



SUPPORT SYSTEMS

TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS

OVERVIEW

This Extended Learning Guide is designed for your team to use in conjunction with the videos on taisresources.net to review current practices, establish baseline information, and plan for continuous improvement. Each guide includes suggestions for discussion, protocols for investigation, and one or more Call to Action activities.

Support Systems are the components represented by the second-most outer ring of the Texas Accountability and Intervention System (TAIS) process diagram, and consist of:

- Organizational Structure
- Processes and Procedures
- Communications
- Capacity and Resources

Note that the components of the TAIS framework don't function in isolation. Your team should consider reviewing each component, beginning with the ones that seem most relevant to your current situation.

ORGANIZATION

In addition to these Extended Learning Guides, each Support Systems component on [taisresources.net](https://www.taisresources.net) features an *Expert video* in which a professional with expertise in the subject offers important points to remember and tips for success.

Each component also offers one or more *From the Field videos* highlighting Texas schools that have used the component effectively in their continuous improvement process. These videos will help your team see and discuss what the component looks and sounds like in action.

USING THIS GUIDE

As a principal, superintendent, district leader, teacher leader, or Professional Service Provider, you can use the videos and Learning Guides to provide an ongoing learning experience for teams tasked with implementing continuous school improvement. The Learning Guides provide a framework for using the online videos to promote discussion and improvement.

EACH GUIDE INCLUDES

- A component definition, called "Build a Common Understanding"
- Discussion questions covering the *Expert* and *From the Field* videos
- Suggested activities to promote reflection, deep thought, discussion, and action planning
- Info about the target audience, time required, and needed materials
- One or more Calls to Action to help the group move from "knowing" to "doing"
- References for further study

SUPPORT SYSTEMS PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Building a Common Understanding

Priority is placed upon teaching and learning when establishing and implementing systemic operational protocols that guarantee accountability, availability of resources, and their effective use.^{1,2}

Target Audience

Campus or District Leadership Team

Time Needed

90 minutes is recommended. (The module can be broken into two sessions if needed.)

Materials Needed

- Videos at www.taisresources.net/processes-and-procedures/
- Printed charts for activities

STEP 1

Watch the *Expert video*, "Processes and Procedures," featuring Dr. Ervin Knezek, with your campus or district team. As you watch the video, take notes on what Dr. Knezek has to say about processes and procedures.

STEP 2

Discuss your findings? What, if anything, stands out for your group?

STEP 3

Consider the processes and procedures in your school or district, particularly those that affect areas you would like to improve. Use the chart below to identify your processes and procedures. Sample processes and procedures have been provided for campuses and districts.

After you have completed listing processes and procedures, analyze each process or procedure by answering the following questions:

- Is the purpose of the process/procedure clear to the end users?
- Does the process or procedure ensure adults are accountable for the desired outcomes?
- Does the process or procedure provide teachers the tools they need in a timely manner (not too soon or too late)?
- Is record keeping easy and kept to a minimum?
- Does the process or procedure connect to and enhance student learning?
- Is the process or procedure streamlined? Could it be eliminated? If not, how could it be improved?
- Does the process and procedure fit easily into the natural flow of teaching and learning? If not, how might it be adjusted to do so?

Process/Procedure Analysis Campus Example

Process/Procedure	Why Was It Created?	Who Does It?	When Does It Happen?	Evidence of Effectiveness (Data)	Recommended Action
Tardy students must get a permit to enter class	To reduce tardiness	Office staff	Every period	Data on tardies reveals little change in number of tardies over time	Adjust process
Teachers analyze data individually after benchmarks	To use data to adjust instruction	Teachers	Every nine weeks	No data is evident that instruction has been significantly adjusted	Plan for teachers to administer short-term assessments and to analyze results and adjust instruction in teams every three weeks

Process/Procedure Analysis District Example

Process/ Procedure	Why Was It Created?	Who Does It?	When Does It Happen?	Evidence of Effectiveness (Data)	Recommend- ed Action
New teachers attend one day of orientation	To welcome new teachers	District staff	August	Welcoming new teachers does not address district expectations/skills	Revise new teacher orientation to be a year-long process that purposefully teaches expectations and skills
Teachers analyze data individually after benchmarks	To use data to adjust instruction	Teachers	Every nine weeks	No data is evident that instruction has been significantly adjusted	District provides training to support teacher creation of short-term assessments, processes to analyze results and how to adjust instruction

Process/Procedure Analysis

Process/ Procedure	Why Was It Created?	Who Does It?	When Does It Happen?	Evidence of Effectiveness (Data)	Recommend- ed Action

STEP 4

Discuss your findings as a group. Consider the impact that processes and procedures have on each Critical Success Factor (CSF). Do they guide people's work and help them address each CSF effectively? Do they provide both pressure and support?

STEP 5

Watch the Ward Elementary and Marble Falls High School *From the Field* videos.

STEP 6

Discuss how central office staff and campus-based personnel changed processes and procedures to improve student outcomes. In each case, new procedures that may have been challenged at first resulted in greater student achievement, and, in turn, greater teacher support. Do you think this is significant, and, if so, why?

STEP 7

Develop specific plans to create processes and procedures to address specific problems at your campus or in your district. Ensure each proposed process or procedure has a clear connection to improved student learning outcomes.

Review the Campus and District examples below regarding processes and procedures. Sample problems have been provided for campuses and districts.

Repeat for each identified problem as needed. Challenge yourselves to determine if each proposed process or procedure supports high levels of student learning or if it is merely convenient for the adults.

Process/Procedure Development Campus Example

Identified problem	Supporting Data	Possible Root Cause	Proposed Process or Procedure	How will this lead to improved student learning outcomes?	Cost
Students aren't in class as much as we want	86% ADA in first semester	Students have discovered they can avoid assignments if they are in the "Tardy Tank"	Change campus "Tardy Tank" process so that students do not skip class to avoid it	More students in class	None

Process/Procedure Development District Example

Identified problem	Supporting Data	Possible Root Cause	Proposed Process or Procedure	How will this lead to improved student learning outcomes?	Cost
Writing scores across the district are lower than desired	40% of all students achieved mastery on the Writing portion of STAAR	There is not a sense of urgency around writing skills District and campus leadership is not monitoring classroom instruction to ensure writing skills are being taught	Develop a district-wide process for monitoring instruction Provide additional professional development and coaching for teachers. Implement a common scoring process	Teachers are receiving needed support, thus becoming more knowledgeable and students are more successful	Funds for Professional Development Instructional Coach or Coaches Time for Common Planning

Process/Procedure Development

Identified problem	Supporting Data	Why Might This Happen?	Potential Process/ Procedure	Potential Impact	Cost

For additional support in creating a strong plan, please see the Continuous Improvement Process components on the TAIS website.

NOTES

1. Gene Bottoms and Jon Schmidt-Davis, "The Three Essentials: Improving Schools Requires District Vision, District and State Support, and Principal Leadership," *The Wallace Foundation*, last modified August 2010, <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/district-policy-and-practice/Pages/Three-Essentials-to-Improving-Schools.aspx>.

2. Ben Levine, "What Does It Take to Scale Up Innovations?" *National Education Policy Center*, last modified March 2013, <http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/scaling-up-innovations>.

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