# Needs Assessment Toolkit Including Root Cause Analysis

**Aligning our strategic plans and interventions to the needs of our students and community**

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Connecticut State Department of Education

# Contents

# How can we ensure that the work we will do will positively impact student learning and wellness outcomes?

## Aligning our strategic plans and interventions to the needs of our students and community

### Why?

Because the students of Connecticut deserve to have an education that prepares them for the 21st century.

### Who?

Multiple stakeholders, PK-Grade 12, bring various perspectives and enrich the analysis process to address the most significant needs.

### What?

It begins with the data and determining the priority concerns. Then examine the concerns closely to understand a root cause.

# Why do we need to focus on root cause and needs assessment?

- Needs assessment plays a pivotal role and is foundational for the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Cycle of Continuous Improvement by gathering evidence and analyzing the data to determine the community's needs in order to provide solutions to complex problems.

- To ensure equity and excellence in education for all students, the needs assessment is a process to determine the community's strengths, needs, and set criteria for understanding how to best allocate available resources, such as money, people, and facilities; so that the structure, operations, and processes can be improved to be impactful.

- When organizations determine strengths, needs, and identify root causes, they can begin looking at all possible solutions to complex problems. The needs assessment guides the decision-making, justifies decisions before they are made, and focuses resources on solutions that will close the gap between current performance and student success.

**Definition of Equity:**

Freedom from bias or favoritism. Equity in education means putting practices, policies and procedure in place to ensure that every child has the individualized supports needed for achievement, fairness, and opportunities leading to success. Justice prevails when systemic barriers are broken down and replaced with systems that are built to meet the diverse needs of learners to create an environment of opportunity and access for success for all students.

**Definition of Community:**

The school community is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. The place of the school community not only includes the school building and grounds, but the surrounding community where the school is located. The partnerships extend beyond teachers, staff, students, and families to include the people and businesses of the surrounding community. This broader school community identity focuses on the connections within the school and with community partners in order to leverage shared physical and human assets to help students succeed.

## About the Needs Assessment Toolkit

| | |
|---|---|
| **Evidence** | Use evidence, including data, to determine focus areas and intervention strategies |
| **Analyze** | Plan, execute, observe, reflect,and revise strategies |
| **Implement** | Execute planned strategies and observe outcomes |
| **Monitor** | Implementation data is used to determine next steps |
| **Reflect** | Determine whether to sustain or change strategic direction |

The Connecticut State Department of Education Cycle for Continuous Improvement highlights the cyclical nature of improvement. The Cycle of Continuous Improvement begins with gathering evidence. The evidence is then analyzed to understand the trends, correlations, and outliers. This information is gathered in order to develop an action plan that will lead to improvement. The plan is implemented and monitored for fidelity of implementation and outcomes. The final step of the cycle is reflection. Stakeholders must engage in reflection to determine the impact of the action plan and additional evidence needed to continue improvement.

The graphic below highlights how this toolkit focuses on the first two steps of the *Cycle of Continuous Improvement*, Evidence and Analysis.

## CSDE Cycle for Continuous Improvement
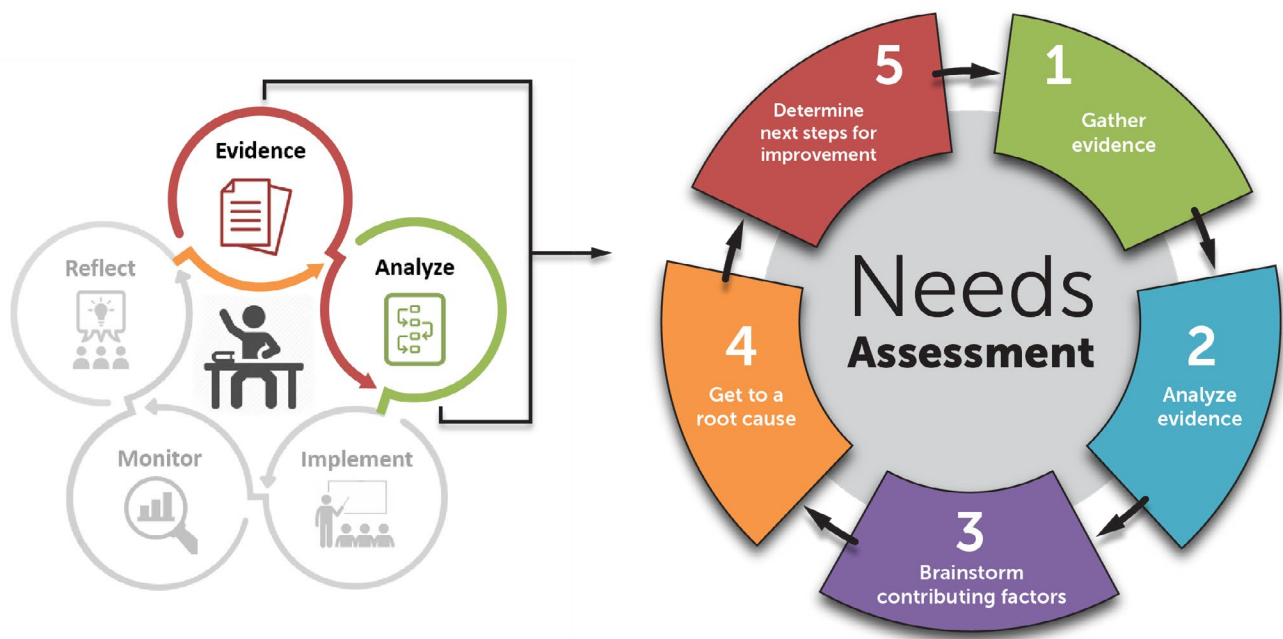
# Needs Assessment Toolkit



## Theory of Action:

If we engage in careful examination of quantitative and qualitative data to determine the most significant challenges to students' success, and we further consider the factors contributing to the challenge and identify root causes, then we can develop action steps to address root causes and implement change that will lead to equitable, improved student outcomes.

