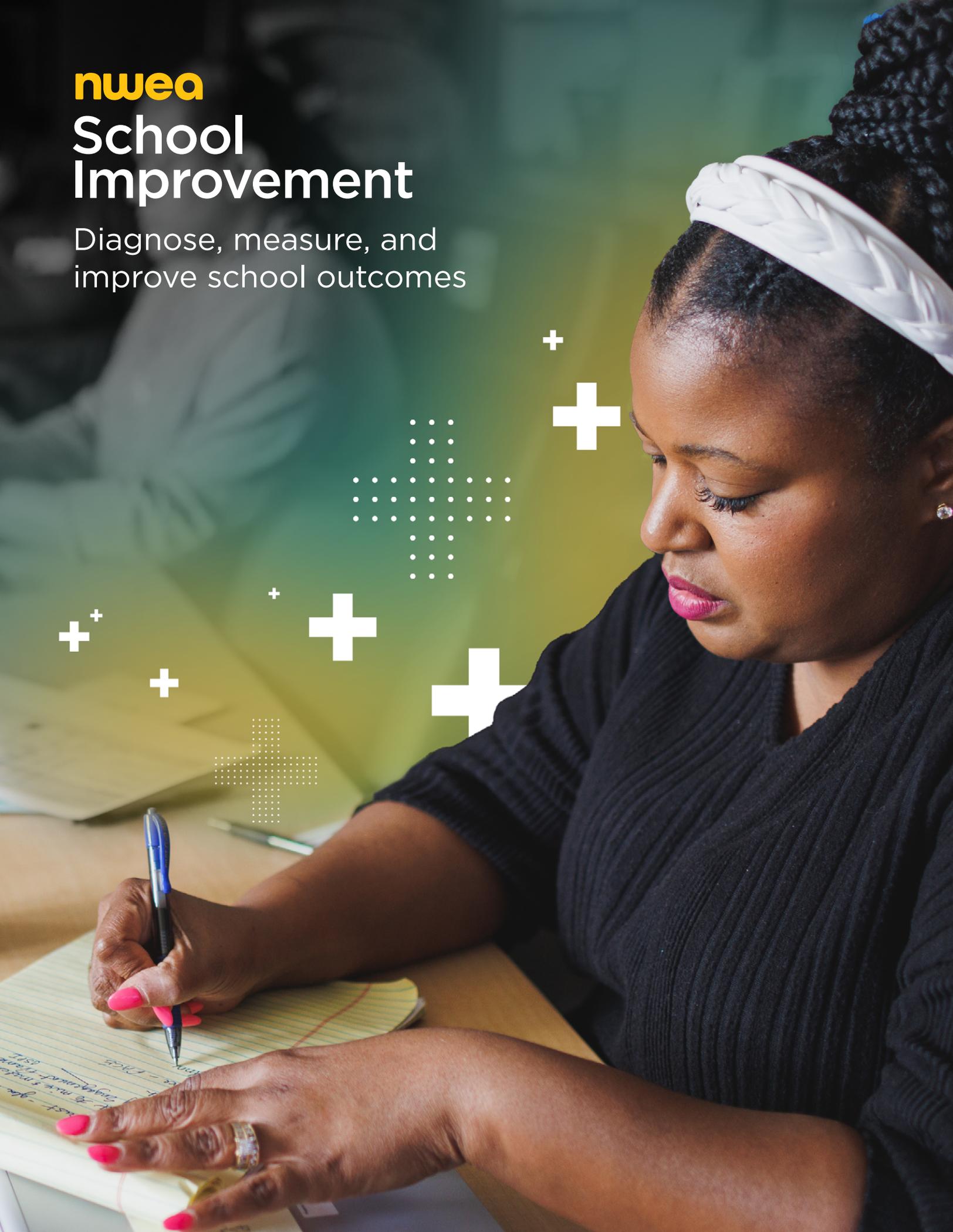


nwea

School Improvement

Diagnose, measure, and improve school outcomes



How do you know if your school is set up for success? How are you measuring it?

