The T.A.C.S.S.: Building Michigan's Quality Improvement System

April 28, 2011

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Presentation Overview

- Introduction of Panelists
- Opening Activity
- Acronym Alley – Learning our Language
- History and Structure of the TACSS Initiative
- Leading Indicators
- TACSS in Practice – Stories from the Field
- Next Steps
- Q & A

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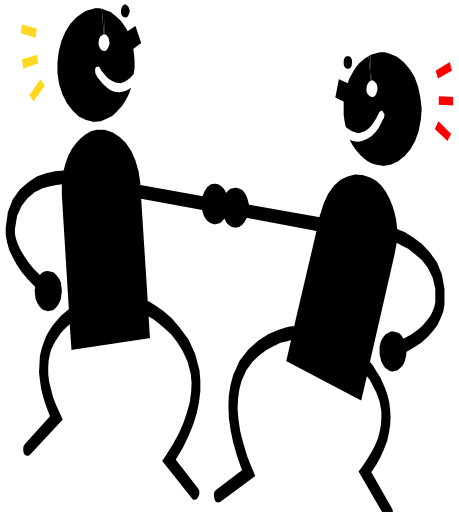
Get to Know thy Neighbor

- Your name
- Your role
- Where are you from
- Why did you select this workshop session



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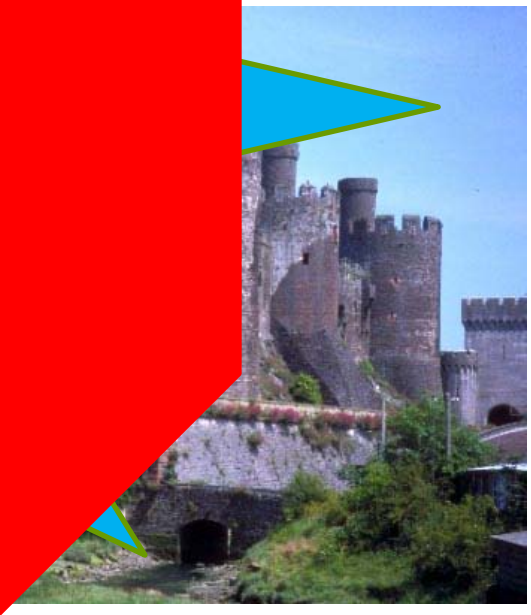

The TACSS Initiative

Michigan 21st CCLC Quality Improvement System

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TACSS Language

- TACSS– Technical Assistance and Coaching Support Services
- MDE– Michigan Department of Education
- CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement
- TA – Technical Assistance
- Youth PQA - Youth Program Quality Assessment