# What is the process and how do we get started?
# The Overview

## Who needs to participate in the work to ensure effective analysis to determine priority challenges and root causes?

The participants involved in the analysis of data and identification of priority concerns are critical to getting to a root cause. A variety of voices from all stakeholders leads to better analysis with various perspectives reviewing data and interpreting and analyzing what the data is saying.

Here are some stakeholders you may want to include on your team:

- Teachers, including grade level, content area, regular education, special education, and English Learner representation
- Support personnel such as school nurse, psychologists, social workers, counselors, tutors, interventionists, and paraprofessionals
- Non-core academic teachers such as specials or essentials teachers
- Leadership team members such as administrators and coaches
- Students
- Families
- Community partners
- School board member(s) — especially important if policies are needed to clear the way for solutions

Remember, it is important to have the team balanced so that participants feel they have a voice within the process. Including stakeholders in the planning process who are directly impacted by the challenges, is more likely to produce a plan that speaks to the needs of all stakeholders in the learning community. The Stakeholder Engagement Guide from The Hexagon Tool provides additional information on selecting a team.

## How do we plan for the work?

Backward planning is a method of project planning that allows you to build your strategic roadmap from the end deliverable back to the project start including the end and start dates of each phase.[1] Keeping that in mind, we encourage you to use that roadmap to plan the following phases of the needs assessment process:

1. Gather Evidence
2. Analyze Evidence
3. Brainstorm Contributing Factors
4. Get to a Root Cause
5. Determine Next Steps for improvement

Working backwards, the team can plan dates for the milestones and tasks. The *Committee Organization Chart* is one tool your team may want to use to record committee membership, establish roles and responsibilities, and provide a common document for recording goals and dates for completion as well as actions and progress toward goals.

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1 Adapted from *Beginning at the End—A Guide to Backward Planning.* Retrieved from https://www.demandlab.com/resources/marketing-operations/beginning-at-the-end-a-guide-to-backwards-planning#:~:text=Backwards%20planning%2C%20or%20work%2Dback,dates%20of%20each%20project%20phase.

# Committee Organization Chart

| Project Coordinators | |
|---|---|
| **Name** | **Position** |
| | |
| | |
| | |

| Purpose and Desired Outcomes |
|---|
| |

| Stakeholder Representation | Name | Position |
|---|---|---|
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As the team begins the work of gathering evidence, analyzing evidence, brainstorming factors, determining a root cause, and considering next steps, this chart may serve as a visual representation for all members to record and monitor progress.

| Target Dates | |
|---|---|
| **Completion** | **Purpose** |
| | |

| Actions Needed | By Whom | By When | Resources Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
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# What data will help us to identify priority concerns?

# 1. Gather Evidence



**Gather quantitative and qualitative available data**: Use the data available within your school, district, and community to understand what is going well and where there are opportunities for growth and improvement. See the chart, *Sources of Evidence*, for suggestions of sources for data. Using all four sources of data (demographic, perception, teaching and learning, and process data) and including data on students, staff, and families will lead to an understanding of the processes and programs that meet the teaching and learning needs of the organization.

Looking at a cross section of data may lead to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the data. For example, when reviewing process data with teaching and learning data, the team has an opportunity to see the impact of programs on student learning and how student learning and instruction impact the selection of programs.

| Sources of Evidence | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Demographic Data** | **Perception Data** | **Teaching and Learning Data** | **Process Data** |
| For Students (aggregate and sub-groups) | ▪ Enrollment<br>▪ Attendance<br>▪ Chronic absenteeism<br>▪ Drop-out rate<br>▪ Race/Ethnicity<br>▪ Gender<br>▪ Grade level<br>▪ EL, SPED etc.<br>▪ Credits toward graduation<br>▪ Discipline<br><br>Disaggregating data by a variety of demographic groups will aid the team in examining equity | ▪ Student surveys<br>▪ Student focus groups<br>▪ Climate surveys<br>▪ Observations<br>▪ Value and belief statements | ▪ Benchmark assessment<br>▪ State assessment<br>▪ Formative assessment<br>▪ District school performance data<br>▪ Discipline<br>▪ Credits toward graduation | ▪ Climate and Culture Initiatives<br>▪ Academic initiatives<br>▪ Scheduling<br>▪ Tools for learning<br>▪ Technology supports<br>▪ The Hexagon Tool - A tool for evaluating new and existing programs and practices<br>▪ Initiative Inventory<br>▪ Equity Assessment — coming soon from CSDE |
| For Staff | ▪ Staff demographics<br>▪ Staff retention<br>▪ Staff attendance | ▪ Staff surveys<br>▪ Staff focus groups<br>▪ Observations<br>▪ Values and belief statements | ▪ Evaluation data<br>▪ Observation data<br>▪ Walkthrough and trend data | ▪ Professional learning opportunities<br>▪ Scheduling for collaboration<br>▪ Tools for teaching |
| For Families | ▪ Community Data gathered from community partners to better understand the needs of students and families<br>▪ DataHaven Community Profiles<br>▪ Kids Count Data Center | ▪ Family surveys<br>▪ Community surveys<br>▪ Family focus groups<br>▪ Community focus groups<br>▪ Values and belief statements | | ▪ Family and community events<br>▪ Opportunities for leadership<br>▪ Communication for and with families<br>▪ Connectivity |
| Additional Sources of Data | ▪ EdSight<br>▪ NEASC Report<br>▪ International Baccalaureate Report<br>▪ Other audits, self-assessment tools etc. Commissioner's Network or SIG Mid-Year Audits | | | |

The chart below highlights the value of creating a data mosaic that brings data together from a variety of sources to paint the most complete picture for your organization.

