

Identifying and Addressing Underlying Causes of School Staff Stress & Well-Being

Presented by

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Introductions



Cheryl Holm-Hansen, PhD



Mark Sander, PsyD

**Please introduce
yourself in the chat!**

Three session series



September 11:

**Roadmap to understanding and assessing school staff stress
and burnout**

Three session series



September 11:

Roadmap to understanding and assessing school staff stress and burnout



September 18:

Strategies to effectively address root causes of school staff stress and burnout

Three session series



September 11:

Roadmap to understanding and assessing school staff stress and burnout



September 18:

Strategies to effectively address root causes of school staff stress and burnout



September 25:

Creating and successfully implementing a plan to address root causes of school staff stress and burnout

Midwest Center for School Mental Health

BUILDING THE CONDITIONS FOR STAFF WELL-BEING

A Toolkit for Addressing the Root
Causes of School Staff Stress and Burnout



Cheryl A. Holm-Hansen, PhD
Mark Sander, PsyD

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Upcoming toolkit

- Recommended approach for identifying needs, prioritizing solutions, and making changes
- Best current evidence for specific staff stress-reduction strategies
- Strategies for ensuring successful implementation and systems change

Toolkit will be shared with all attendees at the conclusion of the series

Upcoming learning/consultation series



Planning for an 8-session learning/consultation cohort is underway

More information will be shared at an upcoming session

Today's agenda



Recap – How do we get to a plan for promoting staff well-being?



Strategies – How do we create conditions for successful implementation?



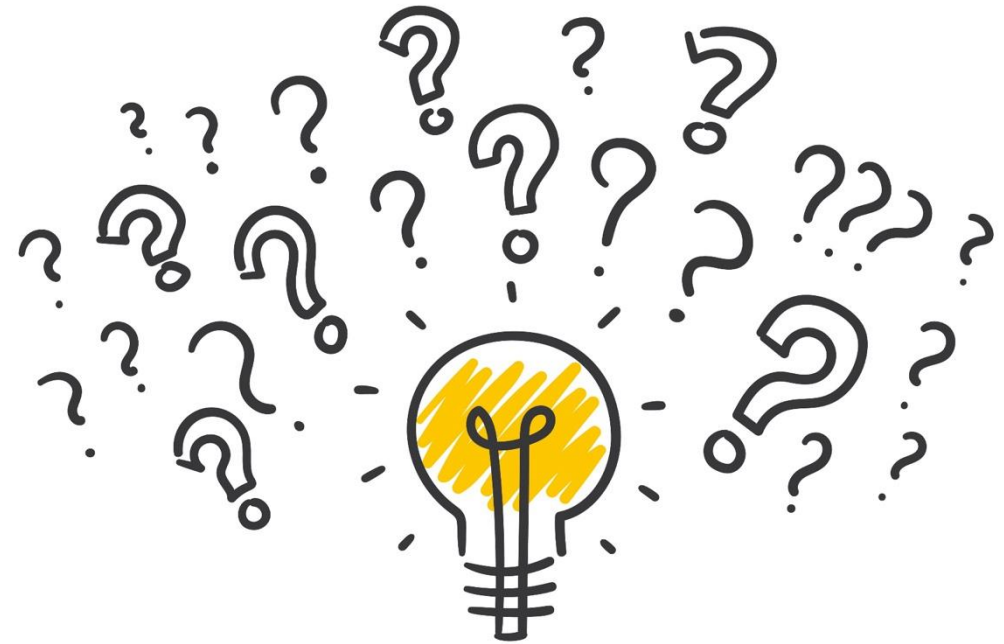
Look forward – How can I get more information or join the learning collaborative?

What do you think?



What do you think?

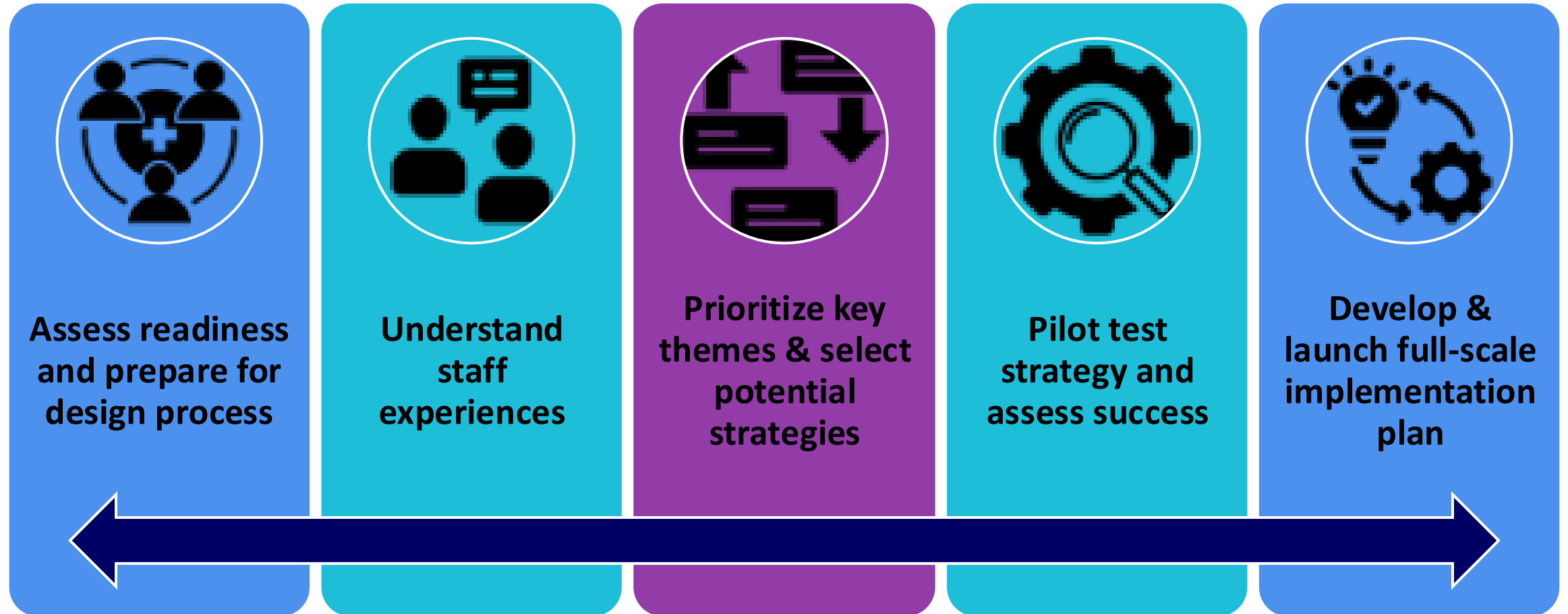
If you joined us last week,
do you have any questions
that we should address
before we move on?



