

Supporting the Continuous Improvement Process in Schools

Initial Data and Planning

Continuous Improvement (CI) methodologies have gained traction in spheres such as healthcare, welfare, and technology with the premise that, through an iterative process, cycles of improvement build on previous cycles rather than starting from square one. Continuous improvement processes also seek to apply systems thinking, considering ways in which components of the system impact one another and how the system as a whole functions and can be improved.

School improvement is certainly not new; however, the tenets of continuous improvement are a fairly recent development in the education system. In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law by President Obama. While the new legislation does not specifically use the term, “continuous improvement”, there are provisions within the legislation that have prompted states to implement policies of continuous improvement. As ESSA went into effect in the 2017-18 school year, many states included continuous improvement (CI) in their policies and plans with many more states implementing CI plans since then.

In the 2021-22 school year, the Nevada Department of Education partnered with UPD Consulting, a Maryland-based consulting firm, to redesign the school improvement process, launching a beta version of the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP). The beta version of CI was updated and streamlined for the 2022 - 23 school year based on feedback from the participating pilot schools and districts.

Nevada’s Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), like those of other states, is an attempt to “re-orient education from compliance and inertia to learning and improvement.” It is also an attempt to “employ data less as hammers and more as flashlights to identify opportunities for learning, improvement, and growth; celebrate successes; and nurture a culture of improvement throughout their organizations” (Gordon, 2019).

In one district, during the 2021-22 school year and again in the 2022-23 school year, the Northeastern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (NNRPDP) provided professional learning sessions for administrators focused on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF). During those sessions, discussion amongst participating administrators surfaced a need for support to navigate the new CI process; it was inferred that if schools in that particular district needed support with the CI process, schools in other districts could also use support.

Figure ?

Supporting the Continuous Improvement Process in Schools Logic Model

PROBLEM	OBJECTIVES	PROCESS MEASURES
The Nevada Department of Education replaced the traditional school improvement process with the Continuous Improvement, or CI, process.	NNRPDP will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with schools to determine desired level of NNRPDP support Make a plan for the CIP support to be enacted Enact the plan and gather evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIP Completion Report CI team survey RPDP Evaluation Survey following professional learning sessions Request for CIP Services for the 23-24 school year
SUBPROBLEM	ACTIVITIES	
Administrators & schools needed support in order to effectively complete the revised school improvement process (CI).	Lead and/or support schools in requested components of the CI process including:	
GOAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide input on selection of CI team members school data dive root cause analysis strategy selection SPP roadmap development professional learning aligned to the SPP status checks and reviewing our journey 	IMPACT
Schools partnering with NNRPDP will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete all requested components of the CI process (CIP) perceive NNRPDP support as beneficial receive professional learning, if requested, aligned to the SPP goals be positively impacted through related PL 		Schools partnering with NNRPDP will complete the CI process and will report that NNRPDP support was beneficial. Professional learning provided by NNRPDP and aligned with the SPP plan will receive evaluation scores of 3 or higher. Schools will request support from NNRPDP for the 23-24 school year.

Method

Learning Design

NNRPDP created a customizable structure for support and presented the idea during a regularly scheduled administrator NEPF session in one district and again at a monthly administrative council meeting in the same district where schools were encouraged to reach out for support. Additionally, a flyer offering CIP support was distributed to other districts within the region.

In order to lead the CI process with schools, as an organization, NNRPDP engaged in deep learning around the process. Two NNRPDP professional learning leaders facilitated a

series of sessions so the entire group could experience each component of the process, debrief the process, and pose problems and possible solutions to scenarios likely to arise when supporting schools with the CI process.

Once schools signed on for CIP support, NNRPDP professional learning leaders were assigned to participating schools based on expertise and availability. NNRPDP professional learning leaders met with administrators to customize a plan to support the school with the process. Some administrators opted to have NNRPDP professional learning leaders lead the process with their CI team, while others administrators chose to lead the process themselves, with NNRPDP professional learning leaders taking on the role of consultants for the process. Professional learning leaders' expertise was utilized to gather and present data, lead productive discussions around root cause analysis, articulate goals based on the analysis, research and support the selection of evidence-based strategies to meet goals, and write the School Performance Plan (SPP) roadmap that detailed the school's goals and action plan. Professional learning (PL) aligned to each school's SPP was planned and, in many cases, facilitated by NNRPDP. Additionally, professional learning leaders helped keep administrators and schools on track during the year through status checks on progress toward goals.