| A Cross Section of Data Leads to the Most Valuable Evidence | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Demographic Data** | **Perception Data** | **Teaching and Learning Data** | **Process Data** |
| Tells us if different student groups experience school differently | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Tells us the impact of impressions on student learning or student learning on perceptions. | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| The impact of demographics on attitudes and student learning | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Tells us how programs impact student learning | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| The impact of programs and processes on perceptions and student learning | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Tells us about student participation in programs | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Tells us about the impact of programs on student learning of different student groups | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| **Highest Impact Zone: When data from all sources informs decisions and actions** | | | | |

## Model the Data:

Next, the team should model the data. Use tools to create charts and graphs that paint a visual representation of the data. This will help you and the team see the data in a variety of ways. It makes it easier to identify trends and outliers. Excel can be a valuable tool in creating a variety of charts and graphs to make your data more visual and accessible for understanding what the data indicates. Through the use of pivot tables, you can summarize, sort and reorganize large data sets to better see comparisons, patterns, and trends in the data.

Providing data models will give your team an advantage as they move to the next step in the Data Analysis.

# How do we effectively use data to identify priority concerns?

## 2. Analyze the Evidence



Once the data has been gathered, it is time for the team to more closely examine the data to determine strengths, needs and opportunities for growth. As the team examines the data, it is critical to begin with the observable facts. Then the team can use these facts to identify trends and unexpected results. When layering the demographic data, perception data, student learning data, and process data trends, questions may arise that call for additional data or investigation. When disaggregating the data (by race, gender, language, students with disabilities, grade level, course level, free/reduced meals) and examining it across different data sets, the team will have opportunities to identify the priority concerns, determine the relevant factors that impact outcomes and data, and use this information to determine root causes of challenges.

The team uses the **Review of Data** to:

- Compare and contrast data by subgroups and across the four sources of data to ensure representation of all student groups with a focus on equity for all
- Look for emerging themes or trends
- Identify surprises or outliers
- Look for patterns
- Look for inconsistencies

## Protocols for Analyzing Evidence

Protocols or guiding questions may help your team more closely examine the data to identify priorities and needs for your learning community. As your team begins to identify challenges, review the data to ensure it supports the claim of the challenge. Remember evidence that is collected across all four sources of data give the most complete picture and has the opportunity, when addressed, to have the highest impact on students.

# Five Steps to Examine Data[2]

1. What parts of the data catch your attention? Only tell the facts, avoid drawing conclusions and causation. (2 minutes to write and reflect individually, 6 minutes to reflect as a group)

2. What parts of the data catch your attention? Only tell the facts, avoid drawing conclusions and causation. (2 minutes to write and reflect individually, 6 minutes to reflect as a group)

3. What good news is there to celebrate? (5 minutes to identify strengths)

4. What are the problems of practice suggested by the data? (3 minutes to write and reflect individually, 7 minutes to reflect as a team)

5. What are the key conclusions?

# Additional Questions for Examining Evidence

These questions are designed to identify observable facts about the data. Refrain from making inferences and focus on identifying trends and unexpected results.

- How does the data compare to ESSA Milestone Targets? (found at [EdSight](#), select *Next Generation Accountability and ESSA Milestones)*

- How do data sets (or populations) compare to each other? (such as comparing one grade to another, comparing to benchmarks, or comparing school vs. district vs. state) What does this tell us about equity and how we are meeting the needs of all student groups?

- What are the commonalities among a given data set (or population)? (Such as among students who are scoring below standard, or those who are achieving)

- What patterns or similarities are evident across different data sets? (Such as comparing local formative assessment data with state assessments, or comparing student achievement with teacher attendance)

- What inconsistencies or discrepancies (if any) are evident?

- What is not represented in the data?

- What questions do the data raise?

- Does this data reflect a concern for a significant number of students or a significant number of students in a sub-group?

- Does this data align to our strategic plan or identified school-priorities?

The following questions are designed for the team to identify trends and brainstorm possible causes of the trends.

- How has the data changed over time?

- What clues help explain why a certain population is meeting or missing targets?

- What areas in the data stand out as needing further explanation?

- What patterns or themes do we see in our observations?

- Which of these observations are most relevant and important to our inquiry?

- Based on our observations, what do we know now?

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2 Adapted from *Protocols for Examining Data,* developed from National School Reform Faculty Materials. Retrieved from [https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/244/secondary%20sbac%20resources/Protocol%20for%20Examining%20Data.pdf](https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/244/secondary%20sbac%20resources/Protocol%20for%20Examining%20Data.pdf)

The following questions are designed for the team to consider prior programs, initiatives, and interventions and the existing conditions that impacted the level of success.

- Did the school fully implement its prior strategies and interventions as planned?
- What implementation challenges and barriers did the school encounter?
- What were the identified strengths and weaknesses of each step during the strategies/ interventions implementation?
- Are the frequency and duration of interventions sufficient for specified subgroups and low-performing students?
- Is the scheduling of interventions sufficient to meet the needs of specified subgroups and low-performing students?
- What measures were used to determine if the strategies/interventions were effective?
- How and how often was the progress of students who benefited from the strategies and interventions measured?
- Were the results different for specific subgroups?

The team may find an [Initiative Inventory](#) helpful in evaluating the evidence of implementation, impact, and costs.

# Decide or Delve

Finally, the team looks at the data and the story it is telling to determine if they have the data needed to make decisions or the team determines the need to delve even further into the data to understand the challenges of the school or district. Questions asked to find trends and outliners may also produce further questions that require additional data.

Gathering and analyzing evidence is cyclical. It is an ongoing activity to inform the cycle of continuous improvement.

# How do we determine a root cause of priority concerns?

# 3. Brainstorm Contributing Factors



## Protocols for Brainstorming Possible Factors

It is easy to put on the judgement hat about causes of priority challenges. We have our own experiences — personal, professional, and within our school communities. These experiences inform our perspectives, biases, and assumptions. The power of bringing a diverse group of stakeholders together with the perspectives of our many personal experiences to explore the challenges and contributing factors provides enriched thinking that helps us get to a root cause.

