social Sciences*

***Teaching for Learning***

*Parent & Community Engagement*

*Leadership & Governance*

*Safe & Orderly Environments*

*Commitment to Professional Learning*

***Culture & Climate***



## Step 2: Identify and Gather Data

---

*A thorough needs assessment should include multiple types of data from a variety of sources.*

### Different Types of Data

- Student demographics
- School culture and climate
- Academic achievement
- College and career readiness
- Human capital/Instructional data
- Parent and community engagement
- School operations and management

### Different Sources of Data

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- State and local assessments
- Lesson plans and student work
- Curriculum and assessment materials
- Observation reports



# Tiered Data Sources

## Tier 1: State and Division Level

- ◆ SOL Results
- ◆ Title I AMOs
- ◆ Title III AMAOs
- ◆ ACCESS for ELLs
- ◆ Alternate Assessment

## Tier 2: School Level Data

- ◆ End of Course Assessments
- ◆ Classroom/Program Assessments
- ◆ CWT data
- ◆ PD Participation Rates
- ◆ Attendance/Tardiness (student, teacher)
- ◆ Principal Performance Metrics
- ◆ Behavior Incidents (PBIS/SWISS)
- ◆ Budgets Projections & Actual Expenditures

## Tier 3: Contextual & Classroom Level Data

- ◆ Expectations Documentation
- ◆ CWT Reports
- ◆ Student Work
- ◆ Meeting/Workshop Records (agendas/minutes/attendance) (CPT, SIT, Parent Meetings, etc.)
  - ◆ Surveys (PD, Parent, Community)
- ◆ Communications Records (Connect Ed use, fliers, mailings, web postings, etc.)
- ◆ PAC/PTO Membership
- ◆ School Event Calendars
- ◆ Volunteer Applications
  - ◆ Classroom interruptions (i.e. announcements)
- ◆ Time lag between referrals and delivery of services



# When determining which sources of data to use, think about the following questions:

---



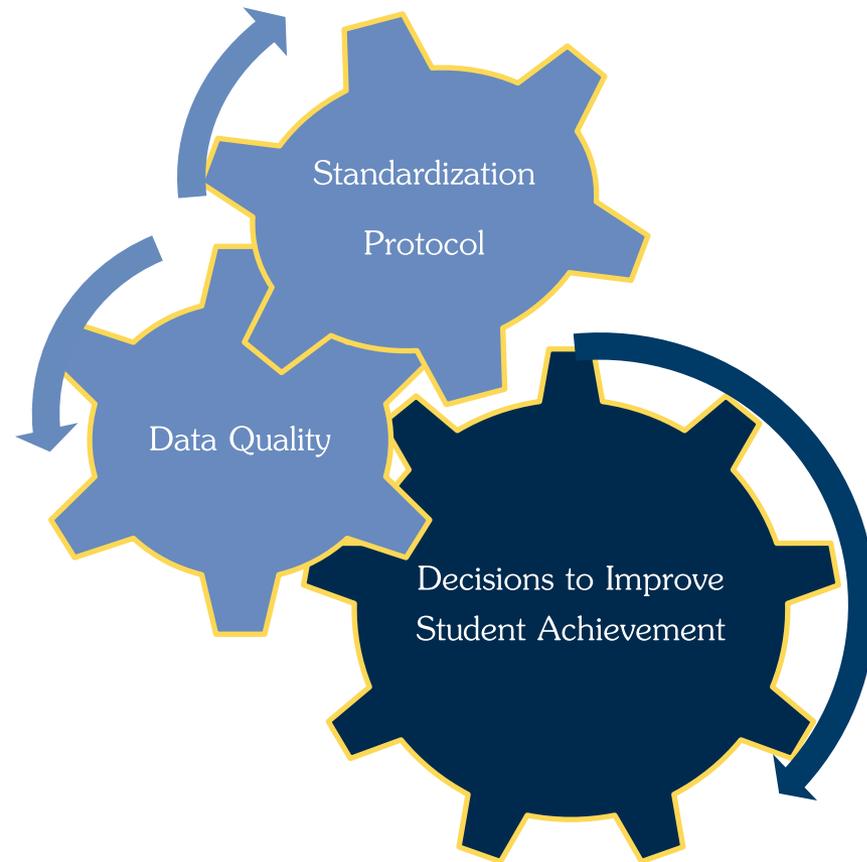
- Are the data sets relevant to the area under study?
- Do the data points selected give you differing perspectives or lenses through which you can answer key questions?
- How does each of the data points (sources of data) help you answer key questions?