NNRPDP professional learning leaders met throughout the year in internal Community of Practice sessions to provide one another support with facilitating, and or consulting in, the process, to resolve dilemmas, and to share successes.

The implicit goal for the NNRPDP organization was to make the process doable and meaningful. To that end, various supporting documents – ways to visualize the process and components – were created and customized for each school ([Inquiry Areas | Data Collection, appendix ?; CI Team Planning Outline](#) to access important documents, appendix ?; [SPP at-a-glance, appendix ?](#)). In addition, NNRPDP looked forward to providing, if requested, ongoing professional learning aligned to the goals of schools.

Participants and Procedure

Eleven schools from four of the six districts located in the northeast region received support from NNRPDP on the CI process. Schools receiving support included six elementary schools, one middle school, two high schools, one K-8 charter school, and one K-12 combined school.

The eleven CI teams included a total of 51 participants. Continuous Improvement teams met to complete the CIP, including creating and submitting a School Performance Plan (SPP) to the Nevada Department of Education by November 30th, 2022. CI teams also met several times throughout the year to revisit goals and check progress.

Twenty-nine professional learning sessions aligned to School Performance Plans were planned and facilitated by NNRPDP. These professional learning sessions served approximately 290 educators overall.

Instructional Context

Schools prepared for the CIP by choosing a CI team representing various stakeholders including administrator(s), teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents. CI teams also included students if the school was a secondary school, tribal representation if native tribes were present in the community, and Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, if appropriate, to engage in and inform the CI process.

The CI process is structured in three parts, called Acts, across the school year, with one or more components in each Act:

Act I: Setting Our Course. This includes organizing the school CI Team, understanding the current school landscape, and developing the school's SPP Roadmap for the year.

Act II: Navigating Our Course. This entails monitoring the SPP Roadmap goals and strategies, sharing progress updates with the school community and stakeholders, and celebrating where the plan is working and making adjustments where it is not.

Act III: Reviewing Our Journey. This encompasses evaluating the goals and strategies in the SPP Roadmap and identifying key learnings from the journey to determine what to continue doing as well as areas of improvement to continue for the next school year.

Two significant changes from Nevada's previous school improvement process are embedded within the Acts. One notable change is the cyclical nature of the improvement process and the expectation that schools check progress toward goals periodically through the year to stay on track and to make necessary adjustments to the plan, beginning again the following year in order to retain all of the knowledge, experience, and growth from the previous year. Another important change is the integration of a systems-level approach where, in order to gain clarity around the system as a whole, schools engage in inquiry looking broadly across three key areas, 1) student success, 2) adult learning culture, and 3) connectedness.

Act I: Setting Our Course

CI teams began the process by engaging in a **school data dive**, considering questions around each of the three inquiry areas as well as available data to shed light on the questions:

Student Success. When exploring the first inquiry area, student success, schools seek to answer the questions: *How are students performing on key measures? To what extent are students demonstrating social, emotional, and academic development (SEAD)? Are students being given opportunities to engage in rigorous academic experiences?*

Adult Learning Culture. When considering adult learning culture, a school seeks to answer the questions: *What does our instructional practice look like? What does our leadership practice look like? How are our systems and structures supporting or hindering our continuous improvement work?*

Connectedness. When delving into the connectedness area, a school seeks to answer the questions, *How are our students experiencing school? How are our teachers experiencing school? How are our families experiencing our school?*

The data dive goals are to, 1) identify areas of strength and areas for growth for each inquiry area, 2) develop problem statements for each inquiry area, and 3) identify SMARTIE goals for each inquiry area (a SMARTIE goal is a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive, Equitable performance target based on school data). NNRPDP support was critical both in preparing for, and engaging in, the data dive. CI teams discovered, in many cases, that they had an abundance of data around student academic performance, usually in the areas of math and English language arts (ELA), but almost no data in other areas such as the extent to which students have opportunities to engage in rigorous academic experiences. These gaps in data became important discussion points and NNRPDP professional learning leaders skillfully assisted CI teams to notice missing information, determine where and how they might gather necessary information, and have meaningful conversations surfacing possible problem areas without allowing emotional reactions to overtake, or become the focus of, the CI process.