In order to find a root cause, we must first consider key factors contributing to a problem. Most often, there is more than one contributing factor that has led to the challenge. Here you will find protocols to brainstorm possible factors that will bring voices, thoughtfulness, and additional ideas to the process. These protocols can be used separately or together to dive into the challenges and gain an understanding of the contributing factors and root causes.

### 7 Rules for Brainstorming

- **Defer judgment.**

- **Encourage wild ideas.**

- **Build on the ideas of others.**

- **Stay focused on the topic.**

- **One conversation at a time.**

- **Be visual.**

- **Go for quantity.**

# Powerful Brainstorming[3]

1. Select a fact-based, data-driven challenge to post.

2. For 3 minutes everyone thinks of as many possible contributing factors and puts each on a separate post it note.

3. Taking turns sharing one idea at a time, each member of the group shares idea and posting around the challenge until all ideas are shared

4. Collaboratively categorize and discuss. Group members can ask clarifying questions at this time and add to one another's ideas. If any factors are outside of the control of the school, move them to the outer edges of the board.

5. To prioritize, each member of the group puts a dot on 3 of the ideas that thought to be most important causes of this challenge.

# Step Ladder Brainstorming[4]

This brainstorming technique avoids group think and empowers all members of the group, honoring all voices.

1. In advance let everyone know the challenge based on the data and consider causes. Team members plan to come to the group with factors that contribute to the problem.

2. Begin with two members only of the group coming together and sharing their thoughts on the cause of the challenge.

3. Add a new member to the group that first shares his or her ideas about the cause of the problem and then the group discusses.

4. Continue to add members one at a time with each presenting his or ideas before discussing with the group.

5. After all members have shared and discussed, come to a consensus about a contributing factor for the challenge.

# 3-2-3 Brainwriting[5]

Brainwriting bolsters confidence for all participants to offer suggestions and encourages consideration of other's ideas.

1. A problem is presented. Brainwriting occurs over several rounds. In each round team members will write down three ideas (possible contributing factors) within 2 minutes.

2. After the first round everyone swaps the piece of paper with someone else, reads the paper and then writes down three more ideas.  These can be new ideas or build on a previously written idea. Continue for at least 3 rounds.

3. After 3 rounds the papers are collected.  The facilitator shares all ideas and the group discusses to come to a consensus of the most plausible contributing factors.

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3  Adapted from *Borrowing a Powerful Brainstorm from IDEO.* Retrieved from https://catlintucker.com/2017/09/brainstorms/.

4  Adapted from *The Stepladder Technique: Making better group decisions.* Retrieved from https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_89.htm.

5  Adapted from *Mindtools: Brainstorming Toolkit.* Retrieved from https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_89.htm.

# 4. Get to a Root Cause

Root cause analysis is the process that allows us to move from data to action. The data analysis and identification of challenges and contributing factors tell us **what** is happening at our schools. Root cause analysis will tell us **why** it is happening. Once we understand the why, we can then develop targeted interventions to address the challenge.

**For the purposes of this toolkit, root cause is defined as the deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative outcomes within any process that, if dissolved, would eliminate or substantially reduce the outcome. In other words, *what is the cause that without it, there would be a change in the outcome?***



# Protocols for Finding a Root Cause

There are several processes and protocols that can be used individually or together to determine a root cause of a challenge and allow the team to systemically confirm it is a root cause.

# Fishbone Diagram

The Fishbone Diagram is a chart that a team can construct to better understand the contributing factors and causes of a problem. Starting with the problem allows the team to breakdown the factors that contribute to the problem and consider the causes of each factor.
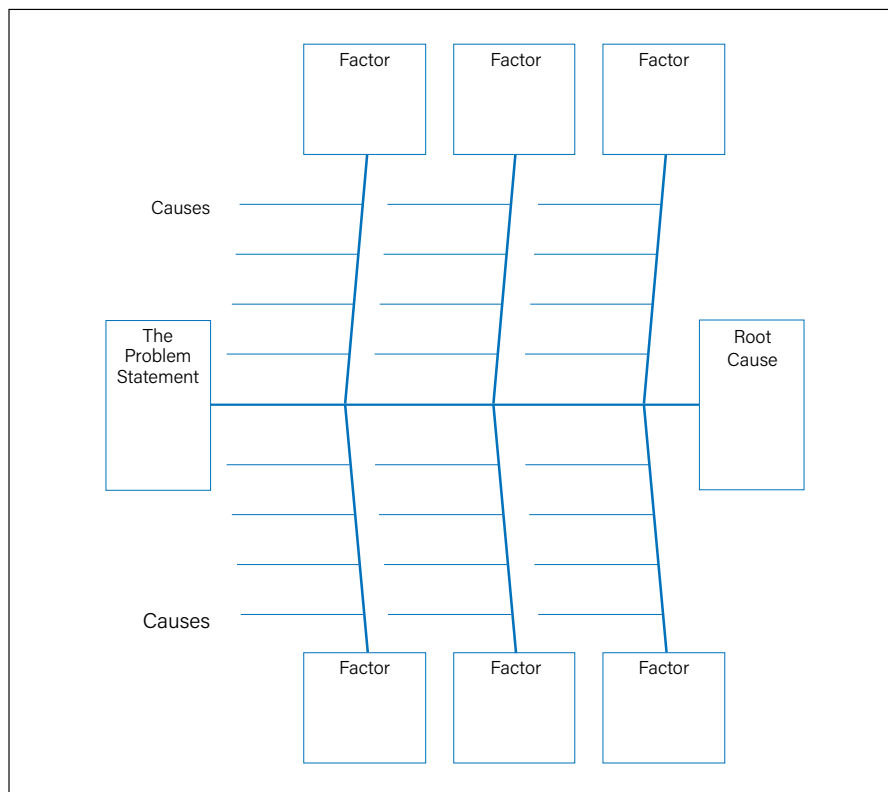


There are many ways a team can approach using the Fish Bone Diagram. Here is one suggested protocol:

1.  In pairs or small teams, focus on one contributing factor and brainstorm causes for this factor. Each team adds their causes to the diagram.
2.  Other small teams build upon the identified causes.
3.  The group circles common causes.
4.  The group discusses, determines, and crosses out causes that the school cannot control.
5.  Each small team or pair ranks the impact of each factor on the problem, 1 has the least impact and move up to the greatest impact. The factors with the highest "score" should be further examined.