We provide an evidence-based evaluation of the essential elements proven to maximize student success and pinpoint precisely where your school needs to improve to see meaningful gains in student outcomes. We then partner with you to transform your data into concrete actions and continuous improvement plans that lead to lasting, sustainable change.

The 5Essentials: Leading the way with a holistic, evidence-based approach

Through our exclusive partnership, NWEA® School Improvement leverages the renowned 5Essentials® Survey and Framework from UChicago Impact®. The 5Essentials is an evidence-based diagnostic survey that provides deep insight into how well a school is organized for improvement. It accurately measures and provides meaningful data on the five essential factors research shows are linked to improved school and student outcomes.



20+ years of research shows schools that are strong in at least three of the five essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student learning.

The 5Essentials is positively related to multiple academic outcomes:



Test scores and test score gains



Attendance rates



Graduation rates



GPA



Teacher mobility/retention



Freshman on track

A powerful process to drive change

At NWEA, school improvement isn't a product that can be plucked off a shelf—it's a powerful process for driving change. Drawing from a system's existing strengths, we cast a wide net in the search for diverse experiences and perspectives and keep an intense focus on measuring, monitoring, and acting on meaningful data about holistic school organizational conditions that are needed to produce better student outcomes.

Our approach is:

- **Rooted in research:** The 5Essentials Survey is backed by 30+ years of research and meets ESSA criteria as a Tier 2 evidence-based practice
- **Focused on school leaders:** We empower school leaders with a unique coaching model and targeted professional learning that strengthens leadership skill and data-informed practices
- **Tailored to educator needs:** An NWEA leadership coach collaboratively creates a tailored plan that builds on leaders' strengths and refines the highest-gain areas for improvement
- **Focused on systems and sustainability:** Supports school leaders in establishing wide-scale practices and protocols that align school initiatives and bolster collaboration, improved instruction, and enhanced student engagement
- **Reinforces continuous improvement and collaborative reflection:** Elevates stakeholder voices through the 5Essentials Survey and quarterly progress monitoring of improvement efforts

NWEA School Improvement services are aligned to the 5Essentials Framework and include:



5Essentials Survey

Provides actionable data and insights into strengths and opportunities for improvement



5Essentials professional learning

Educates leaders on the 5Essentials Framework and Survey and how to use survey results to improve schools



Needs assessment

A customized series of interviews and observations to launch and refine improvement planning



Leadership coaching

Shoulder-to-shoulder support for principals to deepen leadership skills



District systems advising

Developing systems, processes, protocols, and practices for student improvement



NWEA School improvement professional learning

Build educator knowledge and skills in topics aligned to 5Essentials areas

The 5Essentials Survey

Identify areas for improvement and measure your progress

The 5Essentials from UChicago Impact is a diagnostic survey, framework, and reporting site that provides meaningful insight into a school's organizational conditions, culture, and climate. It helps schools prioritize areas for improvement and measure progress toward improved organizational conditions necessary for achieving sustainable school improvement.

Survey highlights:

- Administered annually to students and teachers, with an optional family component
- Illuminates key insights about organizational strengths as well as areas of opportunity across the five essential factors that research shows are critical for school improvement
- Interactive data reports offer a comprehensive view of school conditions and allows users to dig deeply into their data, formulate strategic actions, and track changes over time

View a school's overall performance score of "well-organized," "organized," "moderately organized," "partially organized," or "not yet organized for improvement" and compare performance across each of the 5Essentials. Educators can also identify patterns across student subgroups and compare school performance to the district.

Sample Primary School
Primary School (K/PK-5)
1 Primary Road, Big City, IL 52345

5Essentials Survey Parent Survey

For 2020, Sample Primary School is well-organized for improvement

The overall performance score is comprised of each of the 5Essentials scores. Schools that are at or above benchmark on 3 or more essentials are 10 times more likely to improve than schools that are below the benchmark.