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TACSS Background

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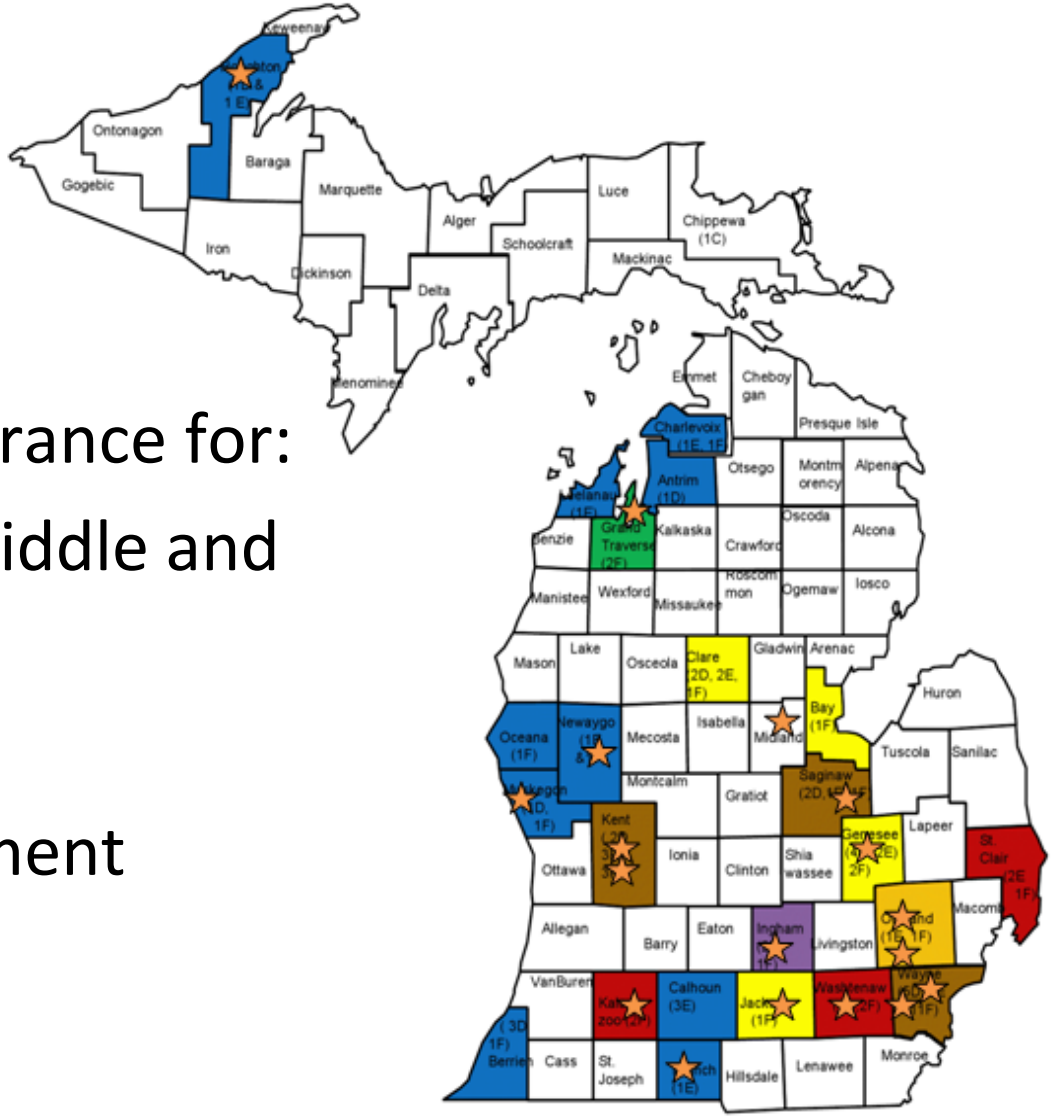
TACSS Background

In 2009-2010:

TACSS is Quality Assurance for:

- 340 elementary, middle and high schools sites
- 44,737 students
- Over $50M investment



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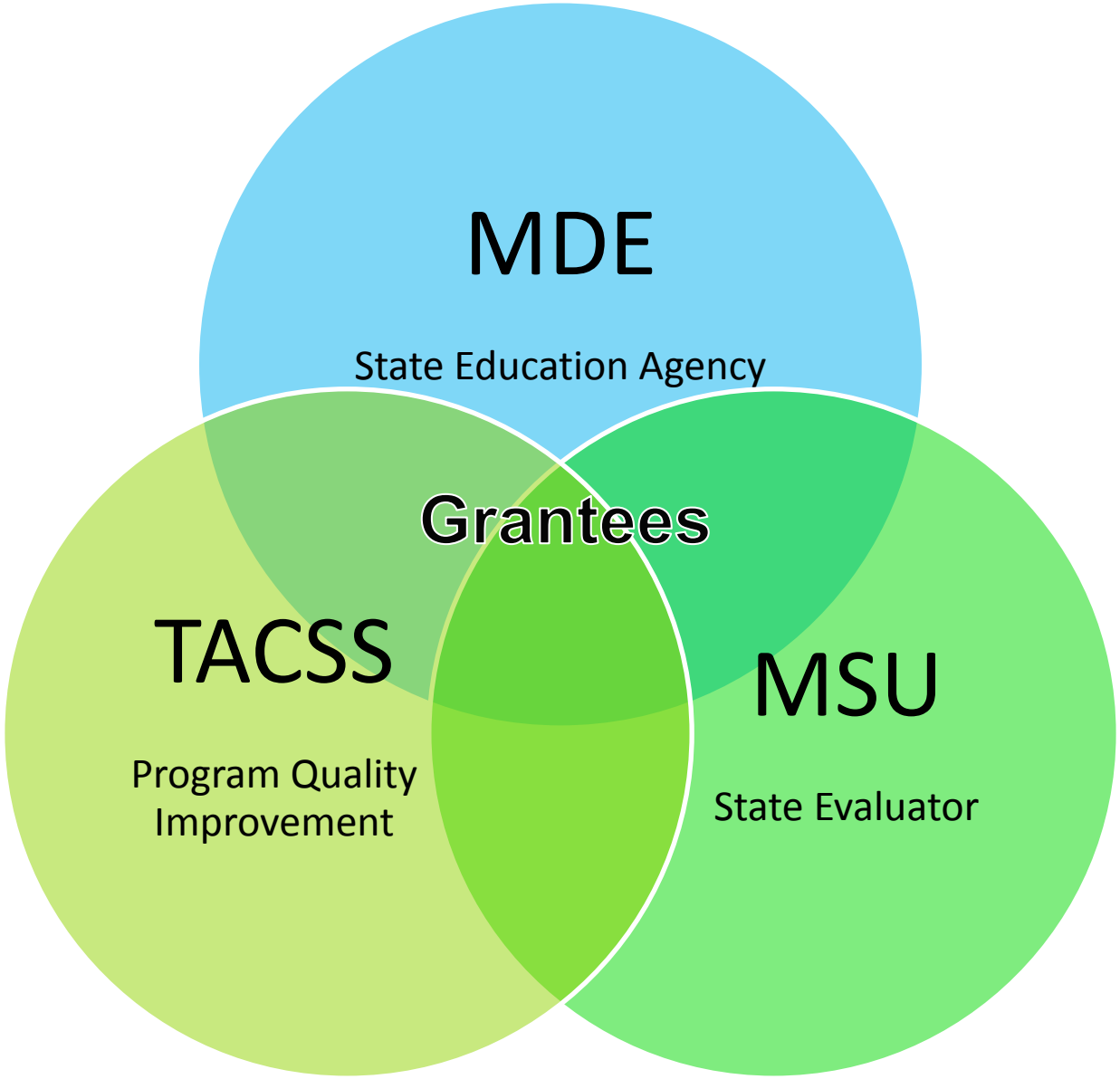
Partnership: Agency, University, Intermediary