For each cause considered for inclusion on the fishbone diagram, ask the following questions to ensure the "cause" is supported by evidence.
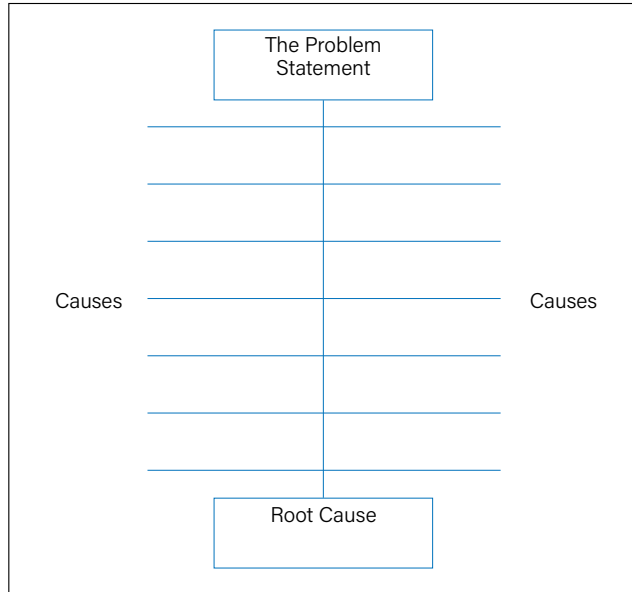
- Is it measureable?
- Do I have at least one source of data to suggest the cause exists?
- What proof do I have that the cause actually contributed to the problem?

While the Fishbone Diagram helps the team identify contributing factors and causes of priority problems, it may not identify a root cause. To determine root cause additionally ask the following questions:

- Is there research evidence suggesting the cause will result in stated effect?
- Is anything else needed, along with this cause, for the stated effect to occur?
- If we eliminate this cause will the problem be resolved or substantially improved? If the answer is yes, this cause is considered a root cause.

# Fishbone 2 Diagram

The Fishbone Diagram can be done in different ways. The Fishbone 2 Diagram focuses on causes, without looking at the factors. The coding on this diagram can help a team determine causes that are within their control. This will help teams determine causes that will be actionable and have impact on improvement.

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │ The Problem  │
                    │  Statement   │
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                    ───────┤
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                    ───────┤
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                    ───────┤
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │  Root Cause  │
                    └──────────────┘
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# The Five Whys

| Guiding Question | Possible Explanation |
|---|---|
| Why do we have this challenge? | First Response: |
| | Why is this the case? |
| | Why is this the case? |
| | Why is this the case? |
| | Why is this the case? |
| | Why is this the case? |
| **Underlying Cause Statement:** | |
| | |

# Verifying a Root Cause[6]

This Verifying a Root Cause Diagram can assist in assuring the team is getting to a root cause. The underlying causes may or may not be a root cause that is driving the conditions and factors leading to the existence and persistence of the problem statement. Use the questions within the decision tree flow chart to determine whether each underlying cause statement is a root or contributing cause and capture the results in a root cause list.
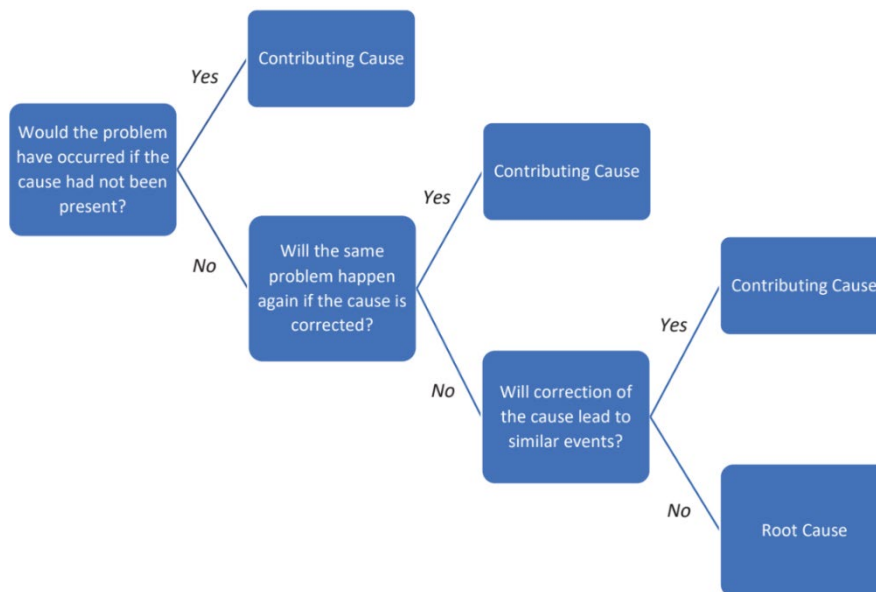


As you begin to explore and seek out underlying and root causes, the team may find the need to reexamine the data and seek out additional disaggregated data to get a clearer picture of the current status and a root cause.