# Identifying and Gathering Data

## Data Quality

The state of completeness, validity, consistency, timeliness and accuracy that makes data appropriate for a specific use.



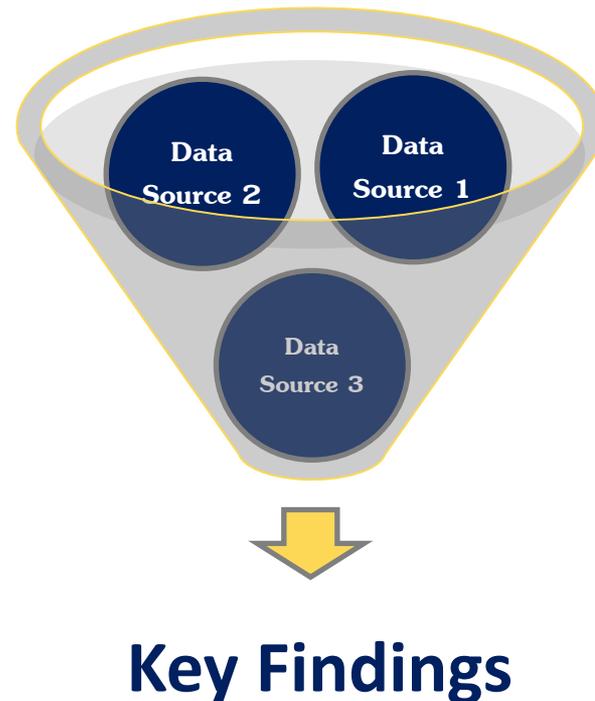
# Identifying and Articulating Patterns and Trends in Key Data Points

---

## Data Triangulation:

Using 3 (or more) sources of data in order to increase the validity of the study.

The goal of data triangulation is NOT to arrive at consistency across data sources. In fact the inconsistencies may shed light on the strengths of different approaches. This allows opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data.



# Contributing Factors

<p><b>Learner Factors</b></p> 	<p>Factors contributing to (in)effective <b>learning on the part of individual students</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ involvement and engagement of students in their learning<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ language barriers</li><li>◆ interrupted schooling</li><li>◆ issues related to poverty/socioeconomics</li><li>◆ mental health</li><li>◆ social and emotional issues</li></ul></li></ul>
<p><b>Instructional Factors</b></p> 	<p>Factors contributing to an (in)effective <b>instructional environment</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ culture of high expectations</li><li>◆ empowerment of learners as active participants</li><li>◆ implementation of a continuous improvement process<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ use of Response to Intervention system</li><li>◆ appropriate student grouping</li></ul></li><li>◆ implementation of an aligned instructional system</li><li>◆ high-quality learning opportunities within and beyond the school day<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ grade level teaming</li><li>◆ advisory</li></ul></li><li>◆ other structures around developmental/transitional milestones</li></ul>



# Contributing Factors, cont'd

<p><b>Climate/ Culture Factors</b></p> 	<p><b>Factors contributing to an (in)effective school environment:</b></p> <p><b>Factors related to (in)effective teachers and leaders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ professional development ♦ coaching ♦ teacher supports ♦ communities of practice, and</li><li>♦ recruitment/retention of highly effective educators and support staff.</li></ul> <p><b>Factors related to (in)effective school-based supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ coordinated and comprehensive supports systems for the whole child</li><li>♦ integrated and aligned interventions ♦ cultivation of parent leadership,</li><li>♦ capacity and skills in support of learning ♦ two-way, internal and external communication with a variety of stakeholders</li><li>♦ safe , orderly, engaging and challenging learning environments.</li></ul>
<p><b>Family &amp; Community Factors</b></p> 	<p><b>Factors contributing to (in)effective family and community supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ providing a coordinated and comprehensive support system for learners' families in a multi-generational approach,</li><li>♦ family and community engagement in the learning process,</li><li>♦ authentic partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, and</li><li>♦ ability to leverage existing and new partnerships <i>with all activities managed towards student outcomes</i></li></ul>





