CONDUCTING A COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Oregon Comprehensive Needs Assessment Guidance

This guidance document is designed to provide Oregon school districts and schools information and resources to support engagement in a comprehensive needs assessment process. This resource is arranged by the questions of **WHAT, WHY, WHEN, WHO** and **HOW** with resources suggested for use during the parts of the process, including root cause analyses tool, a transition lens tool, and resources to examine equity when making decisions and considering cultural paradigm shifts.

In addition, a table that lists additional diagnostic assessments for teams that want to dive more deeply into specific areas is available at the end of this resource.

WHAT: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

The process of assessing needs is a critical step in the continuous improvement cycle. A comprehensive needs assessment is a systematic process that assists district and school teams in identifying systemic inequities, strengths and opportunities within the context and constraints of the local setting then using that information to help prioritize improvement efforts in subsequent planning. A comprehensive assessment of needs examines data in three distinct areas: systems health, outcome and performance data and considering the input from community members (staff, students and community members).

WHY: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

The comprehensive needs assessment process ensures that district and school teams are able to select improvement priorities and goals based on needs and strengths. The process should help to ensure the equitable implementation of policy, practices and procedures that translates into resource allocation, education rigor, and opportunities for all students and especially for historically and currently marginalized youth, students, and families including civil rights protected classes.

WHEN: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) recommends that districts and schools engage in a comprehensive needs assessment process every three years.

Intermittently, segmented or focused needs assessments may be conducted to dive more deeply into specific areas or to help determine root causes for implementation or outcome challenges.
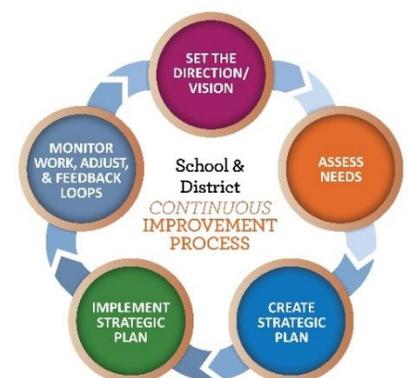
WHO: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

The process may span several weeks and should include a range of participants and voices at all points. Teams should be inclusive of staff with varied expertise including those who support students with disabilities, English Learners, social-emotional/behavioral learning and content areas.

While all community stakeholders should be engaged in decision-making, it is important to make extra effort to engage with underrepresented and historically or currently marginalized staff and partners. These voices include but are not limited to students and families experiencing poverty, students with disabilities, students of color, English learners, migrant students, and homeless and foster youth. During engagement and outreach, consider the following groups and whether their voices are represented in decision-making:

- Students and Youth
- Tribal Leaders and Affiliates
- Parents, Families, and Communities
- District and School-level Educators and Education Professionals
- Classified Staff
- School Board Members
- Community Partners and Non-Profit Organizations
- Before and After-School Programs
- Early Learning Providers
- Higher Education and Researchers
- Business Community
- Elected Officials

HOW: Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

An examination of qualitative and quantitative data in several categories is essential during a comprehensive needs assessment process. Categories for data review include and are expanded upon below:

- Student Outcome Data
    - Examples include attendance, behavior, academics, on-track status, etc.
- Systems Health Data
    - Examples include visionary leadership, culture, inclusionary practices, instruction, assessment and curriculum, etc.
- Perception Data
    - Examples include input from students, staff, families and the community.

Student Outcome Data:

During analysis of student outcome data, the team must conduct a focused review of outcomes for each student population that is served, looking for over- or under-representation. A concerted effort to ensure that a critical examination of disaggregated outcomes, and in particular to examine historically and currently marginalized youth, students, and families including civil rights protected classes takes place.

Examples of disaggregated data analysis include:

- PreK/early learning experiences children have had before arriving in kindergarten
- Academic outcomes (state level data and local assessment data) by student group
- Proportionality of students identified as eligible for special services, including special education, by student group, for example: percent of never and ever ELs receiving services.
- Discipline rates
- Attendance and mobility
- Rates of participation in academic, social-emotional supports
- Graduation rates
- 9th Grade on track
- Course grades
- Credits earned
- Rates of participation and success in college level courses
- Rates of participation, concentration and success in career and technical education programs
- Education plan and profile trends
- Participation in programs to involve students in career related learning experiences*

Both an **Equity** and **Transition Lens** tool are available in the resource section to provide teams with key questions and traditional transition bands as they dive more deeply into student outcomes.

Systems Health Data:

A comprehensive needs assessment process includes a thorough examination of resources, policies and initiatives. In addition, practices and routines related to the five **Oregon Integrated Systems (ORIS) Framework** are important systemic elements. These domains include:

- Leadership
- Talent Development
- Well-Rounded Coordinated Learning Principles
- Inclusive Policy and Practice
- Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership

ORIS Framework →

The ORIS Framework Systems Health Assessment Tool is available at both the district and school level and is available on the ODE website.