# Additional Questions

Because we enter the work with our own perspective and many factors influence outcomes in schools, it is important to revisit and verify a root cause. Here are some additional questions for the team to consider:

- Did multiple data sources support the identification of this root cause?
- Does the data support that this cause contributed to the problem?
- Can anything else, besides this cause, lead to the stated effect?
- Is this root cause within the school's control?
- Is this root cause focused on adult actions?
- Will the elimination of this cause change the outcome?

> *Real change can happen in schools when the community collectively decides to take control of what they have power over instead of craving control over what they don't have power over.*
>
> — A variation for schools on a quote by Steve Maraboli

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6  Adapted from *Root Cause Analysis, Facilitator's Guide.* University of Maryland. Retrieved from https://aefb8617-015a-45da-8070-5c1c1ca5df3c. filesusr.com/ugd/514ff2_cd147deac39a410f977e3365b6290a74.pdf

# What are the next steps to address the priorities and root causes?

# 5. Determine Next Steps



Now that the data has been examined and analyzed, the contributing factors found, and root causes determined, it is time to look forward to the actions steps needed to address the priorities and create opportunities to interrupt the status quo and improve schools. The team should seek the best activities, strategies, and interventions to address an identified root cause of a priority challenge. The Connecticut State Department of Education Evidence-Based Practice Guides will provide you with a list of leading practices that research suggests will increase the likelihood of improved student outcomes.

Use the ***Brainstorming Next Steps to Address Root Causes*** chart to determine potential next steps that are aligned to a root cause and correspond to the evidence and priority indicators. This chart can serve as the road map for building a continuous improvement plan that addresses a root cause and leads to a Continuous Cycle of Improvement built on a foundation of evidence and analysis. The next steps are not an action plan, but rather broadly defined interventions that will then need to be more thoroughly considered to develop an action plan that identifies who and how the next steps will be implemented and monitored for effectiveness.

A Driver Diagram is an additional tool that can assist the team in backward planning. The driver is a root cause and the team can plan backward to ensure the next step will impact outcomes and address the goal.

## Brainstorming Next Steps to Address Root Causes

| Root Cause | Corresponding Evidence | Next Steps | Priority Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Talent** | | | |
| Example:<br><br>Due to a recent shift in administration or leadership, the instructional staff does not have a common vision of what effective instructional practice looks like. | Example:<br><br>SBAC ELA SPI 38.6<br><br>iReady 24.6% of student achieving grade level goal | Example:<br><br>The staff, with the guidance of leadership, will develop a vision of effective instruction and develop a "look fors" tool with observable instructional practices to be used for instructional rounds. | Example:<br><br>Instructional Practice |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| Root Cause | Corresponding Evidence | Next Steps | Priority Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academics** | | | |
| Example:<br><br>▪ Literacy program is not closely aligned to CCSS<br>▪ Teachers do not have targeted professional learning centered around new curriculum to unpack standards and assessments aligned to CCSS. | Example:<br><br>▪ SBAC ELA SPI 38.6<br>▪ iReady 24.6% of student achieving grade level goal | Example:<br><br>Schedule weekly team time via grade level and vertical teaming with leadership support to engage staff in unpacking standards and developing instructional materials and assessments aligned to standards. | Example:<br><br>Curriculum and instruction aligned to CCSS |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| Root Cause | Corresponding Evidence | Next Steps | Priority Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Climate and Culture** | | | |
| Example:<br><br>▪ Most opportunities for family engagement provide little opportunity for two-way communication or partnership from family and community stakeholders. | Example:<br><br>▪ 54% of parents indicated there are few opportunities to engage with the school<br>▪ 28% of teacher agree or strongly agree that families are engaged in this school<br>▪ 28.6% of students were chronically absent in 2018-19 | Example:<br><br>Invite families to be partners in student learning and to the decision-making table. This can be done through participation on school-wide committees, making conversations two-way, connecting through Power-School or other social media platforms. | Example:<br><br>Family and Community engagement |
| | | | |
| | | | |