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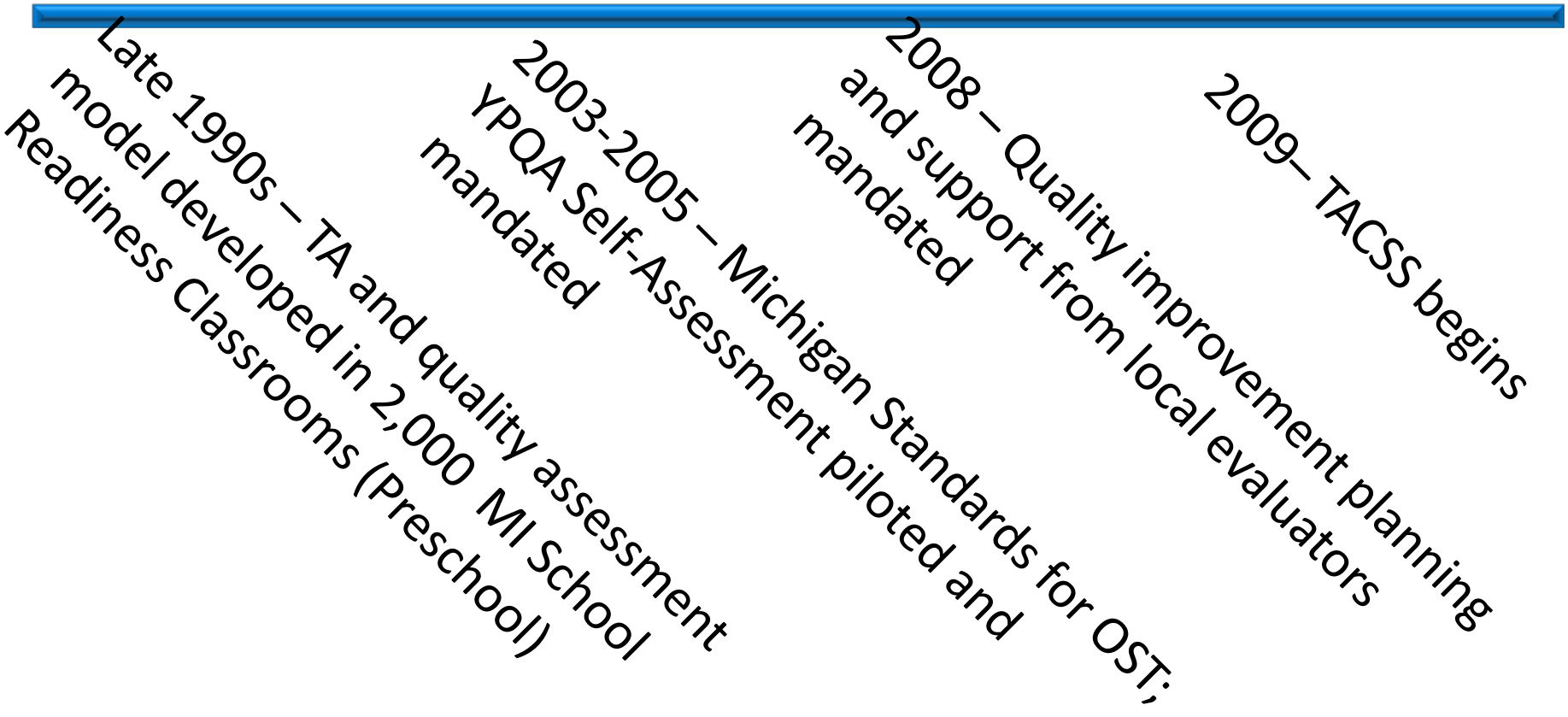
A Decade in the Making