The slide features a dark blue background with decorative geometric patterns at the top and bottom. These patterns consist of multiple parallel lines in shades of purple, blue, and teal, forming a series of connected triangles and zig-zags. A large, empty rectangular box with a thin purple border is centered on the slide, containing the word "Recap" in white text.

Recap

Our process





Implementation Planning

What do you think?



A good strategy is not enough



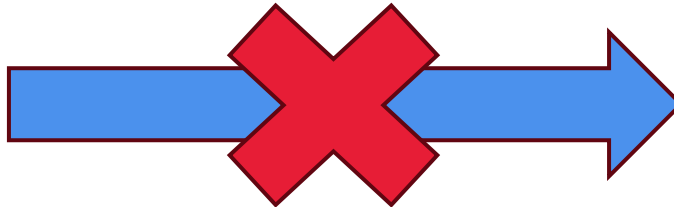
A great idea!



**Meaningful
improvement in
staff well-being**

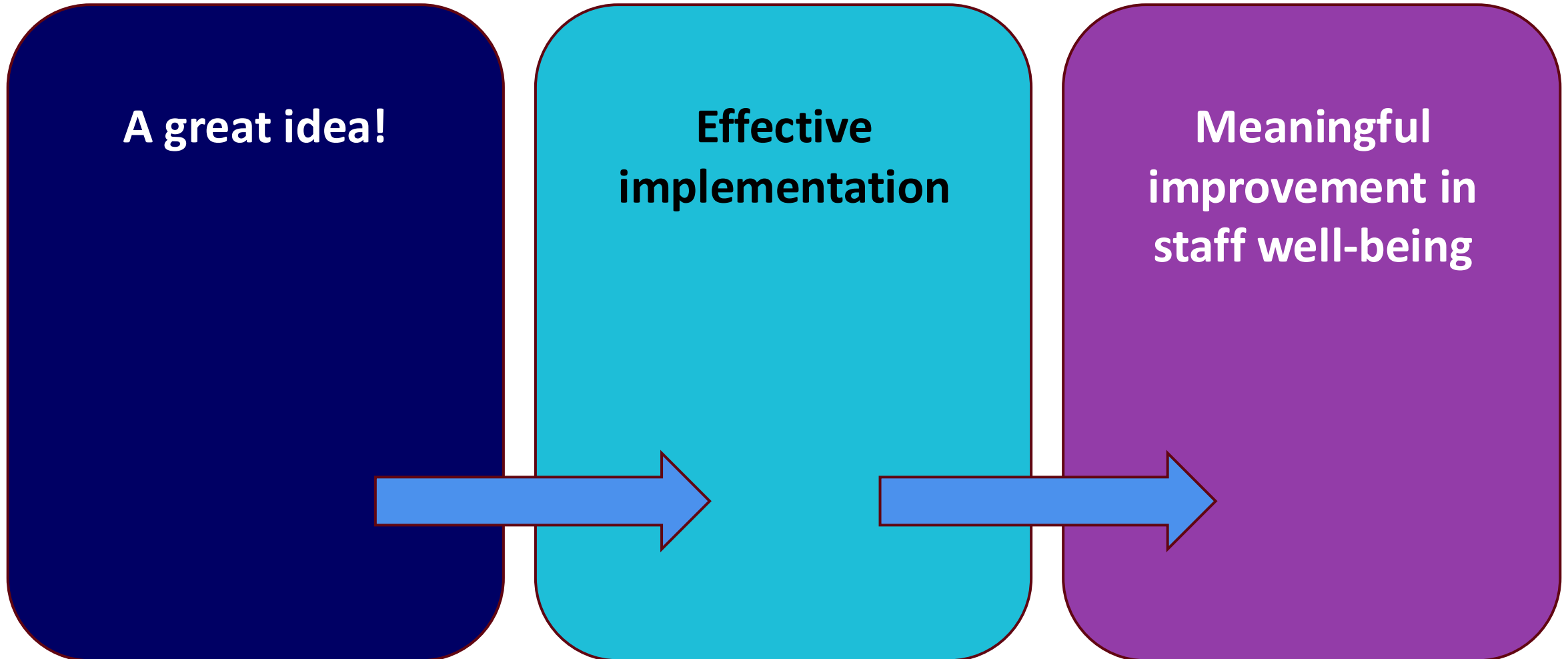
A good strategy is not enough

A great idea!