[About the Survey](#)

THE 5ESSENTIALS
How is Sample Primary School performing on each of the 5Essentials?

ALL MEASURES
How is Sample Primary School performing across all measures?

Legend:
Very Strong (Green) Strong (Light Green) Neutral (Yellow)
Weak (Orange) Very Weak (Red) No Data (White)
Low Response/Not Applicable (Grey)

Drill down more deeply to understand organizational strengths and opportunities by exploring the research-based measures that comprise each essential condition.

Measure	Performance	Essential	Respondent
Teacher-Principal Trust	48 Neutral	Effective Leaders	Teacher

In schools with strong Teacher-Principal Trust, teachers and principals share a high level of mutual trust and respect.

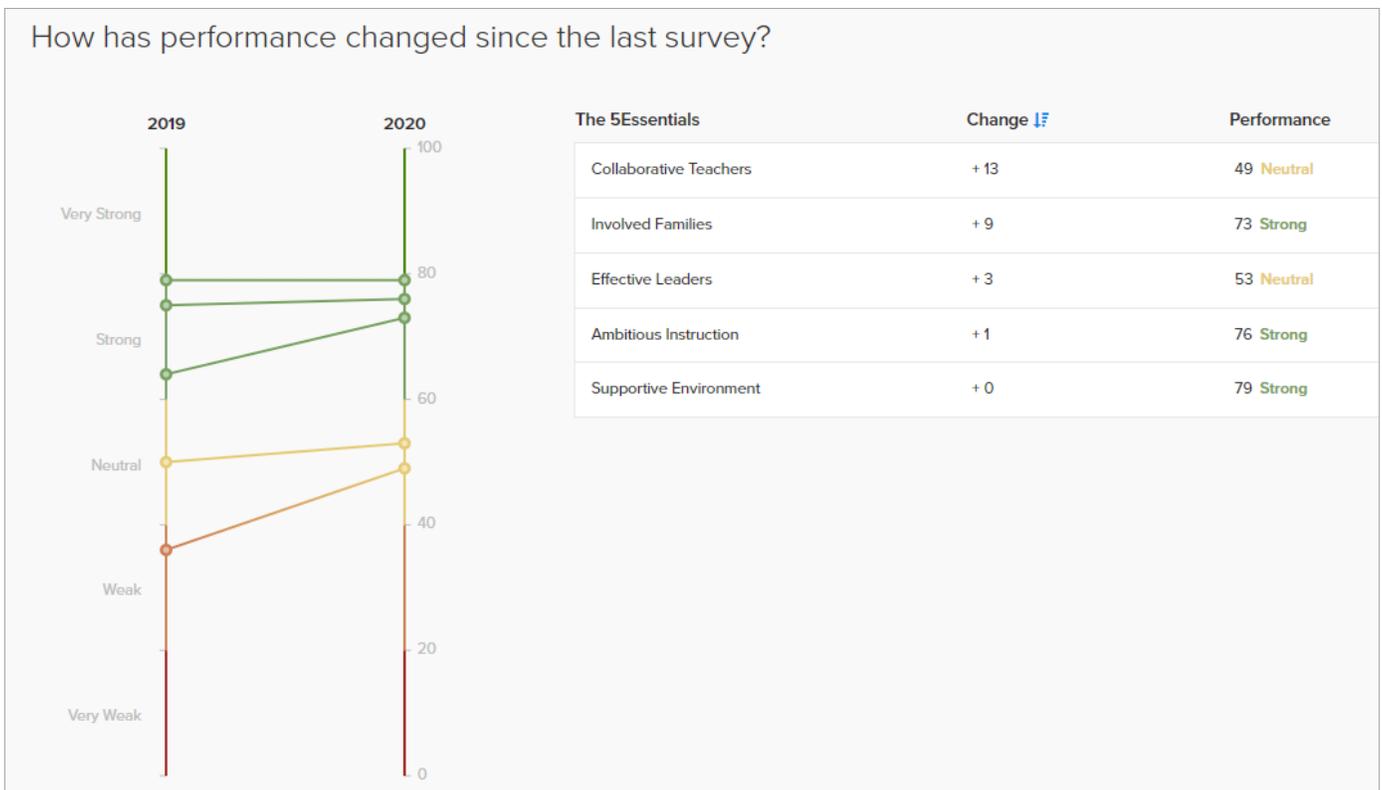
- Based on a comparison to the benchmark, an mScore of **48** means that Sample Primary School is *neutral* on this measure.

