

Praise for *School Improvement: 9 Systemic Processes to Raise Achievement*

All of our achievement scores have gone up. Students who come from poverty are closing the achievement gap. Not only are they catching up with their peers, but as all our test scores go up exponentially, they are right there with them.

–Dr. Wynona Winn, Superintendent, 2000–07, Hutchinson Public Schools, KS

The concepts from Framework were taught to many of our faculty and administrators last spring. Those concepts, combined with increased Student Services advisers and program directors, community outreach, faculty involvement, and a lot of hard work, resulted in our annual attrition rate going from 6% to 4.3% last year.

–Ada Gerard, Campus President, Heald College, Rancho Cordova, CA

Ruby's work is about systems, and these systems help you get to the root causes, and, to me, I thought that was promising, whether you're talking about reforming a school or you're talking about reforming a community. It gave us that hope.

–Wendell Waukau, Superintendent, Menominee Indian School District, Neopit, WI

We received our state test scores, and our students who were at 30% in literacy are now at 50%, which is a 20-point gain in a year.

–Lenisha Broadway, Principal, Ridgeroad Middle Charter School, North Little Rock, AR

Any district would benefit from being involved with the strategies and techniques that have been shared.

Ridgeroad Middle Charter School

- *Seventh grade—Math proficiency increased by 18%*
- *Eighth grade—Math proficiency increased by 13%*

–Kristie Ratliff, Director of School Improvement and Professional Development,
North Little Rock, AR

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The plan and label strategies have helped [students] a great deal—to slow down, to think through the problem that they need to solve, to better communicate their ideas on paper, and just to help them understand their thinking a lot better.

–Susan Tieman, Third-Grade and ESL Teacher, Southwick Elementary, Fort Wayne, IN

The time and content grids caused our teachers to work together and begin to look at what they're teaching and how they are timing it over 12 weeks of classes.

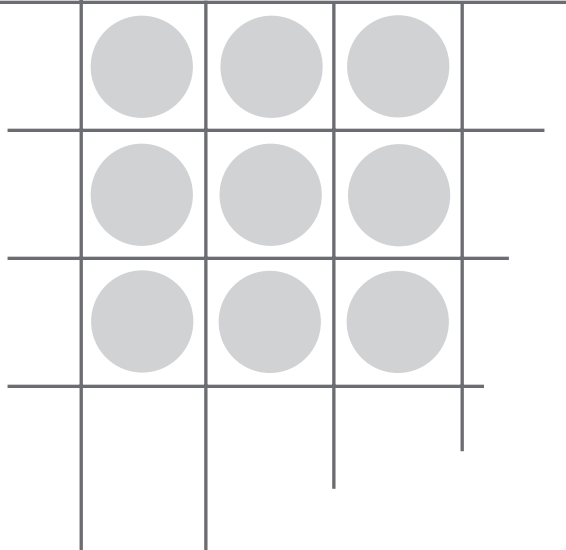
–Dr. Sue Neat, Principal, Blackford HS, Blackford, IN

School Improvement

9

Systemic Processes to Raise Achievement

Creating Sustainable Excellence



Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D., and
Donna S. Magee, Ed.D.

School Improvement: 9 Systemic Processes to Raise Achievement

Ruby K. Payne and Donna S. Magee

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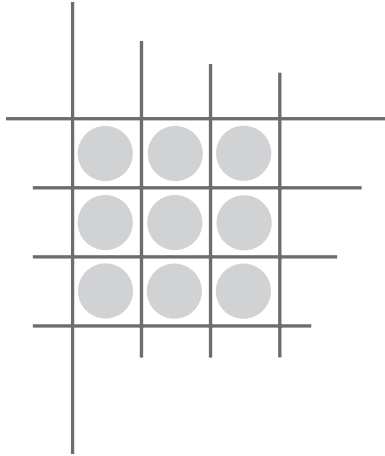
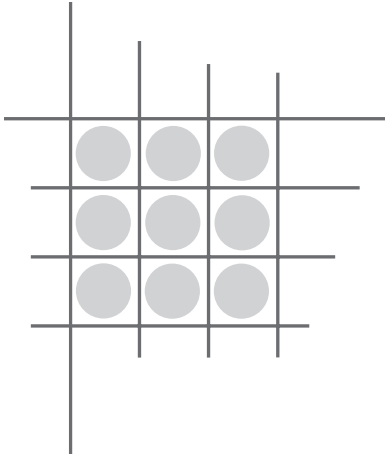


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Introduction

Teacher-friendly. Collegial. Highly collaborative. Simpler processes that take less time and money.

