Instructional Leader: ESC Staff
Time and Date: ~2 hours, Date TBD
Topic: Guided Root Cause Analysis

Objectives:
DCSIs and Principals will be able to:
1. Engage in guided dialogue with stakeholder groups to brainstorm possible root causes
2. Validate and prioritize root causes

Document(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Assessment &amp; Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will need: Facilitators Guide PPT and Projector Copies for each participant of: Note-taking Guide Case Study A Case Study B Guided Discussion Questions</td>
<td>Assessment/CFU during Workshop: whole group share outs table monitoring using responses in Facilitators Guide Responses on chart paper Assessment Post-Workshop (deadline): Root Causes in improvement plans (due to TEA on Sept. 14 or 28)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Follow-up by Instructional Leaders (dates):
- TBD by ESC/PSP

Agenda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mins</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up</td>
<td></td>
<td>Set up tables with post-its and chart paper for campus teams, print copies of materials and place at tables (or hand out as you go), set up projector and slides</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:00-00:05</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td><strong>Introduction and Context Setting</strong>&lt;br&gt;Section outcome: Participants will consider the benefit of conducting a root cause analysis prior to selecting a strategy. <strong>Say (1 min):</strong> In the next 2 hours, we are going to learn how to identify the root cause for our areas of low performance (the problem statements). Individually, take 2 minutes to answer the first question in your note-taking guide (<strong>show Slide 3</strong>): <em>Why do we take the time to analyze root causes?</em></td>
<td>PPT slides 1-4 Note taking guide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:05-00:10</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Section outcome:</strong> Participants will know what will be learned in this session and understand that they will replicate this work back at their campuses.</td>
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<td><strong>Say (5 mins):</strong> (show slide 5) At the end of this session, you will be able to:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Engage in guided dialogue with stakeholder groups to brainstorm possible root causes</td>
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<td>2. Validate and prioritize root causes</td>
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<td>We will look at a couple of case studies to determine why these actions are important for planning, and then we will practice have a guided discussion to conduct a root cause analysis.</td>
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<td>When you return to your campus, you will be able to implement these tools for your own root cause analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:10-00:30</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td><strong>See It and Name It: Root Cause Analysis Case Study A</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Section outcome:</strong> Participants will identify the actions a sample campus took to arrive at a root cause that will serve as the foundation of their improvement plan.</td>
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<td><strong>Say (1 min):</strong> (show slide 6) We are going to look at two case studies. Pull Case Study A from your packet. Individually, read the case study and answer the two questions in your note taking guide. Take 10 minutes for this.</td>
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<td>1) How did this campus get from a surface cause to a root cause?</td>
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<td>[Potential answers: they identified an area of highest need through specific questioning; they included</td>
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multiple stakeholder groups which helped reveal more issues, they tie the root cause back to data]

2) **What impact will this have on their plan development?**
   [Potential answers: the campus now knows what really caused their low performance in math, they will select a better strategy, because they included various groups, they have a deeper understanding of campus issues]

**Say (1 min):** Turn and talk to your table group and discuss your answers. Take 3 minutes for this. *(Facilitators monitor table talk to make sure discussions are on track with the answers above)*

**Say (5 min):** Let’s do a whole group share out. *(Ask for 3-4 volunteers to share their responses)*

**Say (3 min):** *(show Slide 7)* Key idea: what we see from this case study is that we set ourselves up for successful planning when we invite a variety of stakeholders to the table to have a guided discussion and prioritize root causes.

| Section outcome: Participants will evaluate the missteps a campus might make in the data analysis process and identify actions to avoid those missteps. |
|---|---|
| **00:30-00:50** | **00:50-01:20** |
| **See It and Name It: Root Cause Analysis Case Study B** | **PPT slides 8-9** note taking guide Case Study B |

**Say (1 min):** *(show Slide 8)* Let’s look at another campus. This campus missed the same accountability targets and has the same problem statement, but they took a different approach to their root cause analysis. Individually, read the case study and answer the two questions in your note taking guide. Take 7 minutes for this.