## Tip for success

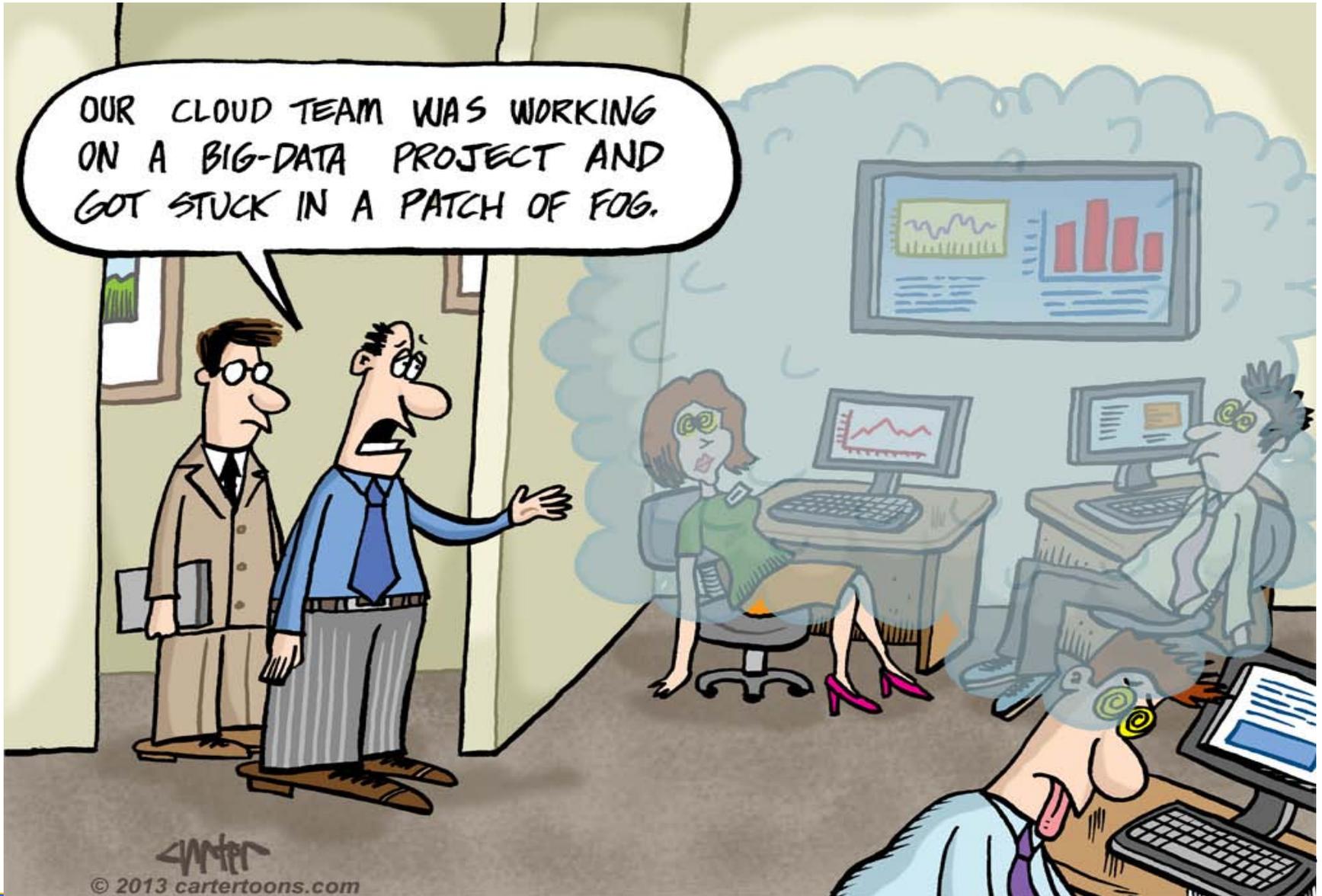
The purpose of the needs assessment is to determine what is happening in the school that is impacting learning and hypothesize on what the root causes might be.