Once CI teams analyzed data and identified problems on which to focus, NNRPDP professional learning leaders supported schools with the second activity of Act I, the **root cause analysis**. This activity focuses on listing possible causes for the problems identified in each inquiry area during the data dive, and then determining critical root cause(s) on which to focus improvement efforts. To make root cause analysis meaningful, it is important to seek a broad range of stakeholder perspectives including voices often missed, as well as considering physical, human, and organizational causes. Anticipating possible tendencies toward blame is also an important consideration in facilitating this session, as is holding the team accountable for utilizing an asset-based lens around what students and families bring and contribute, rather than a deficit-based lens focused on blame. Root cause prioritization includes confirming root causes with evidence; determining which root causes impact the most students, teachers, or families; determining root causes that disproportionately impact historically underserved populations; and determining which root causes the school has the capacity to address. Whether NNRPDP professional learning leaders led the root cause analysis or supported administrators to think through facilitating the session, the skillful ability of NNRPDP professional learning leaders to draw on effective coaching and facilitation skills helped ensure that all perspectives were considered and that the focus of the session maintained an asset-based lens.

The previous two components of Act I, if done well, can help schools focus on problems they can solve. Once the team has identified the root cause(s) on which to focus, CI teams engage in **strategy selection**, a two-part process of 1) identifying potential school improvement strategies and evidence based interventions and practices, and 2) selecting and prioritizing these strategies to accomplish the school goals. Preparation for this session is crucial and can

require a substantial amount of time as those leading the process research evidence-based practices around each of the problems and root causes identified in the three inquiry areas.

Without this preparation, CI teams may rely on the strategies they already know or have been using, rather than seeking to find and implement evidence-based practices. There is also a tendency in this portion of the process to purchase a program to “fix” the problem, rather than investing in increasing the knowledge and skills of educators. To support schools, NNRPDP professional learning leaders consulted a list of clearinghouses (What Works Clearinghouse, Ohio’s Evidence-based Clearinghouse), and research sites (ERIC, JSTOR, Google Scholar) as well as drawing on the recommendations of trusted educational organizations, authors, and professional literature, adding information to a shared Google folder, and ultimately, collaborating to share the workload across members of the organization.

High-quality, evidence-based professional learning is an improvement strategy that can be implemented to address problems identified in all three inquiry areas. NNRPDP professional learning leaders are well-versed in these strategies and were able to communicate these options, and support CI teams in choosing professional learning strategies most likely to increase student achievement. One district scheduled five professional learning days targeted toward the goals of the schools’ School Performance Plans throughout the year. Schools in that district that were supported by NNRPDP with the CI process utilized these five days for professional learning, and most of these schools opted to utilize NNRPDP expertise during those professional learning days.

The final component in Act I is the **SPP Roadmap Development**, which, in reality, is best completed along the way. It is during this component that the plan is operationalized with details for implementation of strategies and an action plan outlined including who is responsible for completing each part of the plan and when it will be accomplished. With the bulk of the plan already determined in previous components, many administrators chose to have NNRPDP complete the roadmap, or worked in partnership with NNRPDP to complete the roadmap which was then shared with the CI team for final approval.

Of the challenges that arose, one was that completing the roadmap and submitting the document to the Nevada Department of Education felt, to some administrators and CI teams, as though the process was over, when in fact it was just beginning. Thus, sharing the roadmap, including school goals and the action plan for accomplishing those goals, with the school as a whole was often neglected or done in a perfunctory way leaving teachers and other stakeholders unsure of the goals and direction of the school and their role in accomplishing the goals.

Act II: Navigating Our Journey

While the heavy lift of considering the strengths and needs of the school, and creating the action plan, is completed in Act I, enacting the plan and checking progress towards the

goals takes place in Act II. This includes two **Status Checks** during the year where CI teams evaluate the school's progress toward goals, analyze the quality and impact of improvement strategies, determine challenges impeding progress, and make decisions on next steps and needs, including potential adjustments to the action plan. To prepare for status checks, new relevant quantitative and/or qualitative data must be gathered and prepared. Data-informed status checks may be new to the CI team and the school and therefore, the teams may need to build the routines and thinking patterns needed to do the work in a meaningful way. NNRPDP support helped schools stay on track throughout the year, reminding administrators and teams about status checks, supporting them to gather and analyze relevant data, including asking important questions to better understand the data, and managing time to ensure all improvement strategies and parts of the action plan were discussed and addressed. While the data can assist teams in understanding what is happening, discussions are critical for figuring out what is driving the findings and data trends, and ultimately what adjustments may be required in order to move the work forward within the school community.