**Meaningful
improvement in
staff well-being**

A good strategy is not enough



We need two kinds of strategies



Well-being strategy

**What are we
changing?**

**Implementation
strategy**

**What will help us
make that change
happen?**

We need two kinds of strategies

Staff feel unsupported by supervisors

Well-being strategy

Establish regular
supportive/ developmental
supervision model

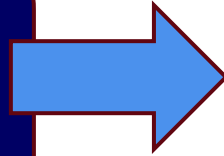
- Train supervisors in new approach
- Create resource guide
- Protect meeting time
- Provide coaching/ feedback to supervisors
- Monitor staff and supervisor feedback

Implementation strategy

We need two kinds of strategies

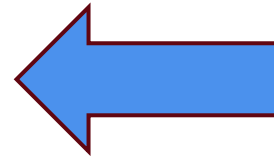
Student behavior is contributing to staff stress

Well-being strategy



Create a rapid response system for staff needing behavioral support

- Develop protocols
- Adjust staffing/coverage
- Train response-team members
- Monitor response times and staff experience

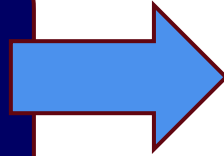


Implementation strategy

We need two kinds of strategies

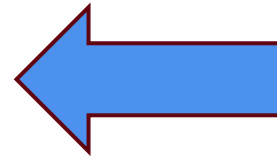
Too many meetings contribute to workload

Well-being strategy



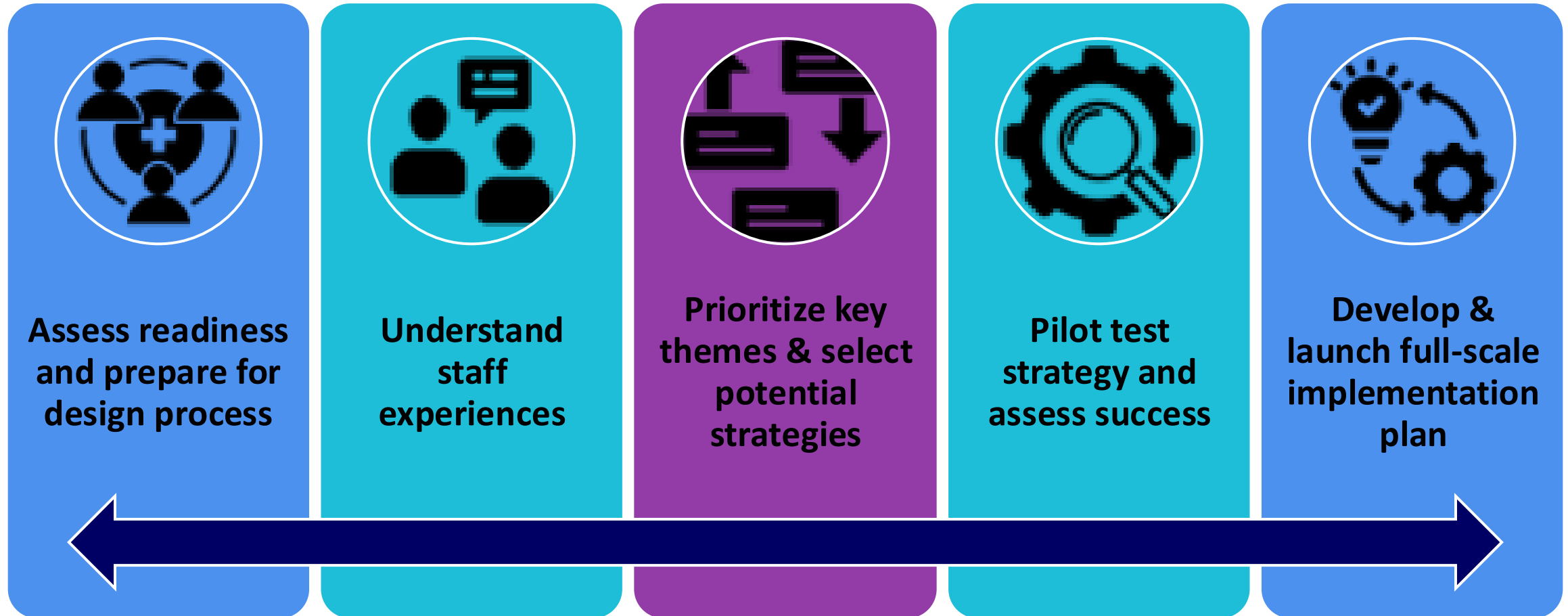
Reduce unnecessary meetings and redesign remaining meetings

- Audit existing meetings
- Establish criteria for determining “necessity”
- Identify meetings to eliminate
- Create new agenda expectations
- Give leaders authority to change meetings
- Track meeting time



Implementation strategy

By the time you reach Phase 5, many conditions for success should be in place





3 Conditions for Successful Implementation

1. Leadership that Goes Beyond “Endorsement”



Leadership Endorsement

What?