Teachers report the following:

[Expand All](#) i

The principal has confidence in the expertise of the teachers.	▼
I trust the principal at his or her word.	▼
It's OK in this school to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with the principal.	▼
The principal takes a personal interest in the professional development of teachers.	▼

View multiyear data to identify trends and patterns across the organizational conditions that are necessary for school improvement and track progress over time.



Needs assessment

Stakeholder observations and interviews to fine-tune your improvement plan

Based on the 5Essentials Framework, the qualitative information gathered through interviews and observations in the needs assessment can be used as a starting point for school improvement work and be triangulated with your 5Essentials Survey data to add additional context and color that help better refine, prioritize, and focus services to maximize the impact of your school improvement plan.



- **Comprehensive:** A series of interviews and observations of professional collaboration ensure the assets and needs of your educators are fully captured
- **Flexible modalities:** Virtual and on-site options provide maximum flexibility in delivering needs-assessment services
- **Customizable to regulatory or funding requirements:** Tailored to your team to ensure funding requirements, mandates, and local, state, or federal laws are met
- **Supports stakeholder buy-in:** Shareable reports summarize the needs assessment process and key recommendations

Leadership coaching

Empower school leaders as focus agents of change

Based on decades of research establishing the fundamental role of school principals in improving student achievement, NWEA School Improvement services intentionally focus on school leaders as the central agents of change and drivers of continuous improvement.

“An effective principal’s impact is stronger and broader than previously thought, making it ‘difficult to envision’ a higher return on investment in K–12 education than the cultivation of high-quality school leadership.”¹

NWEA leadership coaches:

- **Guide and support school leaders** in developing and implementing sustainable processes, practices, and protocols supporting the essential conditions for effective schools that are embodied in the 5Essentials Framework
- **Spend quality time in schools**, observing school leaders in action, visiting classrooms, and interacting with staff during improvement meetings
- **Employ an inquiry method** focused on asking open-ended questions and active listening
- Illuminate insights through **constructive and strategic feedback**
- Can work alongside district and school leaders to **define and develop turnaround leadership skills** centered on learning results, distributed leadership, a systems approach, and leader self-efficacy

“It has been a really authentic relationship that we’ve been able to develop in our work together, which makes me feel confident that I really do have a true thought partner in this space with someone that has experience doing this work, but with an outside perspective.”

Colleen Collins
Principal
CICS West Belden

¹ Anna Egalite, Jason Grissom, and Constance Lindsay, *How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research* (New York: The Wallace Foundation, 2021). <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/principalsynthesis>.

Professional learning that activates your school improvement plan

5Essentials professional learning

Learn how to leverage 5Essentials Survey results to create improvement plans that strengthen the organizational conditions linked to long-term school and student success.

5Essentials Foundations Series

These introductory sessions ground your leaders in the 5Essentials and examine central ideas of the 5Essentials Framework. Sessions include:

- **Understanding the 5Essentials:** Gain solid foundational knowledge of the 5Essentials system, scoring, and reports
- **Building trust:** Consider practices that foster trust and reflect on actions to promote deeper levels of trust
- **Fostering a supportive environment:** Delve into recent research that provides a framework to consider the structures, policies, processes, and programs that enable schools to create safe, supportive environments
- **Leadership and the creation of successful environments:** Explore the role of school leaders in creating change in schools and encounter research that describes the mediated pathway and levers at a leader's disposal