Act III: Reviewing Our Journey

Act III of the Continuous Improvement Process is **Reviewing Our Journey**. CI Teams evaluate the goals and improvement strategies in the School Performance Plan, identify key learnings to inform the following school year, and determine next steps for each goal and improvement strategy. To prepare for this component, relevant data must be gathered and prepared. Discussion at this session is structured around three areas: Now, Next, and Need.

Now. Questions to consider in the Now section include: *How successful were we at implementing our improvement strategies? What does our data reveal about our progress toward our goal(s)? How have our improvement efforts impacted achievement across demographic groups?*

Next. Questions to consider in the Next section include: *Should we continue, correct, or cancel this goal in our next SPP? Why? Should we continue, correct, or cancel the associated improvement strategies in our next SPP? Why? What have we learned about ourselves and our school through this goal and these improvement strategies? What can we do right away to put these lessons into practice?*

Need. Questions to consider in the Need section include: *What do we need from others in this room to be successful in taking action? What do we need from others outside of this room to be successful in taking action?*

Measurement

NNRPDP support for the continuous improvement process in schools included the four goals listed below.

1. Schools will complete all requested components of the CI process as measured by the CIP Completion Report.
2. Schools will perceive support as beneficial as measured by a qualitative analysis of themes from the CI Team Survey and by Request for CIP Services for the 23-24 school year.
3. Schools who request additional support with the CI process will receive aligned professional learning as measured by the CIP Completion Report.
4. Schools will be positively impacted through related professional learning as measured by the NNRPDP Evaluation.

The table below outlines five levels of professional development evaluation (Guskey, 2002) alongside corresponding measurement tools, in conjunction with a brief description of how the evidence will be used in relation to evaluating the effectiveness of NNRPDP support for the continuous improvement process in participating schools.

Table ?

Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation for NNRPDP's CI Process Support (Guskey, 2002)

Evaluation Level	Questions Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered?	What is Measured or Assessed?	How Will Information Be Used?
1. Participants' Reactions	<i>Training expectations, presenter skills, increased knowledge, motivation to improve</i>	<i>CI Team Survey NNRPDP Evaluation</i>	<i>Participants' satisfaction with the experience</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How did receiving NNRPDP support affect the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) at your school?</i> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The training matched my needs.</i> ● <i>The training provided opportunities for interaction and reflection.</i> 	<i>To improve program design and delivery</i>
2. Participants' Learning	<i>Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?</i>	<i>CI Team Survey NNRPDP Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>This training added to my knowledge of standards and/or my skills in teaching subject matter content.</i> ● <i>I will use the knowledge</i> 	<i>To improve program content, format, and organization</i>

			<p><i>and skills from this training in my classroom or professional duties.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My learning today has prompted me to change my practice.</i> • <i>My learning today will affect students' learning.</i> 	
3. Organization Support and Change	<p><i>Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported? Was the support public and overt? Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently? Were sufficient resources made available? Were successes recognized and shared? What was the impact on the organization's climate and procedures?</i></p>	<p><i>CI Team Survey Completion Report</i></p>	<p><i>Organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition</i></p>	<p><i>To document and improve organization support</i></p> <p><i>To inform future change efforts</i></p>
4. Participants' Use of New Knowledge and Skills	<p><i>Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?</i></p>	<p><i>NNRPDP Evaluation</i></p>	<p><i>I will use the knowledge and skills from this training in my classroom or professional duties.</i></p>	<p><i>To document and improve the implementation of program content</i></p>
5. Student Learning Outcomes	<p><i>What was the impact on students? Did it affect student performance or achievement?</i></p>	<p><i>NNRPDP Evaluation</i></p>	<p><i>My learning today will affect students' learning.</i></p>	<p><i>To document impact on students' growth and achievement</i></p>

Results and Discussion

The mixed methods evaluation process included both quantitative and qualitative analysis utilizing several data sources, including the: CIP Completion Report ([Appendix ?](#)), the CI Team Survey ([Appendix ?](#)), NNRPDP Evaluation ([Appendix ?](#)), and the Request for CIP Services for the 23-24 school year.