- Expressing support
- Communicating importance
- Encouraging participation

1. Leadership that Goes Beyond “Endorsement”



Leadership Endorsement

What?

- Expressing support
- Communicating importance
- Encouraging participation

Important to have...but not enough!

1. Leadership that Goes Beyond “Endorsement”



Implementation Leadership

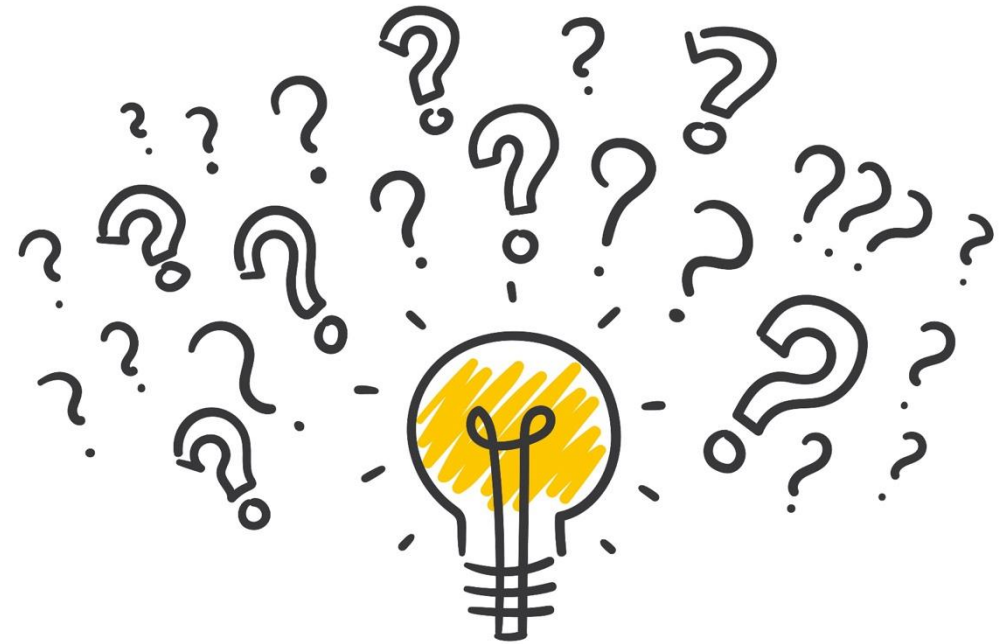
What?

- Protecting time
- Allocating resources
- Clarifying priorities
- Resolving competing expectations
- Removing barriers
- Making difficult decisions
- Following through

What do you think?

Your school has decided to protect one planning period each week from meetings and other non-emergency demands.

What would school or district leaders actually have to DO to make this work?



2. Clear ownership and accountability



Clear ownership and accountability

What?

- Who is responsible for each action?
- Who notices when something is not happening?
- Who has authority to address problems?
- Who communicates with staff?
- Who reviews what we are learning?

2. Clear ownership and accountability



Clear ownership and accountability

What?

- Who is responsible for each action?
- Who notices when something is not happening?
- Who has authority to address problems?
- Who communicates with staff?
- Who reviews what we are learning?

Do not give responsibility for implementation to a team that lacks the authority, time, or resources to implement the change

3. Capacity



Capacity

Can people actually
do what the plan
requires?

What?

- Time
- People
- Skills
- Resources
- Systems
- Authority

3. Capacity



Capacity

Can people actually
do what the plan
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What?