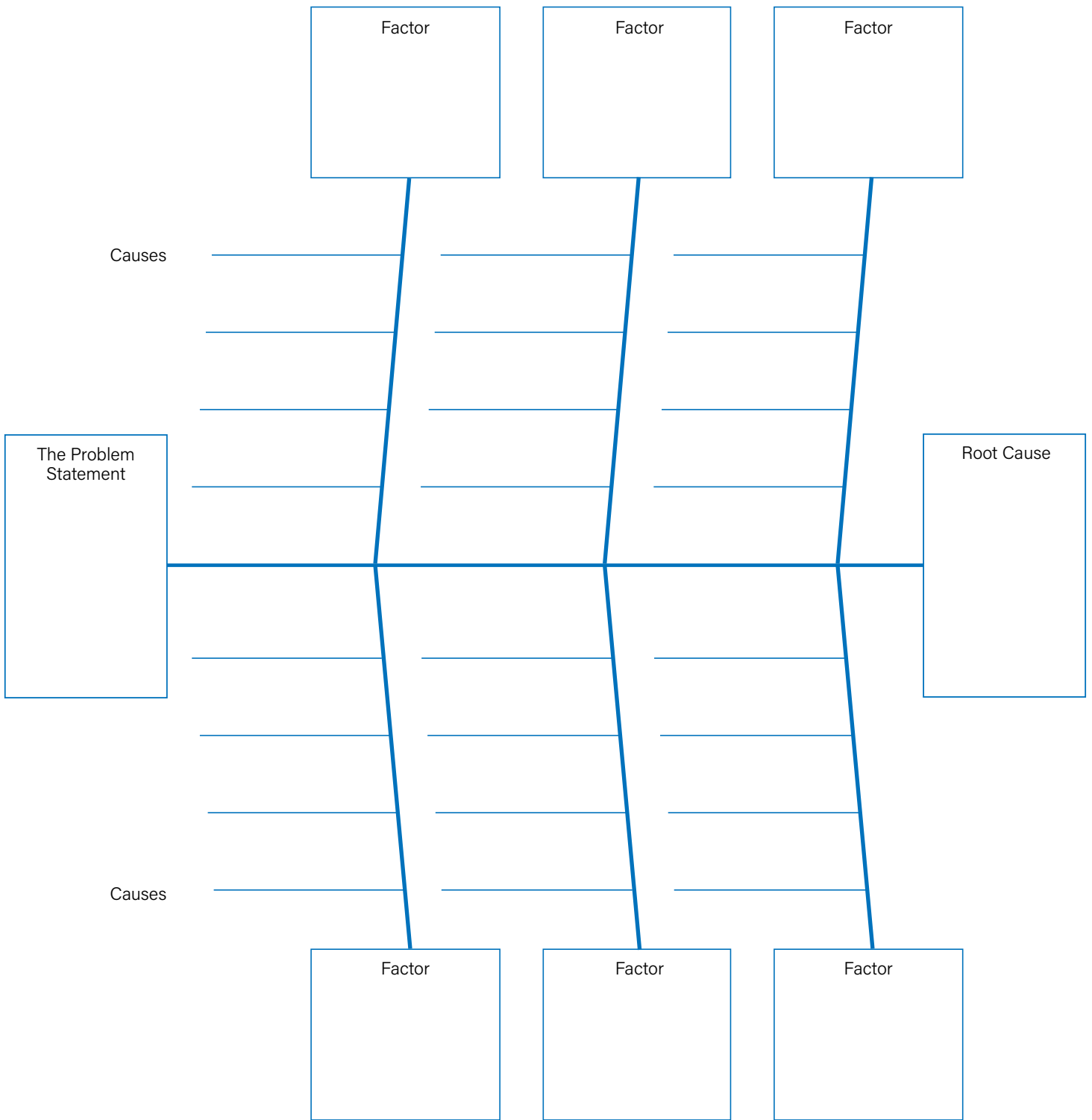| Root Cause | Corresponding Evidence | Next Steps | Priority Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Operations** | | | |
| Example:<br><br>▪ Teachers have little guidance and no professional learning on the use of class structure to support learning.<br><br>▪ Teachers do not have team time dedicated to collaborate and unpack grade-level standards | Example:<br><br>▪ Instructional Rounds indicate the last 10 minutes of each period are not used for intentional instruction in 85% of classes observed<br><br>▪ Math SPI in 2018-19 was 32.7 | Example:<br><br>Provide professional learning and collaborative planning time focused on classroom structures, use of class time, and effective instructional tasks. | Example:<br><br>Routines and Transitions |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# How can we ensure that the work we will do will positively impact student learning and outcomes?

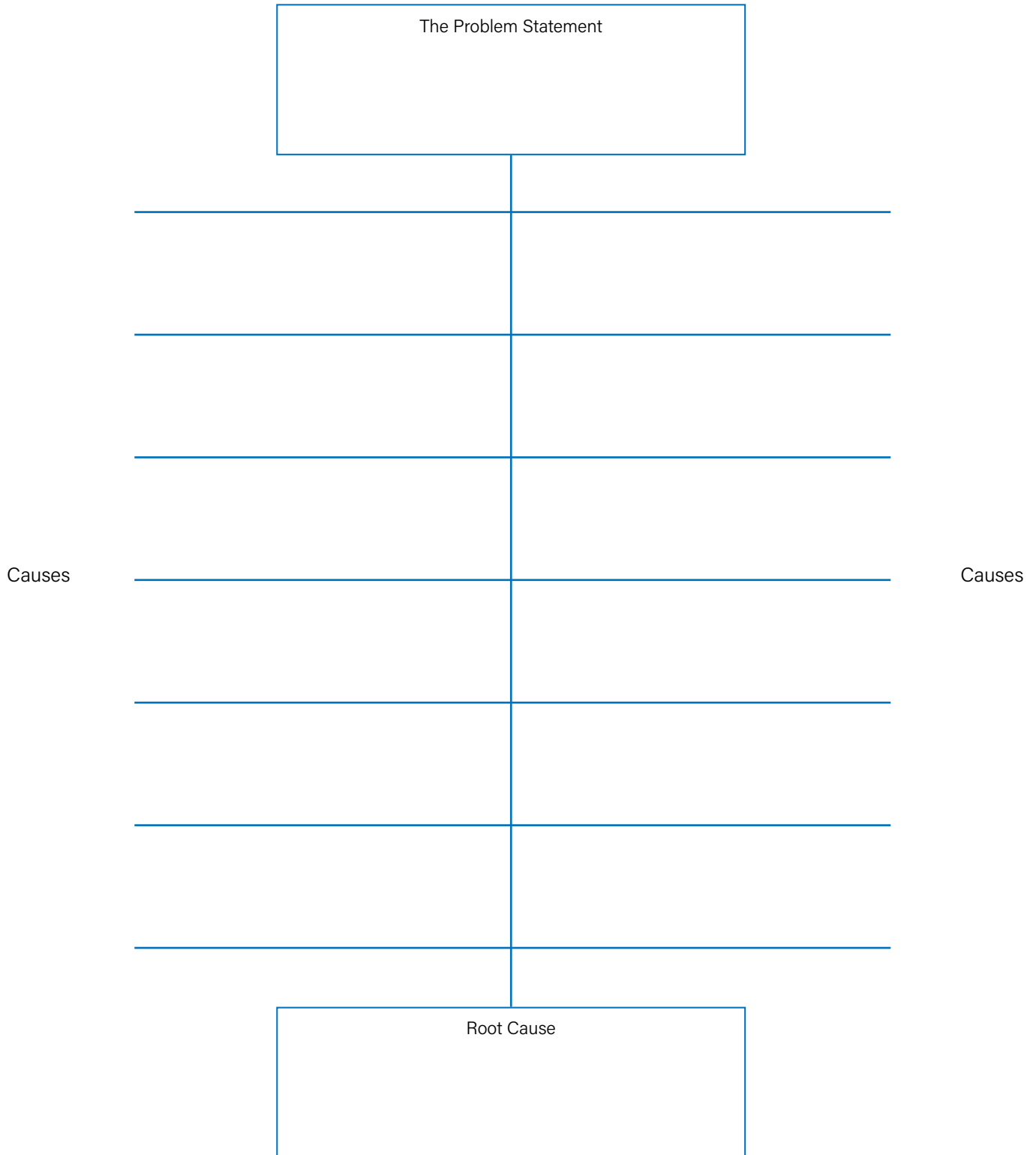## Aligning our strategic plans and interventions to the needs of our students and community