During your data review process –

*avoid the temptation to blame/finger point and the temptation to move into goal setting or problem solving.*

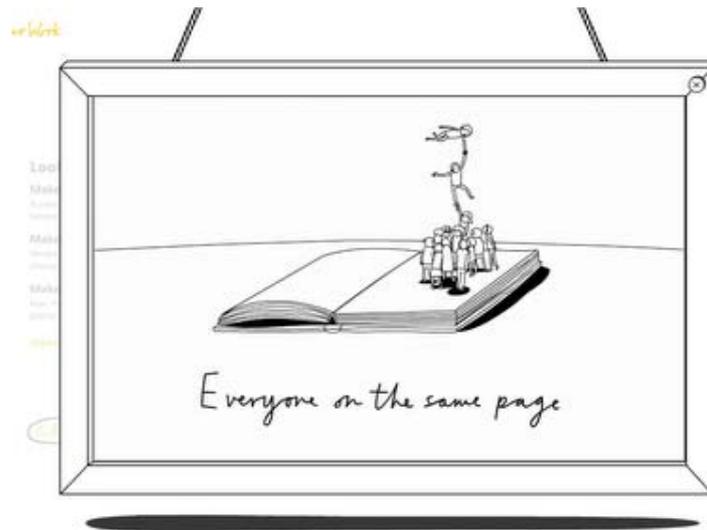


# Check Point



# Check Point

- Step 1 – Establish a team; Divide team into subcommittees
- Step 2 – Identify and gather data
  - Types and Sources of Data
  - Data Quality
  - Data Triangulation
- Contributing Factors



## Step 3: Data Review

---

### PURPOSE:

Through the *data triangulation* process, subcommittees will be able to identify a consistent story/narrative about how students are performing in each domain.

### Three-step PROCESS :

1. Initial observations/findings (*triangulation*).  
*What the data are saying.*
2. Reflective questioning for *data quality*.  
*Validity/reliability of the data.*
3. Identifying *contributing factors*.  
*Hypothesis of root causes.*



# SAMPLE DATA REVIEW WORKSHEET

❖ **Primary Question: *How are our students performing in ELA?***

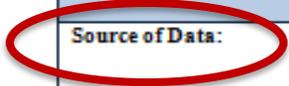
**Guiding Question 1:** *To what extent has student achievement in this content area improved, or not, in the past year? (annual change)*

**Guiding Question 2:** *What school-level patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years?*

**Guiding Question 3:** *What school compared to state/district-level patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years?*

**Guiding question 4:** *What school-level subgroup patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years? (includes achievement gaps) (Subgroups: race, gender, SWD, LEP, SES)*

DATA SOURCES (list sources of data)	OBSERVATIONS/FINDINGS (Summarize positive and negative key findings from review of data source. Statements should be in response to the 4 guiding questions.)
Source of Data: <i>Example: SOL Test</i>	a. <i>There was an annual increase in percent proficient (42% to 51%) and we met our AMO targets.</i> b. <i>There was a 3-year positive trend in percent proficient (23 to 34 to 41%) and mean scaled scores (32 to 36 to 42).</i> c. <i>We are above the division average for percent proficient for 3 years in a row.</i> d. <i>There was a 3-year trend of an increasing achievement gap (percent proficient) between students with an IEP and students without an IEP which now is a 35 percentage point difference.</i>
Source of Data:	a. b. c. d.
Source of Data:	a. b. c. d.
Source of Data:	a. b. c. d.