1) **Why did this campus arrive at a surface cause and not a root cause?** * [Potential answers: didn’t tie the work to data, no guided discussion, only a couple of people at the table, one with limited knowledge of the campus]

2) **What might happen if the campus bases its improvement strategy on a surface-level cause?** * [Potential answers: the campus doesn’t know what really caused low performance, so they are more likely to select a strategy that won’t actually help them]

**Say (1 min):** Turn and talk to your table group and discuss your answers. Take 3 minutes for this. *(Facilitators monitor table talk to make sure discussions are on track with the answers above)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td>Let’s do a whole group share out. (Ask for 3-4 volunteers to share their responses)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 mins</td>
<td><strong>Say (2 min): (show Slide 9)</strong> Key idea: Campuses that engage in a more inclusive, deliberate root cause analysis will be able to select better strategies and see more sustainable gains because they know what they need to fix first.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 mins</td>
<td><strong>Do it: Practice Root Cause Analysis</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Section outcome:</strong> Participants will practice having a guided root cause analysis discussion using the Guided Discussion worksheet.</td>
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<td>3 mins</td>
<td><strong>Say (3 mins): (show Slide 10)</strong> Now we are going to practice conducting a root cause analysis with a guided discussion. We are going to use the same problem statement you saw in the case studies, but we are going to apply our own experience to the discussion. To do this, we are going to work with our own campus groups. Take the Guided Discussion worksheet from your packet. You are going to use this document for your conversation. (<strong>Show slide 11</strong>) (Facilitator explains how to use worksheet and where to record answers.) Since you don’t have all your campus data/artifacts with you today, we will just answer the questions based on your campus experience. (Remember this is practice!) Take 10 minutes to work through the questions and record in your note guide. (Facilitator walks around to see at what level participants are stopping.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 mins</td>
<td><strong>Say (6 mins): (show slide 12)</strong> Now that we have identified missing systems or processes, we are going to use a more traditional root cause analysis tool, the 5 whys, to identify some of the reasons we did not implement the system or process from the guided discussion. First, let’s go back to our case studies and look at the 5 whys processes our sample campuses used. Individually, answer the three questions in your note taking guide. Take 5 minutes for this.</td>
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<td><strong>1) What did Campus A identify when they asked the 5 whys about the system they did not implement?</strong> [Potential answers: that parents believe teacher quality is inconsistent, that teachers do not feel administrators are trained to give feedback on instruction]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2) What did Campus B identify when they asked 5 whys about the problem statement? [Potential answers: that educator preparation programs are not preparing teachers]

3) Why might Campus A’s 5 whys process yield a better improvement plan? [Potential answers: Campus A is focused on the system that is in within their control to implement; they are identifying the potential barriers to putting this system in place]

Say (3 min): Turn and talk to your table group and discuss your answers. Take 3 minutes for this. [Facilitators monitor table talk to make sure discussions are on track with the answers above]

Say (5 min): Let’s do a whole group share out. (Ask for 3-4 volunteers to share their responses)

Say (2 min): (show Slide 13) Key idea: The 5 whys help us identify the barriers that prevent us from implementing systems and processes.

Say (11 min): (show slide 14) Now let’s practice asking the 5 whys. For this practice, we will just use the question you stopped at in teaching and learning. [Facilitator reads over example in slide 14] Take 10 minutes with your group to do this.

Say (3 min): (show slide 15) You have identified some of barriers or threats that may have prevented you from implementing this system or process. You’ll want to keep these in mind when you write (and implement!) your plan. In your note taking guide, answer the following questions to focus your ideas for planning (take 2 minutes):

• Of the barriers we identified in the because statements:
  • Which are due to mindsets?
  • Which are due to action (or inaction)?
  • Which are due to resources?

Say (2 min): (show Slide 16) Key idea: Removing barriers and ensuring that the conditions exist for campus improvement is one of the key responsibilities of the District Coordinator of School Improvement.

Say (6 mins): (show Slide 17) Our last step in this section is to write the root cause statement that would go in our plan.
With your table team, develop your root cause statement. The root cause statement should:

- identify the system or process that was missing that led to low performance
- identify one or more key barriers that kept that system or process from being implemented

The example we worked with earlier is written as a root cause statement on the slide. The system that was lacking is highlighted in yellow; the key barrier is highlighted in green. Take 5 minutes to do this. *(Facilitator walks around to answer questions and help team identify biggest barrier(s).)*

**Say (5 min):** *(show slide 18)* Before we move into our final reflection, we wanted to share a couple of tips for when you return to your campus to do this work.