- Time
- People
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- Authority

**A staff well-being
initiative shouldn't
improve well-being by
quietly creating work
somewhere else**

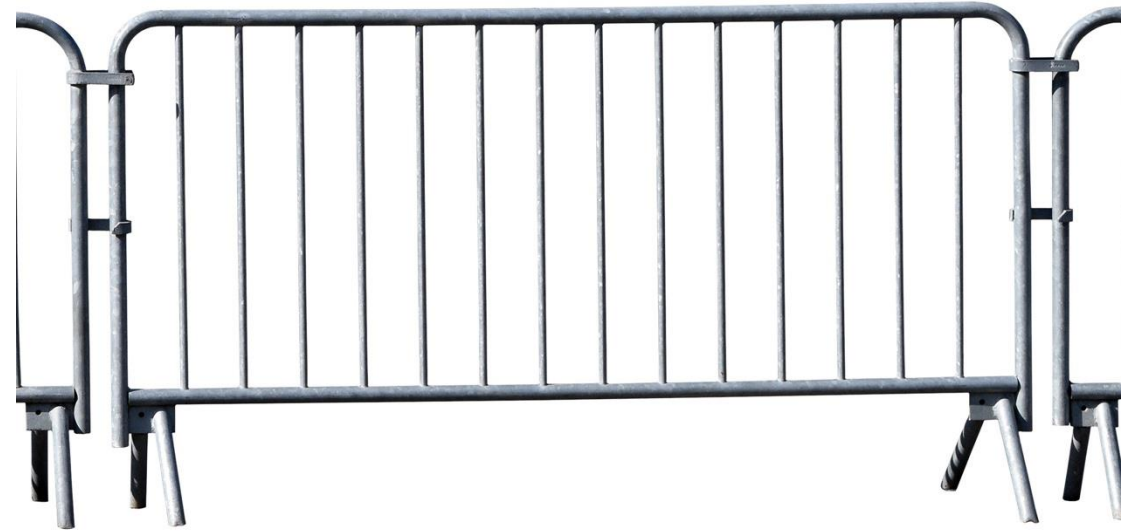


Address Implementation Barriers

Anticipate what will help – and what will get in the way



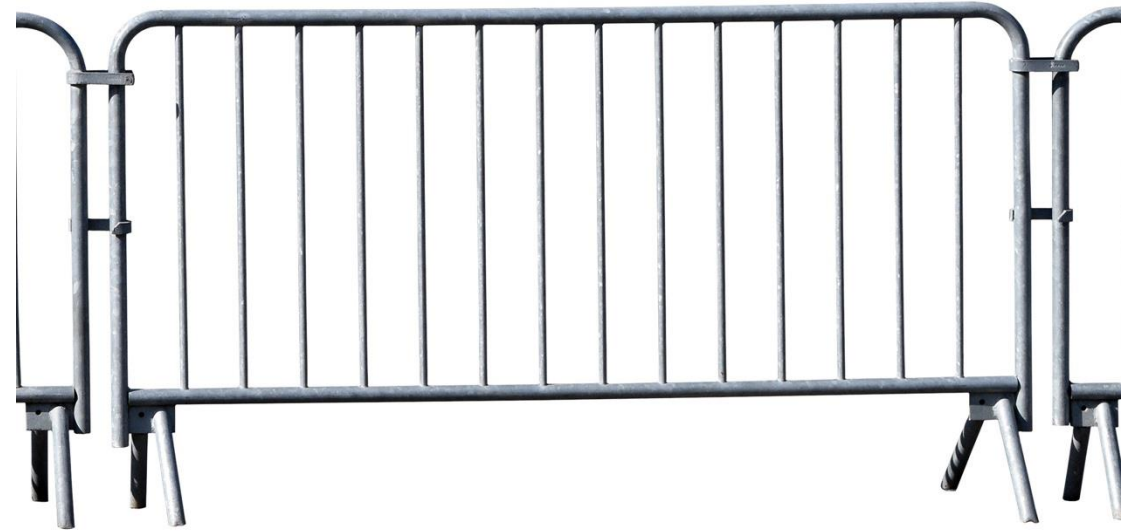
Don't wait for barriers to surprise you



Anticipate what will help – and what will get in the way



- **People** — knowledge, skills, beliefs, trust
- **Leadership** — support, follow-through, authority
- **Resources** — time, staffing, money
- **Workflow** — schedules, routines, competing demands
- **Systems** — policies, contracts, procedures
- **Strategy** — complexity, flexibility, fit



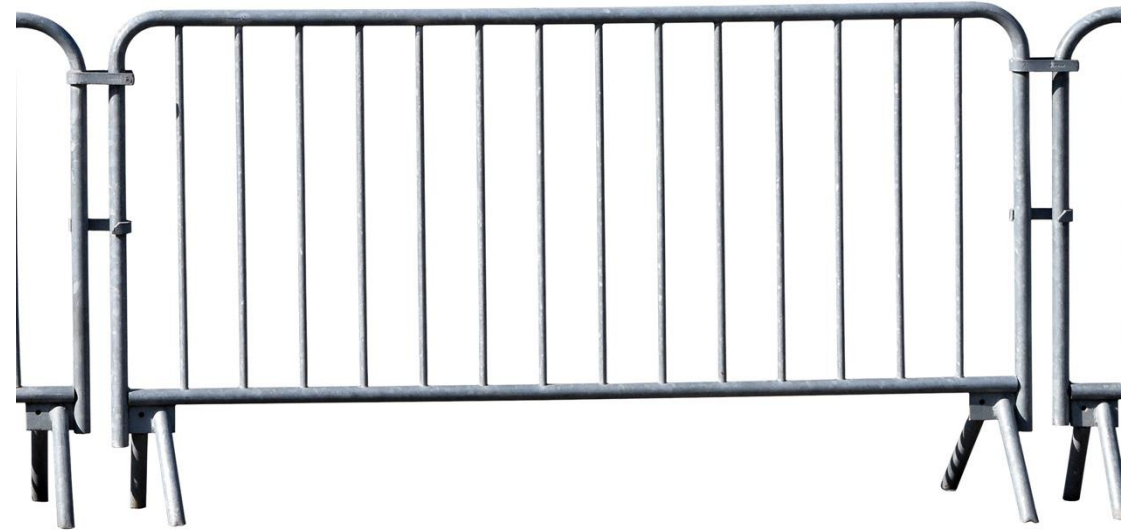
What do you think?