These are all phrases that can be applied to the aha! Process School Improvement Model for Low-Performing Schools. As more and more schools face the consequences of not making the required growth in student achievement, a simpler yet comprehensive model is required. The work of Dr. Ruby K. Payne and her colleagues provides such a model, which has been used for nearly a decade. Results have shown that when the model is implemented with fidelity, student achievement increases and achievement gaps have even been narrowed at some sites.

The Model

Nine processes comprise the model for high-poverty schools. Each process has specific classroom applications aligned to the process that can be monitored by the school leader. The result is artifacts that reflect the processes, along with applications that extend strategies into the classroom.

The processes apply to all levels of schools, beginning with 4-year-olds and continuing through Grade 12. These processes can be taught to teachers in two-hour increments of time after the

foundational workshops, A Framework for Understanding Poverty and Research-Based Strategies, are taught. Key understandings are included in Framework and Research-Based Strategies that are essential to success with the model. An optional but important training that schools may wish to consider is Meeting AYP with Six Simple Processes. While many of the nine processes are included in this training, the pace at which the processes can be implemented can be increased with this additional training. The nine processes that actually comprise the model are:

1. Gridding student data
2. Developing time and content grids, based on the standards and students' needs
3. Understanding assessment context, state assessment glossary, academic vocabulary, and the assessment blueprint
4. Developing 10-question tests that measure students' progress against the standards for the first semester
5. Identifying interventions based on analysis of 10-question tests and analyzing grade distribution or failure/passing rate
6. Understanding content comprehension and incorporating processes, step sheets, planning, and mental models into lessons; response to intervention also is addressed in this step

7. Developing 10-question tests for the second semester
8. Calibrating curriculum and completing artifact analyses using rubrics
9. Reviewing adult voice, putting students in charge of their own learning, and relational learning for students, including technology integration

Because these processes provide scaffolding for instruction, they are deliberately designed for delivery in the order outlined. The gridding of data identified as the first process is a mandatory step that must be completed by teachers when working with the aha! Process model. We realize that districts and schools have a great deal of data available to them and may have a process in place to disaggregate data, but our experience has been that unless the teachers themselves work through this first process, they seldom truly understand the implications of the data and the needs of the students with whom they are working. Many are not comfortable analyzing data and knowing how to use it effectively. They can be described as “data rich, but information poor” (Ronka, Lachat, Slaughter, & Meltzer, 2008, 2009).

As you work through the processes, you also will find that teachers are being asked to work in learning communities, to share best practices, and to support and work with one another. The professional dialog that occurs during these sessions can profoundly shape the culture of a building and the relationships of the adults who work together in it.

It is our hope that the model will inspire you in your process of change, that you will adapt it for your needs, and that you will focus on continuous improvement as you work with the strategies and refine and improve on them over the years.

Finally, this workbook is designed for use in a workshop setting. It is not intended to be a “stand alone” but to provide a reference tool for you after you complete the workshop.

School Improvement Model

	Process	Classroom Application
2 hours	Data analysis	Math—problem-solving model ELA—nonfiction reading strategy and open-response strategy Share examples of walk-throughs
2 hours	Assigning time, aligning instruction *	Bellwork
2 hours	Assessment context, state assessment glossary, academic vocabulary, assessment blueprint	Word wall, vocabulary sketching (mental models) (Consultant needs time scheduled with principal to review assessment blueprint)
2 hours	Ten-question tests—first semester: reading, writing, math	Examples of mental models
2 hours	Interventions, data analysis, grade distribution, failure rate	Resource analysis and interventions
2 hours	Content comprehension—processes, step sheets, planning, RTI, specific mental models	Research-based strategies and targeted interventions using intervention form
2 hours	Ten-question tests—second semester: reading, writing, math	Question making
2 hours	Curriculum calibration, artifacts analysis, rubrics	Rubrics: ELA teachers teach writing rubric and open-response rubric to entire staff
2 hours	Voice, putting students in charge of their own learning, relational learning	Data conferencing with students Monitor for use of adult voice in classroom Monitor for examples of relational learning