Goal 1: Schools will complete all requested components of the CI process as measured by the CIP Completion Report.

With NNRPDP support, all eleven participating schools completed all of the four components of Act I of the CI process: school data dive, root cause analysis, strategy selection, and SPP roadmap development and submission. With NNRPDP support, nine of the eleven participating schools completed Status Check 1 in Act II. Due to unique circumstances, NNRPDP and administrators at one school decided mid-year that the administrators should begin leading the process. A second school, a charter school, completed a slightly different process to meet requirements of both NDE and the State Charter Authority, and therefore, NNRPDP was not involved in the status check. Eight of eleven schools have scheduled Act II, Status Check 2, to be completed before the end of the academic year. In addition, all eleven schools have combined Act III, Reviewing Our Journey, with Status Check 2.

Schools that received NNRPDP support started the Continuous Improvement Process and exhibited a strong commitment to the process as well as high levels of engagement from CI team members. Each component in Act I was completed and the School Performance Plan submitted prior to the November 30th deadline. However, this deadline put schools halfway through the school year before they began implementing their action plan. Or, because professional learning days had already been scheduled by the district, some schools received professional learning prior to the completion of the SPP that was not directly tied to school goals since those were not yet determined. Many schools opted to wait until they had new fall student achievement data before beginning the process, therefore, some schools did not begin the CI process until late October or early November. This created a domino effect of “falling behind,” leading to future delays in completing remaining components of the CI process. For example, many schools delayed the first Act II Status Check 1 until March, which then resulted in schools combining Act II Status Check 2 and Act III Reviewing Our Journey. Additionally, the level of engagement shifted as the academic year progressed, with fewer members of CI teams attending CI Team sessions after the SPP was submitted, resulting in a loss of focus and momentum at some schools.

Goal 2: *Schools will perceive support as beneficial as measured by a qualitative analysis of themes from the CI Team Survey and by Request for CIP Services for the 23-24 school year.*

The CI Team Survey was completed at the end of Act I, and included an open-ended prompt, *How did receiving NNRPDP support affect the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) at your school?* Of the fifty-one CI team members who received the survey, forty-three responded including ten administrators, twenty-six teachers, two paraprofessionals, three parents, and three specialized instructional support personnel. This high percentage of responses – 84% – in itself speaks to the positive perception of NNRPDP support for the CI process. When responses were submitted to ChatGPT for textual analysis of patterns and themes, the following seven themes described below were generated (OpenAI, 2023).

1. **Appreciation for support.** There is consistent appreciation for support and guidance provided by NNRPDP. Many respondents express that they could not have done it without the help of the facilitators.
2. **Improved understanding of the CI process.** Respondents noted that NNRPDP helped them better understand the CI process and the goals they were working towards.
3. **Unified focus.** Many respondents mention that NNRPDP helped bring their team together and provided a unified focus for their work.
4. **Streamlined process.** NNRPDP helped to streamline the CI process, keeping meetings on track and providing structure for tasks.
5. **Accountability.** NNRPDP facilitated critical conversations and provided accountability to ensure that tasks were completed.
6. **Improved outcomes.** Respondents noted that NNRPDP's support resulted in improved outcomes and a more meaningful process.
7. **Implementation challenges.** While respondents express appreciation for the support they received, some note possible challenges with implementing the CIP goals, particularly those goals and action steps related to school culture and climate, which require additional follow-through and accountability in order to realize the hoped-for change.

In terms of completion of the CI process, Act I was the most successful part of the process with CI teams more involved in this portion than in subsequent parts of the process. It is possible that the responses from CI teams would be different if the survey were given at the end of the year.

A second measure used to evaluate the success of the second goal is the number of schools that received support for the 22-23 school year that have requested support for a second year. Of the eleven participating schools, nine have requested support again for the 23-24 school year.

Both the CI Team Survey and the percentage of schools requesting CIP support again indicate that NNRPDP support with the Continuous Improvement Process was perceived as beneficial. This speaks to the ability of NNRPDP professional learning leaders to form meaningful, positive relationships and to encourage individuals and teams to engage in the process.