Anticipate what will help – and what will get in the way



Match the implementation support to the barrier



Match the implementation support to the barrier



Barrier	Possible response
Expectations aren't clear	Clarify roles/procedures
Staff lack needed skills	Training and coaching
Staff do not have time	Protect time/change workload
Existing workflow conflicts	Redesign workflow
Implementation varies by supervisor	Guidance, feedback, and accountability
Staff do not trust the process	Transparency and meaningful influence



Engage staff



Keep staff involved during implementation

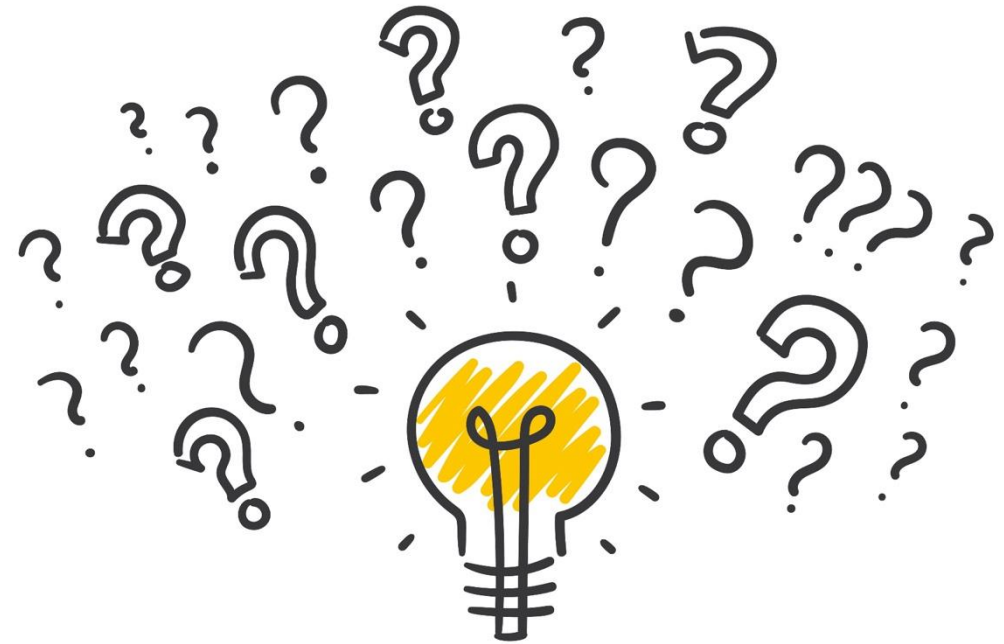
During implementation, staff can tell us:

- What is actually happening?
- What's working?
- What's getting in the way?
- What burden has been created?
- Who is experiencing the change differently?
- What needs to be adapted?



What do you think?

During implementation,
how do staff know if their
feedback actually matters?