* Needs to be done for each content area

Foundational Workshops

A Framework for Understanding Poverty
Research-Based Strategies

Additional Offerings

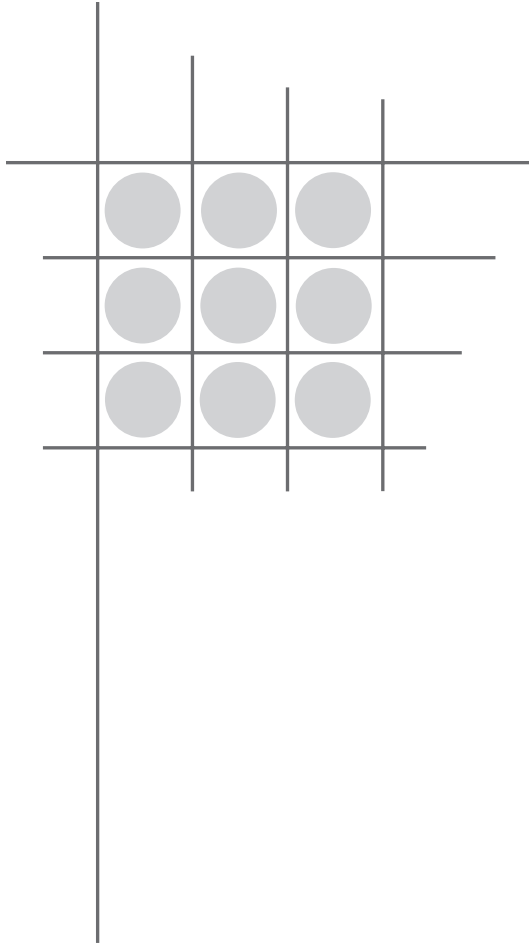
- Curriculum alignment, beyond the development of the time and content grids
- Observation days
- Follow-up with new teachers with the consultant (use certified trainer for foundational trainings)

Required Texts

A Framework for Understanding Poverty
Research-Based Strategies

Recommended Texts

Putting the Pieces Together (elementary)
Books on secondary mental models



Process 1: Data Analysis

Why Data Analysis?

- Allows you to determine how individual students are performing in relation to the overall population
 - Helps predict your AYP (adequate yearly progress)/school rating
 - Provides an approach to address federal mandates that require analysis of performance by student subgroups—and patterns of equity and excellence to be determined
 - Allows you to quickly identify students needing intervention(s)
 - Allows you to identify targeted populations for AYP goals
 - Allows you to identify target standards
- Many districts now have computer programs that can generate the grids; however, our experience has been that the usefulness of the information is diminished unless teachers themselves construct the grids. We have been told that the act of writing the student’s name on the grid helps create a connection with the student and makes the information more meaningful to the teacher.

Benefits to Teachers

Provides a simple process to the teacher

- To understand individual student data
 - To understand students that “count” in more than one category
 - To understand areas of strengths and weakness so that instruction can be targeted
- When instruction is targeted to specific needs of students with appropriate interventions, student achievement increases.
-

Student Data Grid

Grade Level:

Content:

TEST BAND	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	LSES *	LEP **	Disabled

* Low Socioeconomic Status

** Limited English Proficiency

- This grid needs to be adapted based on the subgroups for a campus, as well as the performance categories of the state assessment. For example, the test band may include Advanced as the top band, followed by Proficient, followed by Basic, and then Below Basic. Some states have five performance categories, so the grid should be adapted accordingly.

Ideally, this grid would focus on percentiles for the test band because percentiles represent equal measures of growth. As such, it is easier to predict growth from band to band. However, the reality is that most states use scaled scores that are then translated into performance categories. Therefore, we encourage campuses to use the scaled scores and corresponding performance categories but to keep in mind that these scores may change from year to year, which has additional implications when working to raise student achievement.