# Activity 1a: Review of School Data

Utilizing the *Data Review Worksheets*, engage in a study of student academic performance in English/Language Arts to answer the following questions:

❖ **Primary Question:** *How are our students performing in [domain]?*

- 1 To what extent has student achievement in this content area improved, or not, in the past year? (annual change)
- 2 What school-level patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years?
- 3 What school compared to state/district-level patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years?
- 4 What school-level subgroup patterns or trends did you identify for this content area over the past 3 to 5 years? (includes achievement gaps)  
(Subgroups: race, gender, SWD, LEP, economically disadvantaged)



# SAMPLE KEY FINDINGS WORKSHEET

## II. REFLECTION (ELA)

**Instructions:** Using observations/findings identified in the chart on the previous page, answer the following reflective questions. Be detailed in your responses to better facilitate later team discussion.

**Reflection Question 1 (Data Triangulation)** - Do the key findings and observations from the different data sources show/confirm similar patterns or trends?

**Example Responses:** (a) *There were no consistent patterns or trends.*  
(b) *There was a consistent trend of improved performance on the reading test in all tested grades for 3 consecutive years. There was a drop in performance in year 4.*  
(c) *There was a trend across each data set demonstrating an increasing achievement gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.*



**Responses (Include both positive and negative findings):**

**Reflection Question 2 (Data Quality)** - What is the quality of the data you are using? Are there any known issues or biases affecting data quality that might explain your key findings and observations? Examples include but are not limited to: inconsistent training of test administrators, problems with data collection such as testing irregularities, an event that may have affected student performance, etc.

**Example Responses:** (a) *There are no known issues.* (b) *There were a couple of testing irregularities reported including kids in the hallways during the test, instructional information left uncovered in the testing area, etc.*

**Response:**



# Activity 1, Step 2: Key Findings

Using observations/findings identified in the *Data Review Worksheets*, answer the following reflective questions:

1

**Reflection Question 1 (Data Triangulation)** - Do the key findings and observations from the different data sources show/confirm similar *patterns* or *trends*?

2

**Reflection Question 2 (Data Quality)** - What is the quality of the data you are using? Are there any known issues or biases affecting data quality that might explain your key findings and observations?



## Activity 2: Contributing Factors

---

Review the data presented for the Top of the Hill Elementary School. Provide a response the question:

***What factors or root cases could explain these strengths and challenges?***

Utilize the *Contributing Factors* worksheet provided to capture your thoughts for each of the contributing factors areas (learner factors, instructional factors, climate/culture factors, family/community factors).



## Step 4: Team Review of Findings

---

### **PURPOSE:** *Root cause discovery*

Through team consensus building, finalize key findings & observations derived from the data for each domain.

- This is the final step in the CNA process, before writing the report.

### **PROCESS :**

1. Reassemble the full team.
2. Subcommittee members share-out domain specific *key findings* and *contributing factors* from the data review worksheet.
3. Explain *positive* and *negative key findings*.
4. Write summary statements on specific *factors contributing to the key findings and observations*.



# SAMPLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS WORKSHEET

### III. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS (ELA)

**Instructions:** As a subcommittee, begin brainstorming on any contributing factors in the four areas identified that could possibly explain both your positive and negative key findings. This will be particularly important later when, as a school community, you are discussing the specific factors you can directly impact that you believe, or research supports, will most likely lead to change in the observed behavior. Utilize the defining characteristics for each of the four factors in the chart below to initiate your conversations. Capture your thoughts in the chart that follows.