Keep staff involved during implementation



VOICE

I can express my perspective

PARTICIPATION

I am included in the process

AUTONOMY

**I have appropriate discretion over
my work**

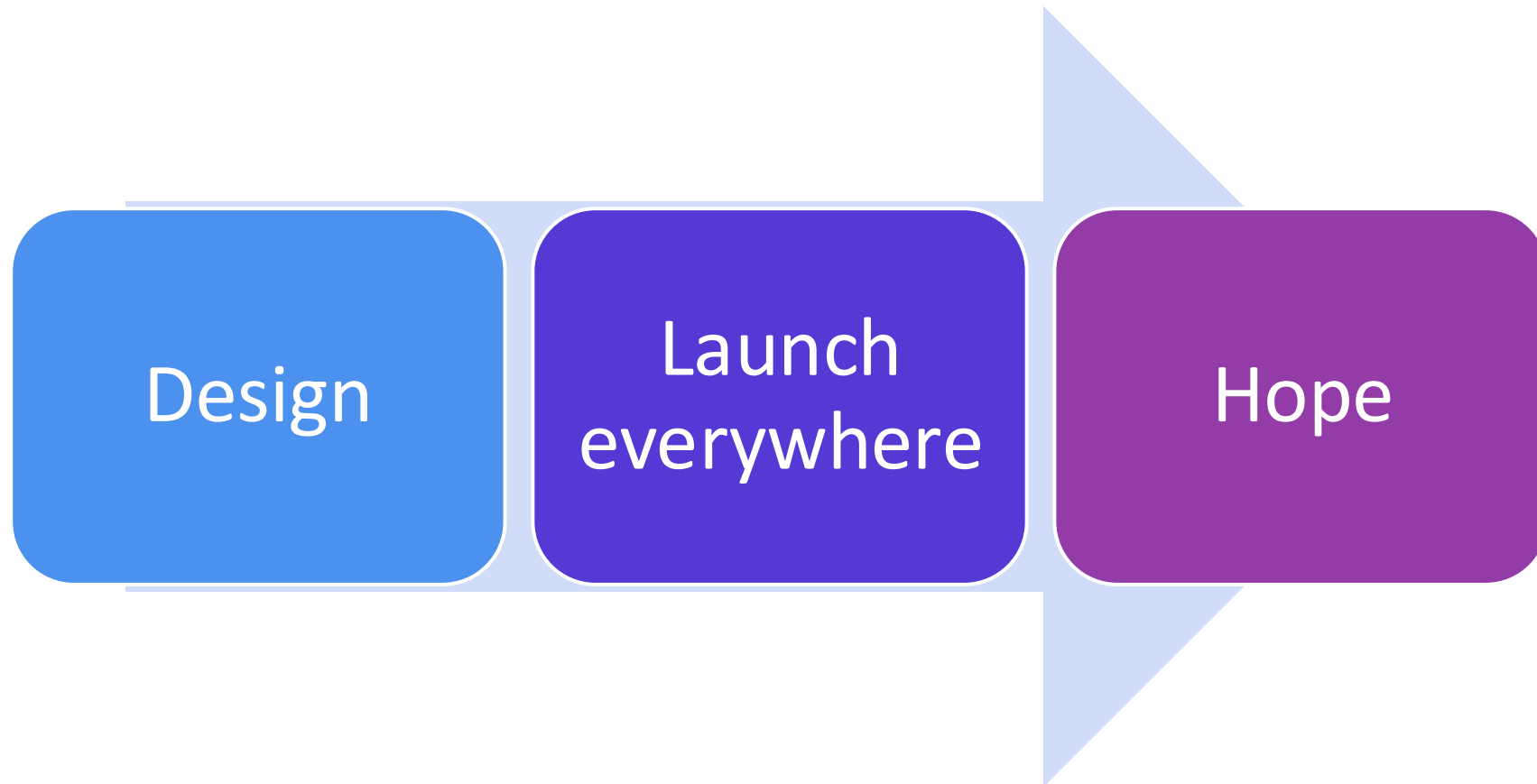
INFLUENCE

**My input has a meaningful
pathway to affect decisions**

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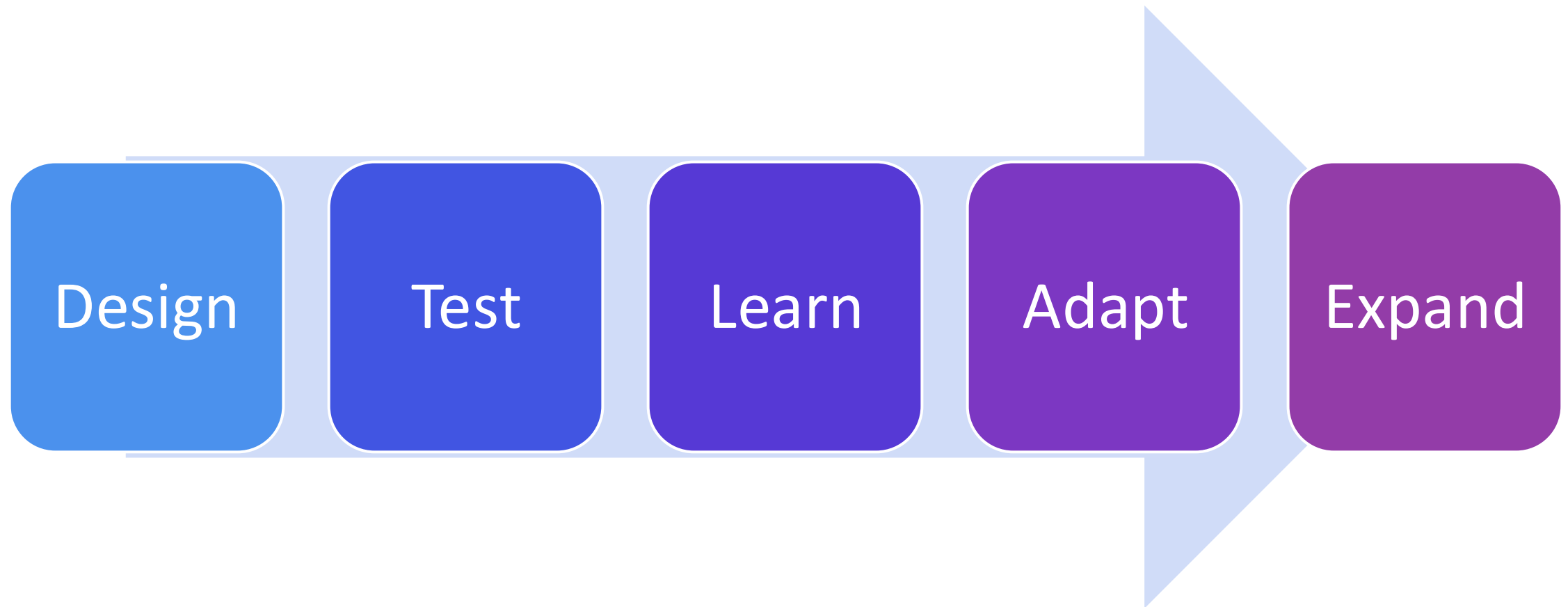
Pilot test