A key is that teachers understand the categories, the “cut scores” for each category, and the subgroups for their campus. Also, do not exclude a subgroup of students even if they don’t meet the required cohort number. These students will count in the district subgroup, which may have enough students across the district to be a required subgroup that counts toward AYP. Additionally, the scaled scores may vary by grade level and content area, so teachers must be given accurate information to complete the grids. Some states/districts also withhold the free and reduced-price lunch lists from teachers.

Tracking student progress by quartile helps measure student growth and determine the amount of probable progress in a given year. It helps us determine how many students, and specifically which students, we need to move.

Prediction guide: To achieve 80% passing on state assessment, 80% of students must score above 50% on a normed reference test.

Student Data Grid

Grade Level:

Content:

TEST BAND	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	LSES *	LEP **	Disabled
Advanced (500–725)	Joe 687 Scott 591 Laurie 586	Delicia 684 Lloyd 679	Juanita 693 Maria 589	Juanita 693	Juanita 693	Delicia 684
Proficient (400–499)	Jesse 465 Jeff 438 Megan 420 Candi 405	Dacoda 470 Jillian 434	Cecilia 471 Lu 410	Jesse 465 Jillian 434		Jesse 465 Megan 420
Basic (300–399)	Sandy 395 Casey 385			Sandy 395		Sandy 395
Below basic (below 300)		Jonas 295	Andrea 265	Jonas 295 Andrea 265	Andrea 265	Jonas 295 Andrea 265
Students who were exempt	Benjamin					Benjamin

* Low socioeconomic status

** Limited English proficiency

Steps:

1. Teachers complete this one-page grid for each class they teach. (See example above.) If a teacher has five sections of eighth-grade English, he/she will complete five separate grids. At the elementary level, teachers complete a grid for both math and reading.
2. Grids for science and writing also should be completed, even though the test is not given every year. If the campus is accountable for student performance in any other subject area, grids for that area also should be completed.
3. When completing the grid, teachers identify each student by ethnicity and level of performance. All students must be listed within an ethnic group.
4. If a student is included in other subgroups, he/she is listed again in the respective subgroup(s). This process enables teachers to see that some students “count” in multiple subgroups. The implication then is that raising the achievement of such students provides for a stronger payoff as they count in more than one subgroup.

The grid will allow teachers to check for patterns of achievement over time.

AYP/Predicting Rating Grade Level/Department Results

TEST BAND 200	Caucasian 80	African American 80	Hispanic 40	LSES * 100	LEP ** 10	Disabled 40
Advanced	30	10	5	10	0	0
Proficient	30	30	15	30	2	20
Basic	15	20	10	20	3	10
Below basic	5	20	10	40	5	10
Students who were exempt						

* Low socioeconomic status

** Limited English proficiency

- After teachers complete their individual grids, the principal compiles a grid for each content area and grade level to assess how the campus is progressing toward the current AYP target.
- For example, if the target is currently 80% of students proficient or above, that means 160 students (80% of 200 total students) must be scoring at a proficient level or higher. In this case only 120 students are proficient or advanced (determine this number by counting the number of students by ethnicity). The same process must be applied to each subgroup.

In this example, 64 Caucasian students must be proficient or advanced, and currently only 60 are. This is why teachers are asked to include student scores on the grid because the question now becomes: Of the 15 students in the basic category, which four could be expected to achieve proficiency in one year if there are specific, targeted interventions?

Apply this process to each subgroup to have a realistic understanding of students' performance against the goals. This process also can be applied to the teachers' individual class grids to determine how the group is performing against the AYP target (see page 12).

Utilizing such a process makes the data and the students more "real" for teachers and administrators alike. This process also allows school personnel to track student progress over time more easily since the information is on one page.

Questions to Consider

1. What patterns are evident from the data collection and grid process?
2. What are the areas of strength by content area/grade level?
3. What are the areas of concern by content area/grade level?
4. Which students have been identified as targets for specific remediation?