	<p><b>Learner Factors:</b> These are the factors that contribute to (in)effective learning on the part of individual students. This can include, but is not limited to, involvement and engagement of students in their learning, language barriers, interrupted schooling, issues related to poverty/socioeconomics, mental health, social and emotional issues, etc.</p>
	<p><b>Instructional Factors:</b> These are the factors that contribute to an (in)effective instructional environment. This can include, but is not limited to, a culture of high expectations and empowerment of learners as active participants; implementation of a continuous improvement process informed by data and best practice; use of Response to Intervention system; appropriate student grouping; implementation of an aligned instructional system, high-quality learning opportunities within and beyond the school day; grade level teaming, advisory, and other structures around developmental/transitional milestones, etc.</p>
	<p><b>Climate/Culture Factors:</b> These are the factors that contribute to an (in)effective school environment. This can include, but is not limited to, factors related to (in)effective teachers and leaders such as professional development, coaching, teacher supports, communities of practice, and recruitment/retention of highly effective educators and support staff. This also includes factors related to (in)effective school-based supports such as coordinated and comprehensive supports systems for the whole child; integrated and aligned interventions; cultivation of parent leadership, capacity and skills in support of learning; and two-way, internal and external communication with a variety of stakeholders; as well as safe, orderly, engaging and challenging learning environments.</p>
	<p><b>Family &amp; Community Factors:</b> These are the factors that contribute to (in)effective family and community supports. This can include, but is not limited to, providing a coordinated and comprehensive support system for learners' families in a multi-generational approach, family and community engagement in the learning process, authentic partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, and ability to leverage existing and new partnerships, with all activities managed towards student outcomes.</p>

Contributing Factors	Factors Contributing to <b>Positive</b> Key Findings	Factors Contributing to <b>Negative</b> Key Findings
Learner Factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Instructional Factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Climate/Culture Factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Family & Community Factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



## Activity 3: Data & Key Capacity Analysis

---

Utilize the *Data & Key Capacity Analysis* worksheet provided to summarize key findings and contributing factors affecting student performance in the area of English/Language Arts.

- 1 Share the positive and negative key findings and observations from the *Data Review Worksheet*:
  - The data indicate ...
- 2 Discuss the factors raised by the subcommittee to explain the positive and negative key finds:
  - We believe the factors impacting these results to be...
- 3 Write summarizing statements on the specific factors contributing to the key findings and observations for your school.



# SAMPLE DATA & KEY CAPACITY ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

---

## STRAND I: *Teaching for Learning - Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment* DOMAIN 1: ELA

**Positive** - more successful areas to replicate in which your students are performing better.

Click here to enter text.

**Negative** - less successful areas to change in which your students are performing more poorly.

Click here to enter text.

Remember to remain focused upon professional practices of teachers (assessment and instruction) and administrators (effective supervision, monitoring and feedback) that impact student learning.

*While it is true that student characteristics influence student proficiency, it is absolutely not true that student characteristics influence the opportunity for school leaders and educators to influence gains in student achievement.*

~Douglas Reeves



## Activity 3: Data & Key Capacity Analysis

### Sample Summary Statement for a **Positive Key Finding**:

*Eighth grade students (subgroup identified) at Top of the Hill Middle School have demonstrated over a three year period (longitudinal data - increased validity of statement) increases in the percent proficient on the English assessment and an increase in mean NCE scores on GRADE and SAT10 (reference to 3 sources of data, triangulation = increased validity). This can be attributed to (contributing factors/root cause hypothesis) the implementation of the guaranteed and viable curriculum with full fidelity (**as evidenced by** CWT data & CPT minutes), appropriate grouping of students in 3-tiered interventions during the day, and parent workshops focusing on strategies supporting their students reading at home.*

**Task:** In the *Data & Key Capacity Analysis* worksheet provided write one positive and one negative key findings and contributing factors statement for student performance English Language Arts at Top of the Hill Elementary School.



# Pulling it all Together

---





# Pulling it all Together

## Writing the CNA Report

The CNA Report serves as the introductory pages to the School Improvement Plan. It is the opportunity to share the narrative, story or overview of what is and has been occurring at the school:

- Who we are (student body, faculty, demographics, etc.)
- What we do (curriculum, programs, opportunities)
- Areas of strength (things we're good at)
- Areas of challenge (things we need to do better)



Organized  
by domain

Once finalized, the CNA report will be utilized in phase 2 of the SIP process which is goal setting and action planning.