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Why TACCS?

Why Now?

TACSS Goals

1. Grow a culture of performance accountability
2. Develop a low-stakes infrastructure for continuous quality improvement
3. Improve overall quality of 21st CCLC services and start up for new sites
4. Add value to child development and learning

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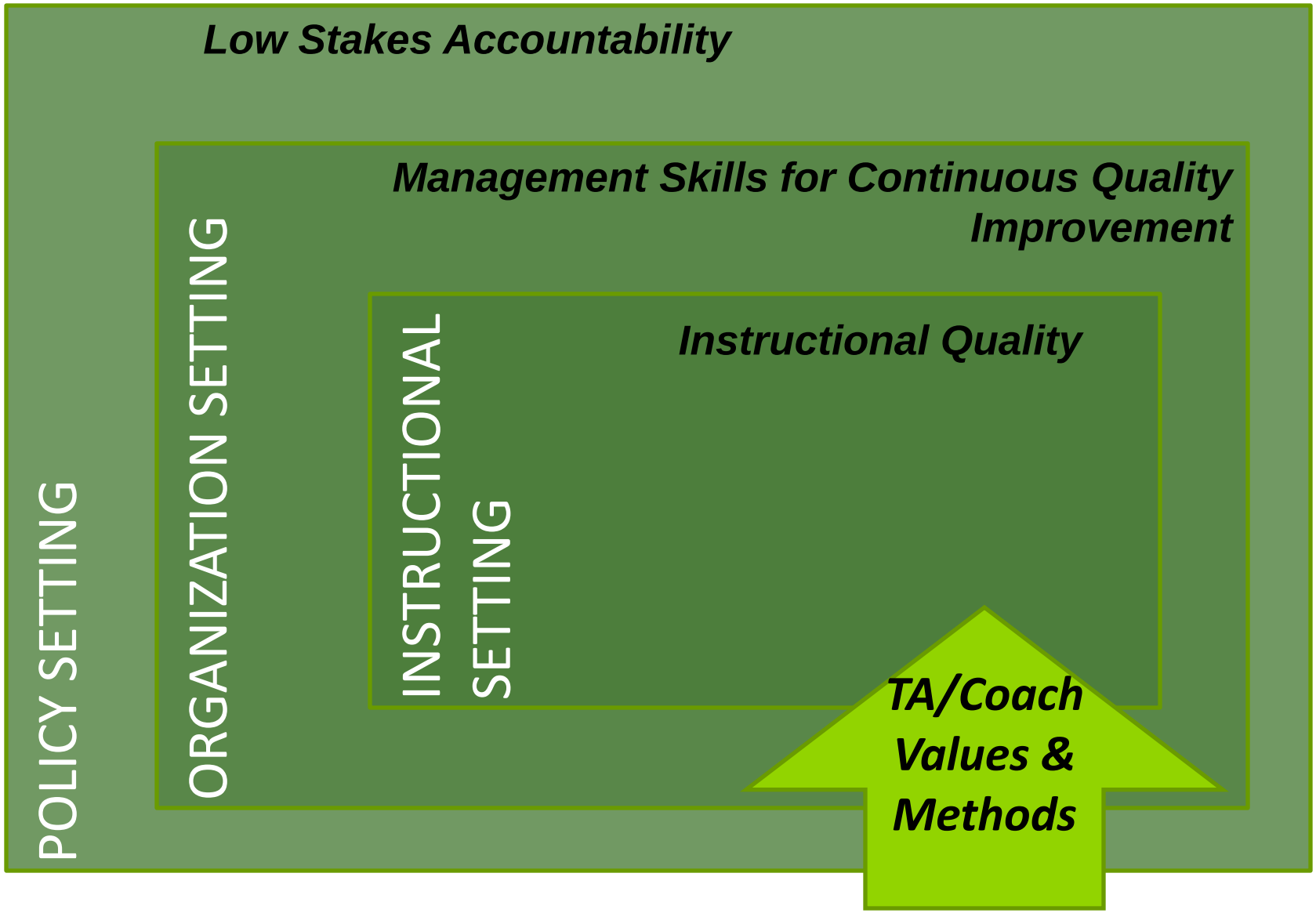
Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS



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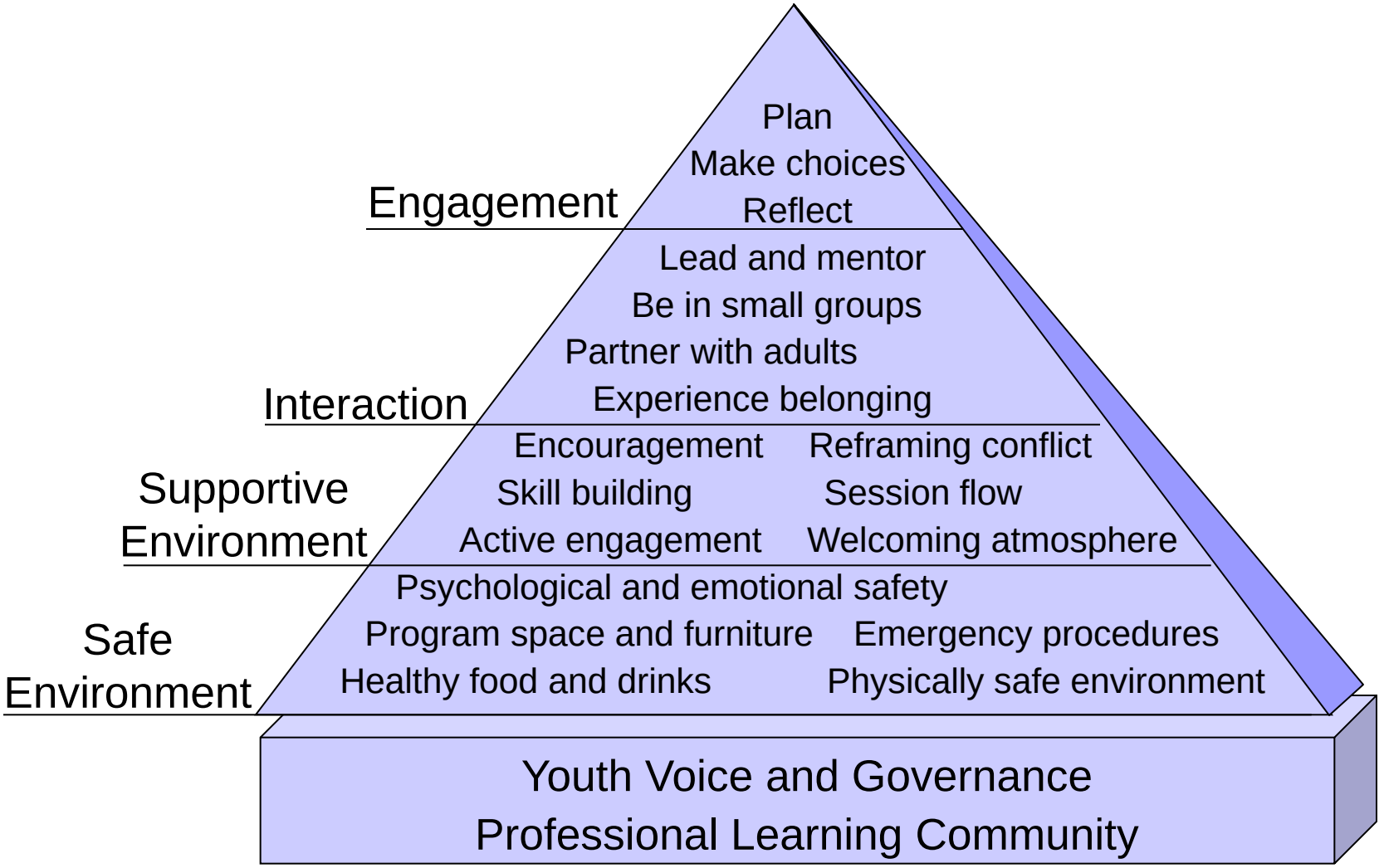
Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Instructional Quality [1]