5Essentials School Improvement Series

These sessions help educators analyze their 5Essentials data within a cycle of improvement and apply the data to coherent school improvement plans. Sessions include:

- **Data and root cause analysis:** Learn about the 5Essentials improvement cycle and participate in data analysis exercises that help identify the root cause of your school's challenges
- **School improvement and implementation planning:** Finalize a school improvement plan with a coherent set of improvement goals, methods for progress monitoring, and an implementation plan
- **Evaluating and adjusting:** Reflect on and evaluate the initial success of your actions and adjust your plans to promote continued progress
- **Completing the cycle:** Evaluate the successes and challenges of the past year, reflecting on multiyear trends and progress



NWEA School Improvement professional learning

Support your focus areas for improvement with topics aligned to the 5Essentials Framework.

Looking to learn how you can create a supportive environment and accelerate learning for all students?

Culturally responsive and sustaining education teaches participants how to establish, develop, and lead culturally responsive and sustaining education—an asset-based mindset focused on recognizing and appreciating historically marginalized students (aligned to the 5Essentials’ Supportive Environments).

Looking for processes and protocols to deepen collaborative inquiry across your school?

Culture of inquiry participants will learn about the essential qualities of high-performing teams that support informed collaborative inquiry, as well as how to lead, facilitate, and engage in effective collaborative inquiry cycles that result in meaningful change (aligned to the 5Essentials’ Collaborative Teachers).

Looking to strengthen school leaders’ essential skills and competencies for continuous improvement?

Being a leader of school leaders: Principles of coaching teaches effective coaching practices and how to develop a tailored support plan that provides the right foundation for sustaining and strengthening the capacity of school leaders to promote continuous improvement (aligned to the 5Essentials’ Effective Leaders).

Any NWEA Professional Learning sessions can also be incorporated into school improvement plans to support specific needs and goals. NWEA Professional Learning engages teachers in collaborative conversations that foster the high-quality, ambitious instruction that improves student outcomes. Learn more at [NWEA.org/professional-learning](https://www.nwea.org/professional-learning).

District systems advising

Develop systems, processes, protocols, and practices for continuous improvement

District system advising brings everyone to a shared understanding about district and school needs and how to establish goals and outcomes that will lead to effective, sustainable systems, enhanced teacher performance, and improved student learning outcomes.

Using an inquiry-based approach:

- Your leadership coach guides district and school leaders to new insights and actions
- Leaders learn management strategies to better understand what systems, processes, protocols, and practices are required to create the conditions that support improved learning outcomes and cycles of continuous improvement

When part of a leadership coaching package, system advising includes quarterly impact reports created by NWEA coaches during the school year. The impact reports delineate progress schools are making toward the goals and outcomes set at the start of the year and provide district leaders with a summation of how all NWEA services are impacting school progress and how the district can support coherence across the NWEA services alongside other school supports.



It truly was a partnership. It wasn't something that I felt like I had to drive. I felt extremely supported. I saw them (NWEA) really dive in and immerse themselves in research, ask a lot of questions, and be very open to working with me, my staff, the community, and our Family & Community Liaison—and put the time in to do the work.”

AMANDA SCOTT THOMAS

Director, Community Partnership
Tacoma Public Schools

Sample year one holistic implementation plan



The experience and expertise of the school improvement team...with the foundational research in the backdrop, and the individualized support, it couldn't have happened with us just ourselves.... [C]oming in and integrating into our existing structures has been the most powerful piece”

KATIE O'CONNOR
Chief Education Officer
Distinctive Schools



Take the first step toward lasting, meaningful change

Partner with us for evidence-based, holistic school
improvement services.

Begin your journey at [NWEA.org/school-improvement](https://www.nwea.org/school-improvement)
or by contacting us at 866.654.3246.

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NWEA is a mission-driven organization that supports students and educators worldwide by providing assessment solutions, insightful reports, professional learning offerings, and research services. Visit [NWEA.org](https://www.nwea.org) to find out how NWEA can partner with you to help all kids learn.

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