# SAMPLE COVER PAGE

## School Improvement Plan Executive Summary for **INSERT SCHOOL NAME HERE**



PRINCIPAL:

WEBSITE:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

### SCHOOL SUMMARY

### STUDENT INFORMATION

Grade Range:   
Total Enrollment:   
Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students:   
Federal Accountability Status:

Percentage Hispanic:   
Percentage Black:   
Percentage White:   
Percentage Asian:   
Percentage Native American:

LEP Percentage:   
SWD Percentage:   
Attendance Rate:   
Graduation Rate:   
Dropout Rate:

### SCHOOL FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION

Number and Type of Administrators:   
Number of General Education Teaching Faculty:   
Number of Special Education Teaching:   
Number and Type of Itinerant Faculty:   
Number and Type of Coaches:   
Number of Teacher Assistants:   
Number and Type of Specialized Teaching Staff:   
Number and Type of Resource Staff:   
Other Faculty Support:



# SAMPLE REPORT TEMPLATE

---

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

---

Provide a simple descriptive list of the instructional programs your school offers in Domains 1-3, by grade level and student type. If your school offers intervention programs or other additional academic programs, include them in the appropriate section. Do not include after school programs or informal academic enrichment programs that aren't a formalized part of your curriculum.

■

## EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

---

Provide a description of the opportunities for teachers, students, parents, and community partners to engage in or provide extended learning opportunities (PD, workshops, afterschool programs, etc.)

Provide a simple description of the frequency, duration and primary use of collaborative time. List teachers that meet together, by type, during collaborative time (i.e.: grade level teams, departments, etc).

■

## AREAS OF STRENGTH

---

Refer to your Data Summary Worksheets to develop the description of trends and patterns in student achievement.

If your school does not clearly show strength based upon the data reviewed by your team, explain that no observable strengths can be identified.

■

## AREAS OF CONCERN

---

Refer to your Data Summary Worksheets to develop the description of trends and patterns in student achievement.

If your school does not clearly show a concern based upon the data reviewed by your team, explain why

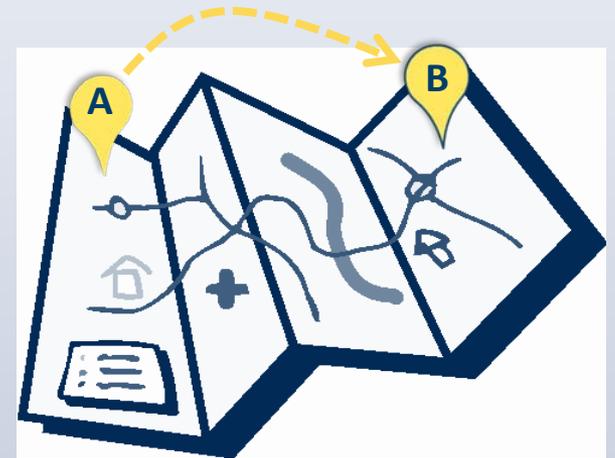
■



# Conclusion and Next Steps

## What did we accomplish today? Recapping Today's Session.

- Learned step-by-step process for conducting a CNA
- Learned about data triangulation, data quality, and how to ID root causes affecting student performance
- Learned how to “pull it all together” to write the CNA report
- Learned how/where to access resources to help facilitate the process in your school



## What comes next?

- School Improvement Planning Part II: Prioritization; Goal setting; Action planning
- Title I University – additional CNA and SIP training opportunities for Fed. Prog. Dir./Title I Coord.
- Part II Toolkit – look for on VDOE Title I web page in the coming months



# Contact info

---

## **Kristi Bond, Title I/III Specialist**

Virginia Department of Education  
Office of Program Administration & Accountability  
E-mail: [kristi.bond@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:kristi.bond@doe.virginia.gov)  
Tel: 804-371-2682

## **Dr. Lynn Sodat, Title I Coordinator**

Virginia Department of Education  
Office of Program Administration & Accountability  
E-mail: [lynn.sodat@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:lynn.sodat@doe.virginia.gov)  
Tel: 804-371-2934

## **VDOE Website**

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>

## **Title I Web Page for CNA and SIP Resources**

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal\\_programs/esea/title1/part\\_a/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title1/part_a/index.shtml)

