Step 2: Create SMART Strategies

- For each goal, brainstorm the strategies that could be implemented to increase the likelihood of achieving the goal.
- Each strategy should be specific and measurable/accountable.
- Strategies are action-oriented. They are what the teacher, school team/department will do.
- Strategies might consider and include classroom assessment practice, classroom instruction, and activities that should be discontinued to increase the focus necessary to implement the achievement goals.
- When developing strategies to support prioritized goals, consider identifying those practices, curriculum, instruction or assessment realities that may be contributing to data results.

Step 3: Prioritize the Strategies

- Each strategy should contain one or more results indicators that identify:
  - Relevant subject area(s): is the goal tending to an urgent need?
  - Relevance to student outcome data?
  - Current reality or baseline data point if available
  - What relationship, if any, exists in performance across content areas?
  - What is the root cause of data results?
  - What curriculum, instruction or assessment realities may be contributing to data results?
  - What school position (administration, before and after school intervention, etc.) influences the data results?
  - Time when the assessment will take place as well as timely in terms of identified need
  - Achievement goals.
  - Relevant subject areas - is the goal tending to an urgent need?
  - Data to monitor the strategies. When you create your monitoring plan consider:
    - How will you monitor the strategies. When you create your monitoring plan consider:
      - How it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning?
      - Review your work from developing questions to determining results indicators then determine if it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning?

Step 1: Establish SMART Goals

- Strategies are action-oriented. They are what the teacher, school team/department will do.
- Prioritize needs: Percentage of Grade 7 students scoring at proficiency or higher in the district required mathematics assessment administered in June 2010.

Step 4: Determine SMART Indicators

- What data sources and tools should you use to determine results indicators?
- Each strategy should contain one or more results indicators that identify:
  - Whether the strategy is actually being implemented as designed.
  - If it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning.
  - What is the root cause of data results?
  - What curriculum, instruction or assessment realities may be contributing to data results?
  - Which areas are of most urgent need?

Tools/Resources

- district and school achievement data
- data to monitor the strategies. When you create your monitoring plan consider:
  - How it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning?
  - Review your work from developing questions to determining results indicators then determine if it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning?

Sample Questions/Steps

- What needs, strengths and/or areas of concern do you find in the last three years of your student outcomes?
- How do students perform from one year to the next (before and after time)?
- What percentages of students are meeting state standards? Has this changed? How?
- How do gaps exist among subgroups (ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education and English-language learners)?
- Do gender gaps exist?
- What relationship, if any, exists in performance across content areas?

Treasure Goals

- What areas should be celebrated and what adult actions contributed to the performance?
- Which areas have the greatest potential for growth?
- When were the strategies last implemented?

Step 6: Monitor and Evaluate Results

- Review your work from developing questions to determining results indicators then determine how you will monitor the strategies. When you create your monitoring plan consider:
  - Whether the strategy is actually being implemented as designed.
  - If it is being implemented as designed, is it having the desired effect on student learning.
  - What is the root cause of data results?
  - What curriculum, instruction or assessment realities may be contributing to data results?

The State of Connecticut Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons and does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the Department of Education’s nondiscrimination policies should be directed to the Equal Employment Opportunity Director, State of Connecticut Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1345, 860-807-2073. (Updated March 2020.)
Data-Driven Decision Making: District and School Level Data Teams

Introduction
The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has developed and implemented the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) to accelerate the learning of all students and to close the achievement gap in the state. As part of this work, the Department has partnered with the Leadership and Learning Center, regional educational service center (RESC), and the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to provide district- and school-level training and technical assistance in the following key areas:

- Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM): ongoing review of student data by district leaders, building leaders and teachers to determine strengths and areas in need of improvement at the district and school level.
- Data Teams (DT): ongoing analysis of data from common formative assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning, and to identify instructional strategies that will best address student and learning objectives in the classroom.
- Engaging Classroom Assessments (ECA): formerly known as Making Standards Work (MSW): Data Teams (DT) to provide district- and school-level training and technical assistance in the following key areas:
- Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS): applying the nine research-based effective instructional categories identified in the Art and Science of Teaching (Marzano et al., 2001), and monitoring teaching to develop lesson plans that best meet student needs.
- Improving School Climate (ISC) with a focus on collaborative teams focused on student learning.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: District and School Level

Rationale
The Connecticut State Department of Education has developed and implemented a comprehensive accountability initiative to accelerate the learning of all students. This initiative is based on the findings of nationally recognized researchers, including Douglas Reeves, Dr. Michael Schmeichel, Dr. Robert Marzano, Dr. Richard Elmore, Dr. Jerome Freedman, Dr. John Simpson and others. Their work provides evidence that schools with high rates of poverty and high percentages of ethnic minorities in their student population can raise high academic performance. Common characteristics of these high-achieving schools include:

- A clear focus on achievement;
- Standardized and continuous data that emphasizes the core subject areas of reading, mathematics, writing to develop lesson plans that best meet student needs;
- Use of data to inform instructional and leadership decisions;
- Frequent assessment of student progress and multiple opportunities for student learning;
- An emphasis on research-based effective teaching strategies, including nonfiction reading, writing, and collaborative teams focused on student learning;
- All adults held accountable for student achievement and;
- A positive school climate.

Tend to have parameters in place for coaching, mentoring, and evaluation of educational interventions in a timely manner.

This guide provides an overview of DDDM, ISC, or ISC, is available to provide support in the implementation of the DDDM process. Document titles in this guide that are followed by an asterisk indicate that the content is more detailed in the program documentation.

Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM) is an essential process that should be used at the district and school level to improve student achievement. The process generally begins with a collaborative analysis of what Douglas Reeves calls “Effect or Student Outcome Indicators” (Reeves 2004). Effect data are systemwide indicators that are required by federal and state statutes. These data points apply to every school in a district and may, for example, include state test scores, attendance figures and dropout rates.

What is Data?
Data is more than just numbers and test scores. Data include any information that helps us learn about learning.

Data can include:
- district student achievement;
- state assessment performance;
- school assessments;
- graduation or promotion requirements;
- content area and grade-level requirements.

It is important when analyzing data to consider not only the Student Outcome Indicators (effect data), such as student achievement results, but also the High Leverage Adult Actions (cause variables), such as adult behaviors and indicators in teaching, curriculum, leadership, behavioral strategies and other factors that influence student achievement. We need to create as much data as possible, or more about the actions of adults as we have about students.

Examples of Student Outcome Indicators
- District student achievement;
- State assessment performance;
- Graduation or promotion requirements;
- Content area and grade-level requirements.

Examples of High Leverage Adult Actions
- Percentage of assessments scored collaboratively by classroom teachers with specific criteria;
- Percentage of time spent with small-group instruction;
- Percentage of disciplinary actions that result in out-of-school suspension;
- Percentage of homework that is devoted to writing in the content area;
- Percentage of teachers engaged in bimonthly data team meetings.