First, we want to acknowledge that doing a root cause analysis can lead to some difficult conversations. If you have attended any professional development around communicating with stakeholders (like Courageous Principals), now is the time to employ those strategies! And remember: focus on the specific process (or lack of a process), not the specific people, that led to low performance.

Second, we want to reiterate the importance of conducting the root cause analysis with multiple stakeholder groups. You may want to consider giving the Guided Discussion Worksheet to these different groups BEFORE everyone comes together to see if you are calibrated on what systems are lacking at the campus.

*(show slide 19)* We have practiced using guided discussion to identify and validate a prioritized root cause. Before we leave, in your note taking guide, take a minute to reflect on the last question:

*What are the key actions I need to keep in mind when I do this work at my campus?*

*(show slide 20)* This concludes the Root Cause Analysis training! *(Facilitator note: include your contact info/follow up method here)*

updated 8/13/18
Root Cause Analysis Note Taking Guide

Introduction and Context Setting

• Why do we take the time to analyze root causes?

Identifying Key Actions for Root Cause Analysis: Case Study A

• How did this campus get from a surface cause to a root cause?

• What impact will this have on their plan development?
Improving Practices: Case Study B

- Why did this campus arrive at a surface cause and not a root cause?

- What might happen if the campus bases its improvement strategy on a surface-level cause?

**Practice: Guided Discussion for Root Cause Analysis**

Use the Guided Discussion for Root Cause Analysis Worksheet.

*The first element we do not do consistently or with fidelity was:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching and Learning:</th>
<th>Leadership Effectiveness:</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Quality:</th>
<th>School Climate and Culture:</th>
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</table>
The 5 Whys

- What did Campus A identify when they asked the 5 whys about the system they did not implement?

- What did Campus B identify when they asked 5 whys about the problem statement?

- Why might Campus A’s 5 whys process yield a better improvement plan?
Teaching and Learning: 5 Whys Practice

1. Why wasn’t this system/process implemented?
   • Because:

2. Why didn’t we achieve success when we ________________________________? (because statement from question 1 goes here)
   • Because:

3. Why ____________________________________________________________? (because statement from question 2 goes here)
   • Because:

4. Why ____________________________________________________________? (because statement from question 3 goes here)
   • Because:

5. Why ____________________________________________________________? (because statement from question 4 goes here)
   • Because:

Barriers to Implementation
• Of the barriers we identified in the because statements:
  • Which are due to mindsets?

  • Which are due to action (or inaction)?

  • Which are due to resources?
Our final teaching and learning root cause is:

**Final Reflection**

- *What are the key actions I need to keep in mind when I do the root cause analysis at my campus?*
ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS CASE STUDY A

Campus A is an elementary school with approximately 700 students. The campus serves grades PK-5. On August 15th, the campus learned that it had received its first Improvement Required rating. The campus missed the target for Domain 1: Student Achievement and for Domain 3: Closing the Gaps. The campus has identified several problem statements through their focused data analysis, and today they are going to identify a root cause for one of those problems:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Statement</th>
<th>Annual Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% of 5th graders did not meet grade level in math.</td>
<td>We will reduce the percent of students who did not meet grade level in 5th grade math by 20%.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The DCSI is now going to lead the campus through a root cause analysis to identify why this problem occurred so that the campus knows what strategy to select. The principal and DCSI have invited the CLT team to the meeting, the parent liaison (who brought parent comments from the campus’ public meeting), and several other teacher leaders from all grade levels on the campus. The PSP is also in attendance.

The DCSI begins the meeting by posting the problem statements and annual goals on the board. “Our goal at this meeting is to identify why these problems have occurred. We are going to evaluate four elements of our school system to see where we failed to engage in best practices.” The DCSI gives each participant a list of questions and explains that these questions are organized by the four elements they will explore today: teaching and learning, leadership effectiveness, teacher quality, and school climate and culture. Under each category, the questions are listed in the order that they should be done (for example, under school climate and culture, the campus should develop a mission, vision, and goals before developing a behavior management plan.)