## Call To Action

We began this process asking the question, "How can we ensure that the work we will do will positively impact student learning and outcomes?" This toolkit offers a process to create a road map that is ready to inform a continuous improvement plan, including selecting strategies, action planning, monitoring for outcomes and fidelity, evaluating, and reflecting to determine next steps. Aligned to the needs assessment and root cause analysis, ***Brainstorming Next Steps to Address Root Causes*** will lead to actions that are purposeful and designed to meet the needs of the organization in order to positively impact student learning and outcomes. By accurately identifying a root cause, resources and actions will address the true needs of students, the school, and the community. Once the continuous improvement plan is developed, implementation with fidelity, monitoring progress and outcomes, and reflecting on the work will be critical to ensuring success.
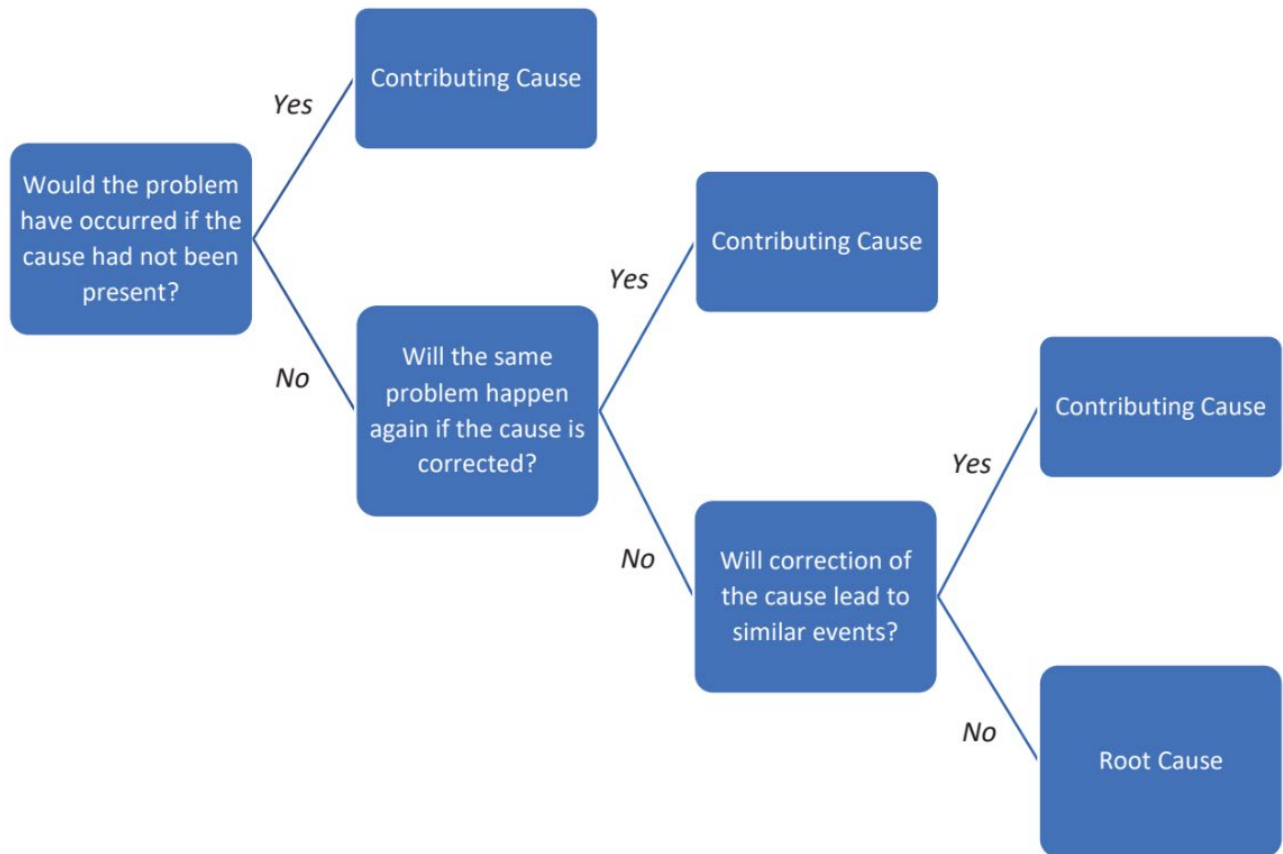
# Fishbone Diagram

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Factor | Factor | Factor |

Causes

The Problem Statement

Root Cause

Causes

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Factor | Factor | Factor |

# Fishbone 2 Diagram

The Problem Statement

Causes

Causes

Root Cause

**Coding:**     **S** = student based        **A** = adult based        **I** = in our control        **O** = out of our control

# Verifying Root Cause

# Driver Diagram

|  | **Primary Drivers (Root Causes)** | **Secondary Drivers (The Where)** | **Action Steps (The How)** |

| **Goal** | | | |

| What do you want to accomplish, for whom and by when? | | | |

**Goal** = What you want to accomplish or the priority concern

**Primary Drivers** = What you need to focus upon based on the root cause analysis

**Secondary Drivers** = Where in your system (structures/processes) should the focus of energy be to effect the Primary Drivers

**Action Steps** = The actions that will directly impact the goal aligned to the root cause