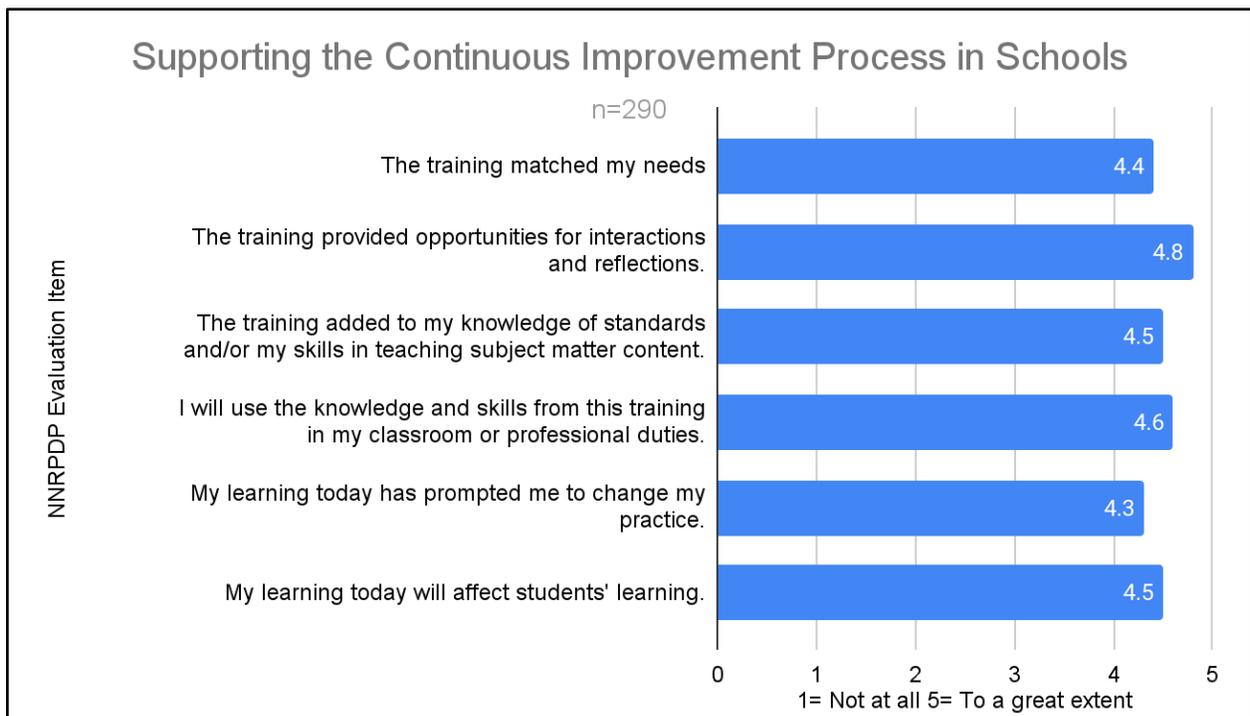
Goal 3: *Schools will receive aligned professional learning as measured by the CIP Completion Report.*

Ten of eleven schools requested professional learning aligned with their School Performance Plan. Of those ten schools, six completed all professional learning as requested while four partially completed the requested professional learning. Of those schools in which aligned professional learning was only partially completed, participating schools, rather than NNRPDP, requested the cancellation of previously-scheduled professional learning.

This measure seems to indicate that, although many schools started strong, maintaining focus and momentum was challenging. In multiple cases where professional learning was canceled, problems perceived as urgent and time-sensitive by the administrator or the school usurped scheduled, focused professional learning.

Goal 4: *Schools will be positively impacted through related professional learning as measured by the NNRPDP Evaluation.*

The table below indicates that 100% of the nearly 300 teachers across the northeast region who participated in professional learning facilitated by NNRPDP, and aligned with their school’s SPP, were positively impacted. On the NNRPDP Evaluation which utilizes a Likert scale of one (1) to five (5), where a rating of one indicates *not at all*, a rating of three indicates *to some extent*, and a rating of five indicates *to a great extent*, the mean rating for all NNRPDP Evaluation items was above four, suggesting that the aligned professional learning was effective and impactful.