How implementation often looks



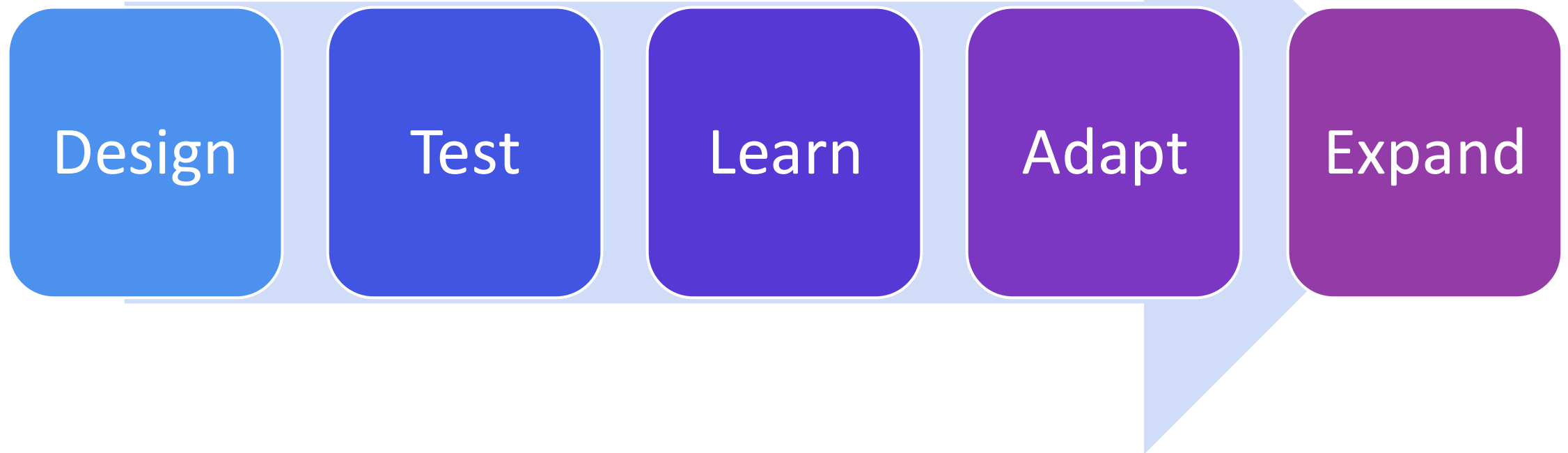
What implementation should look like





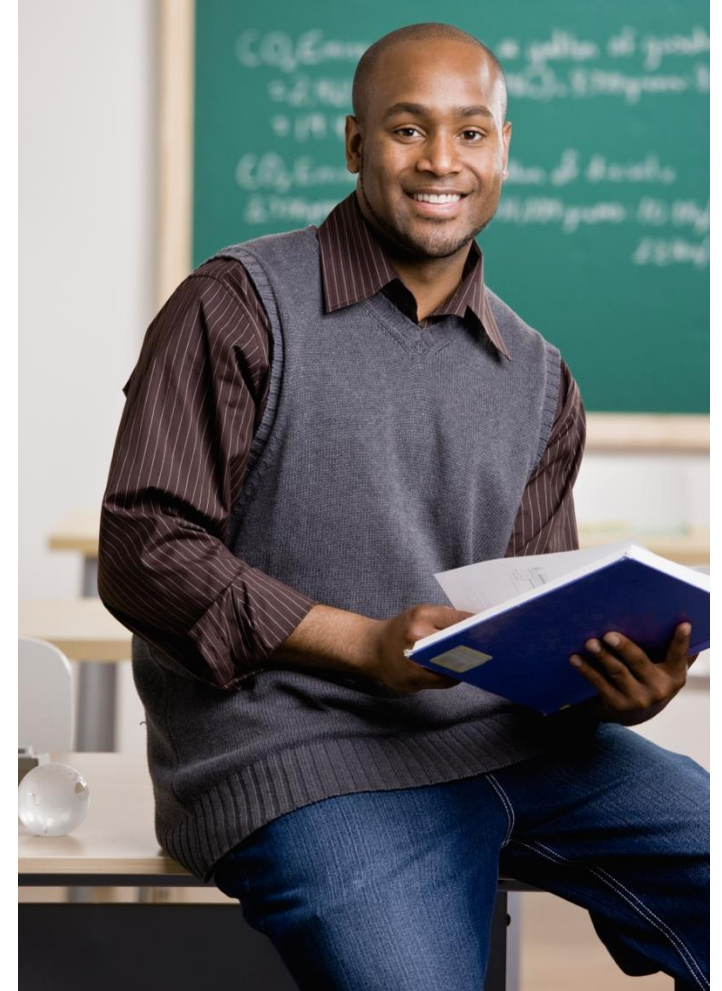
What implementation should look like

A pilot isn't just a small version of implementation. It's an opportunity to answer questions before you commit to scale.



What should a pilot teach us?

- Can we actually implement it?
- What gets in the way?
- What support does it require?
- Does it affect different staff differently?
- Does it create unintended consequences?
- Does it appear to address the problem?
- What should we change before expanding?



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Monitoring

Monitor what matters



DID WE DO IT?

Implementation

DID IT HELP?

Outcomes

**WHAT ELSE
HAPPENED?**

**Burden, equity,
unintended
consequences**

Three “checks”



BURDEN CHECK

What work are we creating, removing, or moving – and for whom?

EQUITY CHECK

Who benefits, who benefits less, who bears burden, whose experience may be hidden, and who has meaningful influence?

DECISION CHECK

Do we know enough to make the next decision responsibly?

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Adapting and Sustaining

Adaptation is part of implementation



Decisions may involve:

- Continuing
- Adapting
- Expanding
- Reducing
- Replacing
- Returning
- Stopping

Adaptation is part of implementation



**Changing the plan based
on what you learn is not
implementation failure**

Build in sustainability from the beginning



- Can this become part of normal work?
- Where does the time come from?
- What resources are recurring?
- What routines/ policies need to change?
- How will new staff learn it?
- How will we notice if implementation starts slipping?
- How will we continue getting staff feedback?

Adaptation is part of implementation



**Sustainability is
institutionalization – not
just continuing to remind
people about the
initiative**



What comes next?

Next steps



- **Distribution of toolkit**
- **Opportunity to participate in learning/consultation cohort**