The DCSI leads the team through the questions, starting with teaching and learning. The first question is: Did you use TEKS aligned curriculum with scope and sequence and pacing guides to guide teachers on what they should be teaching and when? The team agrees that the campus did this, and the DCSI asks for specific evidence. The principal and grade level chairs show the DCSI the district level pacing guides and the tracking tool they used last year to ensure teachers were following it. They move on to the next question: Did you use TEKS aligned assessment to measure progress toward state assessments? Again, the team is able to produce the released STAAR tests they used to measure progress and the results of each test administration.

The team continues through several more questions related to resources, lesson plans, and instructional expectations. When they get to the question “Did you observe and give teachers feedback on a weekly basis,” the principal says that the administrative team intended to do that this year but was not always consistent. The DCSI tells the team this is where they will stop and dig into why they failed to implement a consistent observation and feedback cycle.

The DCSI leads the team through “5 whys.” She starts by having the team answer why a consistent observation and feedback cycle was not implemented. The principal answered that the administrative team did not always have time to conduct observations each week. The DCSI asks why again, but she adds something to the question. Rather than just ask why there was not time to conduct observations (because the team already knows the answer), she asks “Why didn’t we achieve success when we didn’t make time to conduct observations and give feedback?”

At that point the team surfaces that the school did not succeed when time was not made for observations and feedback because teachers were not given a clear path to improve their instruction. When the team continued the remaining 3 whys, they uncovered that:

- Teachers were not given a clear path to improve their instruction because the administrative team did not provide action steps to set them on this path;
• The administrative team did not provide actions steps because they did not always know what to suggest teachers do; and
• The administrative team did not know what to suggest because they had not been adequately trained in providing instructional feedback.

The DCSI asks the team to engage in one more level of analysis. She asks, “which of these issues that we have raised are root causes? And which are surface-level barriers to implementing change?” The teachers in the room assert that the root cause is the lack of instructional knowledge on the part of the administrative team. They believe if the administrators receive training, the observations and feedback will be more effective, and teachers will get better. The parent liaison states that parents are concerned about the inconsistent quality of teachers on the campus and suggests that this is the root cause. If the teachers are all quality teachers, then all students will do better. The DCSI has been presented two suggestions: improve teacher quality or train campus administrators.

The PSP suggests looking back at the root cause analysis questions and the 5 whys. He asks “which of these issues encompass both inconsistent teacher quality and the lack of training in instructional feedback?” The team agrees that it is the lack of a consistent system for conducting observations and providing feedback that is the root cause. Getting training for administrators would only be one step in implementing an observation/feedback system, and the outcome of that system would be greater consistency of teacher quality on the campus. The team writes their root cause statement:

Campus leadership failed to create and implement a robust observation and feedback cycle to help teachers improve Tier I instruction.

**ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS CASE STUDY B**

Campus B is also a PK-5 campus serving approximately 700 students. This campus also missed Domain 1 and Domain 3 targets and has received its first Improvement Required rating. After some support from their PSP and ESC trainers, the campus has identified the following problem statement:

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The DCSI has told the principal they now need to identify the root cause for this problem statement. The DCSI wants to make sure that the principal meets expectations, so she and the principal sit down together to write a root cause statement.

To start the meeting, the DCSI suggests doing a 5 whys analysis on the problem statement. The DCSI asks why, and the principal gives the reason. Their dialogue is:

DCSI: *Why did only 25% of 5th graders meet grade level in math?*
Principal: *Because our teachers are not prepared to teach math to level of rigor on STAAR.*

DCSI: *Why aren’t our teachers prepared to teach math to level of rigor on STAAR?*
Principal: *Because their certification programs didn’t prepare them for good teaching.*

DCSI: *Why didn’t their certification programs prepare them for good teaching?*
Principal: *Because most of our teachers went through an alternative certification program.*

DCSI: *Why did most of our teachers go through an alternative certification program?*
Principal: *Because we pay less than neighboring districts and cannot attract teachers that are more experienced or went through more rigorous educator preparation programs.*

At this point, the DCSI does not ask the 5th why, because teacher pay is not in the DCSI’s or principal’s control. The DCSI and principal decide to back up to the “because” statement that seems most like it is in their control and write this as their root cause:

**The math teachers are not prepared to teach to the rigor of STAAR.**