Note: In some cases, a root-cause analysis or deeper diagnostic in a particular domain area may be warranted in order to ascertain the deepest underlying or contributing causes. Examples might be to engage in a **Fish Bone or 5 Why Analysis** (examples available in the resource section of this document) to examine more deeply the root causes of absenteeism among a particular student group or utilizing the Chronic Absenteeism Diagnostic, or the Oregon Literacy Framework to dive more deeply into English Language Arts instruction.

Educator Performance Observation and Evaluation Data (Systems Health) is also a critical source of information relative to systems health. When using this type of data in analyzing systems health, it is important to use multiple measures. Rather than relying solely on final, aggregate evaluation scores, ideally a school or district will have gathered data from formal and informal observations that will guide Professional Learning choices for the district, school, and individual teachers. If the school and/or district does not collect this type of data, that is an important piece of information in itself, and something that the organization should consider addressing.

Perception Data (Systems Health):

Districts and schools have a responsibility to ensure all stakeholders and partners are able to engage in improvement process planning. To enable access and improve efforts aimed at ensuring educational equity, the strategies must extend beyond the usual people, processes, and practices (i.e. public comment at district meetings, reliance on already-formed advisory groups). Strategies to engage stakeholders, including but not limited to students, teachers and staff, families, communities may include:

- Online Engagement or Written Responses
- Surveys
- Focus Groups or Small Group Meetings
- Public Meetings or Forums
- Advisory Panels
- Cross-Sector Partnerships
- Ensuring communication methodology is approached in a culturally responsive manner, with accessible language and/or translation
- Empathy Interviews

Resources and Tools Section

Resources and Tools included in this guidance to assist teams in engaging in a comprehensive needs assessment process:

1. The Five Whys
   Questions help teams dig deeply into the contributing barriers for a given problem.

2. Fishbone Diagram
   Assists teams in determining contributing causes of a problem.

3. Equity Lens Questions (when determining implementation strategies)
   Assists teams in ascertaining how potential decisions impact varied groups in order to create well-crafted and equitable improvement strategies.

4. Critical Paradigm Shifts for Multicultural Education

5. Transition Lens Tool
   Assists teams in capturing data across all levels of the school or district system.

6. Supplemental Diagnostics List
   This table (list is not all-inclusive) elevates additional resources or tools to assist teams in learning more deeply about specific systems such as behavior, literacy and health.

**The Five Whys**

Five Whys Template

Clearly State the Problem:

Why did this occur?		Is this a root cause?	Yes/No

Why did this occur?   Is this a root cause?   Yes/No

If no, why did this occur?   Is this a root cause?   Yes/No

If no, why did this occur?   Is this a root cause?   Yes/No

If no, why did this occur?   Is this a root cause?   Yes/No

If no, why did this occur?   Is this a root cause?   Yes/No

Root Cause:
(Ensure that this is within your control)

Possible Solutions:

Fish Bone Diagram

Fishbone Diagram

Cause

Effect
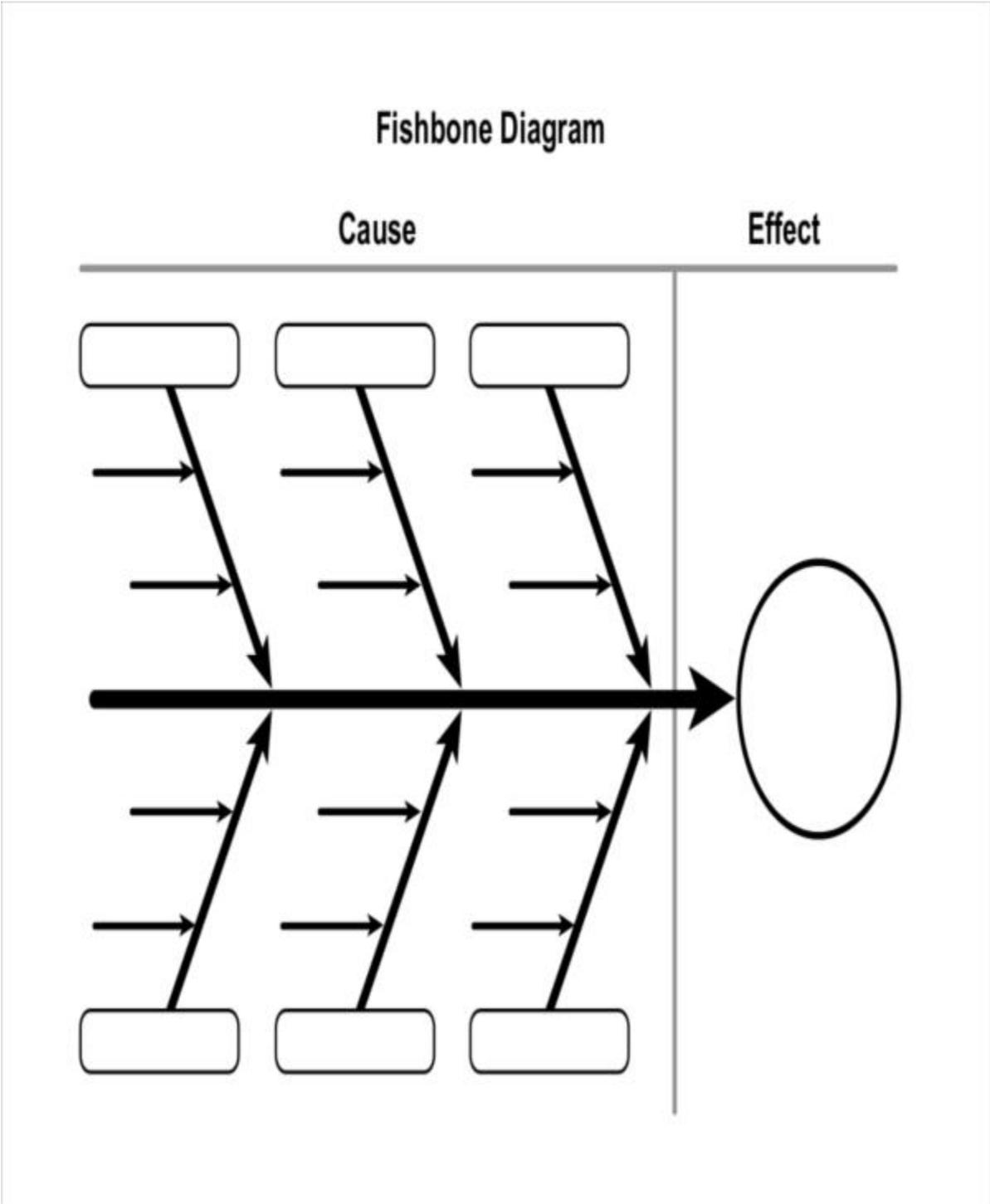
Using an Equity Lens When Determining Strategies (to Implement)

Creating a culture of equity requires monitoring, encouragement, resources, data, and opportunity. Use the following equity questions to ensure strategies address or support equity in services and resources.

Possible Strategy (Written as a Theory of Action): If then and	
Question	**Response**
Does the strategy address a need of any racial/ethnic and underserved group identified by data?	
Does the strategy ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?	
What is the impact of this strategy on eliminating the opportunity gap?	
How does the strategy ensure each learner and communities' individual and cultural needs are met? How can you modify or enhance the strategy to do so?	
How will you collect performance data on race, ethnicity, and native language as they relate to this strategy?	
How will any professional learning related to this strategy demonstrate a commitment to equity? How does the professional learning support cultural responsive instruction?	
How does the investment or resource allocation for this strategy advance the 40/40/20 goal?	
What is the potential impact of the resource allocation and strategic investment to these groups?	
How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by the strategic investment or resource allocation?	

Critical Paradigm Shifts for Multicultural Education

Compiled by Paul Gorski for **EdChange** and the Multicultural Pavilion

1. **The Base Shift: Equality to Equity**
   a. Does every student who walks into our schools have an opportunity to achieve to her or his fullest regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, first language, (dis)ability, and other social and cultural identifiers?
   b. Is my work contextualized in a bigger social picture that incorporates the history of oppression experienced by a variety of individuals and groups?

2. **Identifying "at-risk" students to Acknowledging a broken system**
   a. Who am I problematizing?
   b. Is my goal to make shifts in student outcomes (for which inequities are actually symptoms, not the root problems) working within a broken and inherently racist, sexist, classist, etc., system? Is this possible?

3. **Color-blindness to Self-examination**
   a. How am I recycling the history of inequity in education?
   b. Is color-blindness possible? And if so, is it desirable?

4. **Learning about "other cultures" to Dismantling systems of power and privilege**
   a. "Other" than what?
   b. Is my work focused on helping people feel OK sitting next to each other, or on addressing the root problem of imbalances of power and privilege that will remain regardless of who sits next to whom?

5. **Celebrating diversity to Advocating and fighting for equity**
   a. Am I asking students who are already alienated by most aspects of education to celebrate a difference for which they are routinely oppressed? If so, to whose benefit?
   b. Can I justify the use of limited resources for celebration when inequities persist?

6. **Focus on intent to Focus on impact**
   a. Is it enough that I intend to do well and fight toward equity, even when my work is misguided and recycles oppressive systems?
   b. Is it enough to support equity philosophically (such as including it in a school mission statement) while I fail to reflect equity in practice?