It is notable that the item that received the highest mean score (4.8) measured opportunities for interactions and reflections. NNRPDP professional learning leaders are skilled professional learning facilitators, mindful of the principles of andragogy and the importance of participants actively engaging with content. It is also notable that the item that received the lowest mean score (4.3) measured whether the participant was prompted to change practice based on the learning. While this score is far from disappointing, it may serve as an area for NNRPDP professional learning leaders to make adjustments in facilitation in subsequent years. This might mean beginning the session by stating that the objective of this, and any professional learning session, is to change practice. Participants could be asked to set goals for ways they plan to change practice based on their learning and to schedule time to check in with a learning partner on their progress. The mean score of 4.5 for the statement, *“My learning will affect student’s learning”* is incongruent with the previous statement about changing practice. This may also indicate an area where professional learning leaders could impact educators as they clarify that, not only is the objective of the professional learning to change practice, but that students will not be impacted unless they do change practice.

Conclusion / Implications for Teaching & Learning

Supporting schools with the Continuous Improvement Process proved to be both rewarding and challenging. The four explicit goals of the project were, to a great extent, accomplished: schools completed or partially completed the CI process; NNRPDP support was perceived as beneficial; schools received professional learning aligned to their SPP goals, if requested; and educators were positively impacted through that related professional learning. Additionally, positive relationships were forged and maintained, and NNRPDP made progress on the internal implicit goal to make the process doable and meaningful for schools. Challenges can be attributed to one main cause: schools do not yet have a deep understanding of the CI process resulting in a lack of commitment and follow-through; NNRPDP, therefore, has the opportunity to continue to help schools make the paradigm shift necessary to espouse this kind of change. For schools to truly embrace continuous improvement in a manner that leads to positive change, several lessons learned in the inaugural year of the project can inform next steps.

NNRPDP can better support schools with a more meaningful experience by **partnering more purposefully and effectively with the administrator**. The school leader is a trusted professional to guide the process with NNRPDP organizing and facilitating the process; this sharing of roles can make the process less arduous for school leaders, alleviating the pressure to plan and facilitate each component of the process, yielding more energy to invest in the process in a more meaningful way. Every effort should be made to support the school leader to make the paradigm shift from compliance-driven school improvement to cyclical, meaningful continuous school improvement.

NNRPDP can begin by communicating the importance of purposefully **ensuring representation** on the CI team from all grade levels in elementary schools and all departments in secondary schools. They can also better plan to ensure voice among all stakeholders including families and students.

NNRPDP can **lead a more organized process**, outlining the terms of support including the date by which schools will begin the process, scheduling all session dates throughout the year, and ensuring that the school commits to the time necessary to complete the process in a meaningful way.

NNRPDP can support the school administrator and CI team in **involving the whole school in the CI process**, soliciting input and data, and communicating the SPP goals and plan with stakeholders including the progress along the way. This might include specific plans and roles for communicating in multiple settings throughout the year including staff meetings, emails, PLCs, and family events with information posted on the school website and goals revisited throughout the year at all professional learning sessions. These goals should never be a surprise to any stakeholder. All teachers in the school, as well as families and students, need to understand where the school is headed and how the CI team arrived at goals so that when professional learning takes place, they understand how it is aligned to school goals and their role in achieving the goals.

Once Act I is completed and schools goals and action plans in place, the work of clearly communicating the plan as a whole and putting the plan into action begins. Data from The Completion Report shows that this is where schools often begin to lose focus and momentum, becoming distracted and lacking follow-through; therefore, this is an area where NNRPDP could provide more support. With the roles and responsibilities of the administrator and the NNRPDP professional learning leader more clearly defined, NNRPDP can support the school in the ways that are most practical and powerful. This might include sending reminders to administrators of deadlines, and checking in regularly to offer support. Or, NNRPDP professional learning leaders could provide an opportunity for administrators from across the project to come together at key points as a whole group in order to share successes and dilemmas with the CI process.

The overall effectiveness and success of supporting the Continuous Improvement Process in schools and achieving the stated goals suggests that NNRPDP continue to support the CI process utilizing the structures created for the 22-23 school year with the aforementioned revisions for improved organizational support and change. Fortunately, the CI process is cyclical, with the expectation to build on strengths and address challenges, taking stock along the way. With nine of the eleven schools that partnered with NNRPDP in the 22-23 school year planning to receive support in the 23-24 school year and others jumping on board to receive support for the first time, all of the learning and experience from the 22-23 school year will make the process more meaningful.

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