



PREFACE TRY THIS: SELF-ASSESSMENT—WHERE ARE YOU ON YOUR IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY?



This self-assessment will help you determine your school or district's current strengths and areas for growth in using improvement science for equity-centered continuous improvement.

► INSTRUCTIONS

For each statement, rate yourself or collaboratively rate your leadership team on a scale of 1 to 5:

- 1 Not yet started
- 2 Occasionally happening
- 3 In progress, but inconsistent
- 4 Happening consistently
- 5 Deeply embedded in our culture

► PART I: THE WHY—EQUITY, WORKPLACE CULTURE, AND LEADERSHIP VALUES

- Our school/district prioritizes equity in improvement efforts, such as identifying authentic problems, listening to those experiencing or affected by the problem, applying culturally responsive solutions, and analyzing the impact on closing gaps.
- We intentionally foster a workplace culture where staff feel valued, included, and safe to engage in inquiry.
- We prioritize and support a collaborative culture, helping teams develop norms, have time to meet, and empower them to create change.
- Our leadership team embodies values of equity, collaboration, vulnerability, and a stance of continuous improvement.
- We have a clear and shared vision that centers students, and we consistently communicate and make connections between that vision and our improvement work.



▶ **PART II: THE WHAT—THEORIES, PRINCIPLES, AND LEADERSHIP PARADIGM SHIFTS**

- We view school/district improvement as an ongoing learning process that involves collaborative problem-solving rather than a series of professional development sessions or initiatives.
- Our leadership team understands and actively applies proven principles of improvement to shape our improvement processes.
- We recognize that achieving equity requires transforming systems that go beyond addressing individual behaviors or surface-level issues, and our improvement efforts focus on identifying and addressing root causes.
- We embrace the research-based leadership dispositions for facilitating continuous school system improvement and intentionally integrate them into our leadership practices.
- We believe that meaningful system change begins with us, and we are committed to examining and evolving our own leadership mindsets and practices as part of the improvement journey.

▶ **PART III: THE HOW—STRUCTURED PROCESSES, TOOLS, AND LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES**

- We use a specific and articulated cycle for inquiry, and we know and use tools that help us with each step.
- We have structures and supports in place to ensure every team is engaged in collaborative inquiry.
- Our staff takes ownership of improvement efforts and initiates inquiry rather than doing it to follow leadership expectations.
- We have a culture where it is safe to take risks, fail, and learn from mistakes without fear of shame or blame.
- We actively scale successful improvement efforts by sharing what works across teams, schools, and districts.

▶ TOTAL SCORE: __ OUT OF 75



- 60–75 → Your school/district has a strong foundation in continuous improvement and is well-positioned to deepen this work.
- 40–59 → Your team is progressing, but inconsistencies exist in embedding continuous improvement at all levels.
- Below 40 → There is room for growth, and this book will provide essential strategies for building a stronger improvement culture.

▶ REFLECT

With my teams, we talk about looking out a window (pointing to others) versus looking in a mirror (looking at ourselves). This self-assessment is a mirror. Use it to reflect or spark conversations with your team as you consider your readiness for this improvement journey:

- What are your areas of strength?
- Which areas do you anticipate needing the most attention and growth?
- Which chapter(s) of this book do you expect to be the most valuable for your current understanding of your improvement needs?