From: Critical Paradigm Shifts for Multicultural Education

Using a Transition Lens When Analyzing Student Data

A Transition Lens focuses on identifying needs related to building student skills needed to successfully transition through one stage of learning to another, so students have the needed foundation for the next stage of learning.

Transition Stages	Data Source	Strengths as Evidenced by *Data Statements*	Opportunities as Evidenced by Data Statements
Entering K			
Transitioning into upper elementary			
Transitioning into middle school			
Transitioning to high school			
After the first year of high school			
High School to Post-High			

Additional Supplemental Diagnostic Tools

Tool	What's Measured	Notes
Checklist of Observable Processes During RTI Full Implementation Stage	Items related to assessment, data analysis, grouping, intervention instruction, problem-solving	From RTI Action network
Chronic Absenteeism Diagnostic Tool	Items related to causes of student attendance/poor attendance	ODE Chronic Absenteeism Program administers this assessment
Culturally Responsive Tiered Fidelity Inventory (CR-TFI)	Implementation of school-wide PBIS	Portland Public adapted original SWPBIS TFI
Data-Based Individualization (DBI) Implementation Survey	Capacity to implement DBI (individual problem solving)	Structured interview
DIET-DB/SB	Literacy/ School or district level of implementation of response to intervention	Full process includes staff survey, evidence review and interview questions
District Capacity Assessment (DCA)	District capacity to implement an evidence-based practice	*This may fit better in the leadership domain
Institutional Assessment Quiz	This tool provides grounds for the visioning process and gives a starting point for how to approach advancing EDI within a system.	Advancing the Mission: Tools for equity, Diversity, and Inclusion pg 31-34 provides a checklist to *place* an institution somewhere on the continuum between four categories: Color blind, Diversity only, Race tentative and Equity focused.
Integrated MTSS Implementation Scale	Level of implementation of integrated MTSS	Administrator perception survey
Integrated MTSS Implementation Scale	Level of implementation of MTSS	Instructional staff perception survey
ISSET	Tier II and Tier III PBIS implementation	External evaluation
K-12 Reading Common Core Instruction Framework	Alignment of goals, curriculum, instruction and assessment to standards	School self-assessment
Oregon Healthy Teens Survey		Oregon Health Authority – Oregon Healthy Teens Survey • Representative sample of Oregon's 8th and 11th graders • Survey takes place biennially on the odd years (most recent 2017)

Tool	What's Measured	Notes
		• ~27,000 students, 600 schools surveyed • Provides state and county level data • Questions range: general, oral, and mental health topics, resilience, behavior, and perceptions of peer and parental attitudes.
Oregon Literacy Framework - District level tool	Support for Implementation of literacy best practices	District level
Oregon Literacy Framework - School level tool	Support for Implementation of literacy best practices	School level
Oregon School Health Profiles Survey		[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – School Health Profiles](#) • National survey: representative sample of Oregon's Middle and High Schools • Survey takes place biennially on the even years (most recent 2016) • ~300 Lead Health Educators, ~300 Principals/School Administrators • Provides state level data • Questions on school health policy and curriculum
PBIS Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ) and Early Childhood BOQ	Tier I SWPBIS implementation	Usually completed w/a PBIS coach
PBIS Team Implementation Checklist (TIC)	Fidelity of implementation of Tier I PBIS	Team can conduct multiple times/year
Reading TFI- Elementary	Implementation of school-wide tiered reading model	Version from MIBLSI, others may be available
Reading TFI- Secondary	Implementation of school-wide tiered reading model	Version from MIBLSI, others may be available
School Counseling Program Assessment	Health of the schools' counseling program	[Oregon's Framework for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs](#) The tool itself is embedded in this guidance and is found on pages 87-90.

Tool	What's Measured	Notes
School-wide evaluation tool SET	Implementation of SWPBIS	External evaluation
Self-Assessment Survey (SAS)	Level of implementation of PBIS	Staff perception survey
Team Functioning Survey	Operations/routines that promote healthy teams	Staff perception survey, on SPDG data portal
Text-book Equity Analysis	I believe this tool can be adapted to analyze other forms of equity as well, such as racial/cultural equity, socioeconomic equity, and dis/ability equity for example.	Toolkit for Assessing and Promoting Equity in the Classroom Pg 61-71 this is a great tool developed by UNICEF to analyze gender bias in curriculum materials such as text books.
Various Fidelity Resources	Fidelity to intervention protocol	RTI Action Network – Treatment Integrity Protocols
Various RTI implementation resources	Includes both checklists and resources to support implementation.	RTI Action Network – Checklists and Forms
Wellness Survey		Student Wellness Survey 2018 FAQ