- Key questions to ask about the results are listed above. You will note that this process also
- requires that teachers analyze weak and strong standards as well. For years, that was the
- focus of many schools; they looked at student performance by objective. And while that is important, focusing on individual students first is more important. It is not enough to focus solely on student performance by objective or student results by performance category; both are needed.

It is essential to keep in mind that “Accountability is based on *numbers* of students in a given category and the number or percentage of students who are moving to another category. It is not based on the group average” (Payne, 2008).

Applying AYP Activity to Individual Classroom

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Reading **Math** Social Studies Science Writing

Circle test data used

TEST BAND	ALL Total # _____ X 80% = _____	CAUC Total # _____ X 80% = _____	AA Total # _____ X 80% = _____	HISP Total # _____ X 80% = _____	Low SES Total # _____ X 80% = _____	SPED Total # _____ X 80% = _____	LEP Total # _____ X 80% = _____
Advanced (2400– 2600)	E. Smith 2484 E. Martinez 2484 K. Simmons 2484 C. Marshall 2477 B. Rodriguez 2400 B. Riley 2400	E. Smith 2484 C. Marshall 2477	K. Simmons 2484 B. Riley 2400	E. Martinez 2484 B. Rodriguez 2400	E. Martinez 2484 K. Simmons 2484 B. Rodriguez 2400 B. Riley 2400		E. Martinez 2484
Proficient (2100– 2399)	T. Paine 2335 E. Tony 2280 J. Rivera 2255 M. Vargas 2231 L. Harris 2208 A. Inge 2186 K. Chapman 2142 W. James 2134	T. Paine 2335 E. Tony 2280 A. Inge 2186 W. James 2134	L. Harris 2208 K. Chapman 2142	J. Rivera 2255 M. Vargas 2231	T. Paine 2335 E. Tony 2280 J. Rivera 2255 M. Vargas 2231 L. Harris 2208 A. Inge 2186 K. Chapman 2142 W. James 2134		E. Martinez 2484 M. Vargas 2231
Basic (1900– 2099)	T. Wagner 2038 (3?) C. Kelley 2020 (4?) X. Jones 2020 (4?) R. Reves 2003 (5?) T. Hardy 1952 (8?)	T. Hardy 1952 (8?)	T. Wagner 2038 (3?) C. Kelley 2020 (4?) X. Jones 2020 (4?)	R. Reves 2003 (5?)	T. Wagner 2038 (3?) C. Kelley 2020 (4?) X. Jones 2020 (4?) R. Reves 2003 (5?) T. Hardy 1952 (8?)		R. Reves 2003 (5?)
Below Basic (1899 or less)							
No Score	L. Brady L. Anderson		L. Brady L. Anderson		L. Brady L. Anderson	L. Brady	L. Anderson

Additional Discussion Questions

1. Which students missed the passing level by a slim margin?
2. Why is this student in this category?
3. Which students impact more than one subgroup?
4. Which students have been identified for specific remediation?
5. What specific interventions will be provided?
6. How can a resource analysis help identify interventions for targeted students?
7. Which students have not passed and need to pass to graduate from high school?

- Gridding data is a mandatory first step when working with this school improvement model. It is not enough, however, to just grid the data. Rather the analysis and the professional dialog that occur when teachers collaborate over their data are what begins to happen to create needed change that will lead to improved student achievement.

The questions listed above can be used for this professional dialog, but this list is not exhaustive. What other questions might you add when analyzing the data?

As you begin to focus on interventions, keep in mind that a resource analysis is a first step when determining interventions, as it tends to be a waste of time to make an intervention that utilizes a resource that the student is missing. For more information about resources and resource analysis, see *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (2005).

Facilitating the Process

Teacher materials needed:

1. State assessment data for previous and current students
2. Current student roster identifying students by:
 - Ethnicity
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Special populations, such as Special Education and Limited English Proficiency

● To facilitate this process, campus administration should provide this information to the teachers. Teachers should not have to search out this information.

● To expedite the gridding process, we encourage teachers to work in pairs. With a class roster before him/her, one teacher calls the student's name while the other finds the student's name and score on the master list. The student's ethnicity is identified so that the teacher can record the name and score in the appropriate space on the grid. While doing this, the partner is referencing other rosters to determine socioeconomic status and special population information.