

Questions

What is the Payne School Improvement Model?

As issues of accountability and growth in student achievement continue to be a challenge for many schools, simpler processes that take less time yet give a payoff in achievement are needed. The attached Payne School Improvement Model (PSIM), developed by Dr. Ruby Payne and her team, outlines nine processes that can be taught to teachers in two-hour increments of time. At the elementary level these can be taught to individual grade level teachers or multiple grade levels in a session. The key is that the groups be small enough to receive the individual attention that will enhance teachers' professional growth and learning and also allow the group to move quickly through the processes. At the secondary level it is recommended that teachers meet by department/content areas; if the size of the department is so great that the process would be impeded, work could be done by courses taught. Emphasis will be placed upon literacy and math skills; if science and social studies teachers are included, the primary focus would be literacy, using content-specific examples. An alternative to this model is to work with the principal and leadership team, provided there is a cross-representation of departments involved on the leadership team.

To support the principal in leading the implementation of this model and monitoring its progress, a checklist is provided, along with suggestions of activities for faculty meetings. It is our belief that faculty meetings should be more about staff learning and growth than announcements. These activities will also maintain focus on the model and its implementation, which aha! Process has found to be significant when using the work to impact student achievement and enhance teacher practice.

With the sessions scheduled in two-hour increments, schools can more easily schedule substitute teachers and reduce the amount of time teachers are out of their classrooms and away from direct instruction with their students. Each process includes a classroom application activity that can be utilized by the teachers between sessions with the aha! Process consultant. These sessions also provide a scaffolding for instruction and are deliberately designed for delivery in the order outlined. The gridding of data identified in the first process is a mandatory step that must be completed by teachers when working with this model; this is not an option.

The foundational trainings A Framework for Understanding Poverty and Research-Based Strategies will need to be provided prior to implementing the 9 systemic processes. These trainings will provide key understandings needed to apply the model. Should a campus wish to embed the strategies at a deeper level and choose to work with aha! Process over multiple years, it will be necessary for any new staff members to receive the foundational trainings prior to beginning the technical assistance work. This is ideally done by sending staff members to a certification training so they can return to the campus and train the new teachers. In addition, a day with the aha! Process consultant needs to be provided to the new staff members to assist them in understanding the processes prior to working with the entire department/grade level to embed the processes at a deeper level.

With our revised model for improvement, you will find that all of the processes can be completed by a department or grade level in a three-day period, or they can be spread out over the school year, allowing teachers time to work with the processes before adding the next step.

The decision is yours. Our desire is to provide flexibility and ease of use while helping you to meet your accountability goals, build the capacity of your staff, and provide a model that can be sustained over a period of time.

Why would a school or district want to use this program?

The Payne School Improvement Model (PSIM) provides a systemic, focused approach for professional development that "pays off" when it is tied to the goals and plans for the school. The model is collegial and collaborative; educators work together to embed the strategies consistently, systemically, and systematically into their classroom practice, regardless of grade level or content area. The model is not about "one shot" workshops but about a series of trainings with follow-up to the trainings. This follow-up is designed to meet the specific needs of the educators and children.

Other benefits of the model:

- It can be integrated into or used with any program
- High teacher satisfaction rate
- Changes teachers' thinking and practices
- Provides immediate results when implemented as designed
- Collegial and collaborative
- Provides free supporting documents for principals/administrative teams for follow-up at all PSIM sites
- Specifically addresses low SES AYP subgroup and has also been proven to increase student achievement among all subgroups

What distinguishes the Payne School Improvement Model from other professional development programs?

Payne's model specifically addresses the unique needs of economically disadvantaged students. This group has been identified as a target group under No Child Left Behind and is important in meeting AYP goals. The model also includes specific strategies to help schools meet their AYP goals.

How was this approach to school reform developed?

Ruby Payne started her educational career in 1972. Throughout her career she realized that students from poverty had specific cognitive issues and that a simplified approach to cognitive development was needed to address their needs. Dr. Payne studied the work of Reuven Feuerstein, Lee Shulman, and others to develop *A Framework for Understanding Poverty and Learning Structures*, key pieces of her model. The systemic piece of the work was developed from Dr. Payne's experiences raising test scores as an administrator, principal, consultant, and teacher.

How do I know the Payne School Improvement Model really works?

Several research studies have documented the progress made on state assessments in schools using the Payne School Improvement Model. Please see our [Research Results \(link to http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/\)](http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/) page for information on these studies and

stories from teachers, principals, and district administrators who have been involved in implementing the model.

What are the costs of using this program?

The costs vary greatly depending on the needs of the individual school. Our planning team works with each site to develop a proposal to meet your specific needs. If you would like to discuss your needs with an aha! Process representative, please contact us at achievement@ahaprocess.com, or call (800) 424-9484.

Is there a required curriculum?

No. The Payne School Improvement Model is not a prescriptive program. There are prescribed processes with specific classroom applications that drive the implementation of the model through technical assistance sessions. The model is designed to impact the knowledge, skills, and beliefs of educators by providing strategies and processes that can then be applied in the educators' context. It is about developing the capacity of individuals as it focuses on the what, the why, and the how of instruction. It is about developing the cognitive capacity of children as it focuses on how to teach and how children learn. It is also about developing the capacity of the organization to change as it implements the systemic processes. These processes change the practices in school buildings.

Are materials provided to long-term sites?

Materials are required for the foundational workshops, as well as the first technical assistance session. The estimated cost per participant for all materials is \$43 plus shipping charges.

What professional development does aha! Process offer?

aha! Process provides a wide variety of workshops to meet many professional development needs. In addition to the foundational workshops (A Framework for Understanding Poverty and Research Based Strategies), we can provide additional trainings to meet your needs. Examples of specific workshops that complement the model include Meeting AYP with 5 Simple Processes, The R Rules, Tucker Signing Strategies for Reading, and Collaboration for Kids. Please see our [Workshop Descriptions \(link to http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/Workshops.html\)](http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/Workshops.html) page for details on what is available.

How do you ensure the quality of your services?

All aha! Process consultants have been trained by Dr. Payne and have been approved to provide technical assistance (TA). aha! Process also designates a project manager for each site to monitor and review progress at the site, as well as to address any problems that might arise. We look at the long-term process as a partnership with the school and maintain open lines of communication, including written reports of each TA visit and annual planning visits with the project manager. Ongoing support is provided through the aha! Process office and through

phone and e-mail contact with the project manager. Additional planning meetings with the project manager can be scheduled as needed.

Is the Payne School Improvement Model research-based?

Extensive research has been conducted on the model. Research on the impact on student achievement is currently being conducted at several sites across the country. Reports are available on our [Research Results](http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/) (link to http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/) page.

How do we have time to do the Payne School Improvement Model and also teach to the standards?

One process of the model focuses on aligning the curriculum to the standards and developing a plan for teaching all standards before they are tested. As part of the technical assistance sessions, aha! Process consultants work with the teachers to understand each standard and when and how it should be taught during the year.

How does a school know that it is implementing the design well?

As part of the technical assistance, aha! Process consultants will conduct observations using the *Instructional Framework Scale – Observation*. This scale is designed to measure the level of model fidelity. The principal will also be provided documents to monitor implementation between consultant visits.

What does aha! Process do to help a school get started with the model?

Schools wishing to implement the Payne School Improvement Model have several options. Initially, the school may be introduced to the model through a seminar, workshop with an aha! Process consultant, or book study. If the school determines there is a match between their needs and the services available through aha! Process, the school can contact our Long-Term Projects office at achievement@ahaprocess.com for help developing a plan for implementation.

For which grade level is the Payne School Improvement Model designed?

The Payne School Improvement Model is appropriate for all grade levels, although the implementation varies between elementary and secondary campuses. Generally, on elementary campuses, one consultant provides technical assistance for all teachers. At the secondary level, aha! Process consultants provide content-specific technical assistance in four content areas (English language arts, math, science, and social studies). This increases the number of technical assistance days at the secondary level.

What if a school has a reading or math program that is required by the district?

The Payne School Improvement Model is not a scripted curriculum. It addresses strategies that we have found fit within any program a school may currently be using.

Can I visit a school that is using the Payne School Improvement Model?

If you are interested in the Payne School Improvement Model and would like to visit a site currently using the model, please contact our office at achievement@ahaprocess.com, or call (800) 424-9484.

Is there independent research on the Payne School Improvement Model?

Several independent studies and dissertations have been conducted on the model. Please see our [Research Results](http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/) (link to http://www.ahaprocess.com/School_Programs/RnD/) page for examples.