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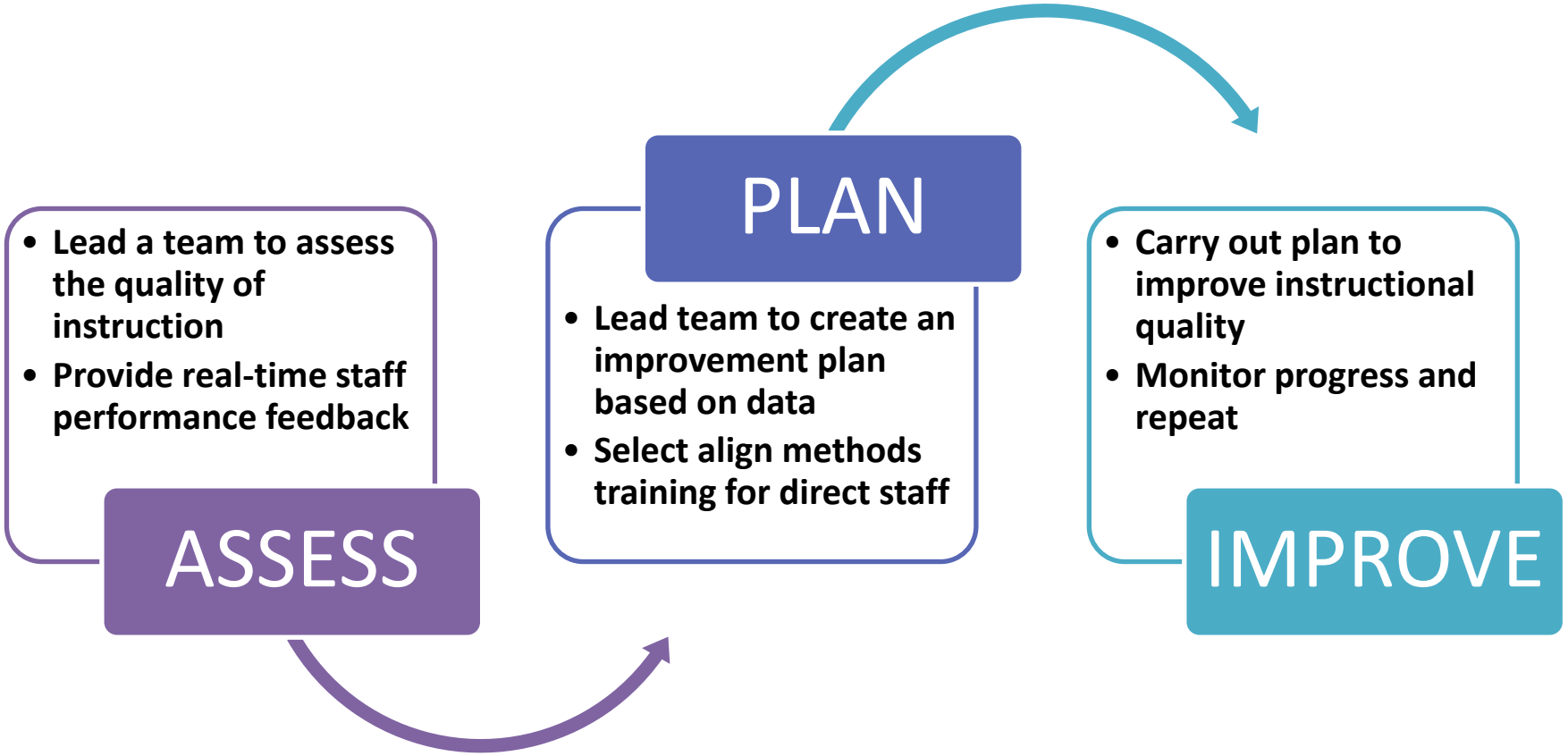
Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Management Skills for CQI [2]



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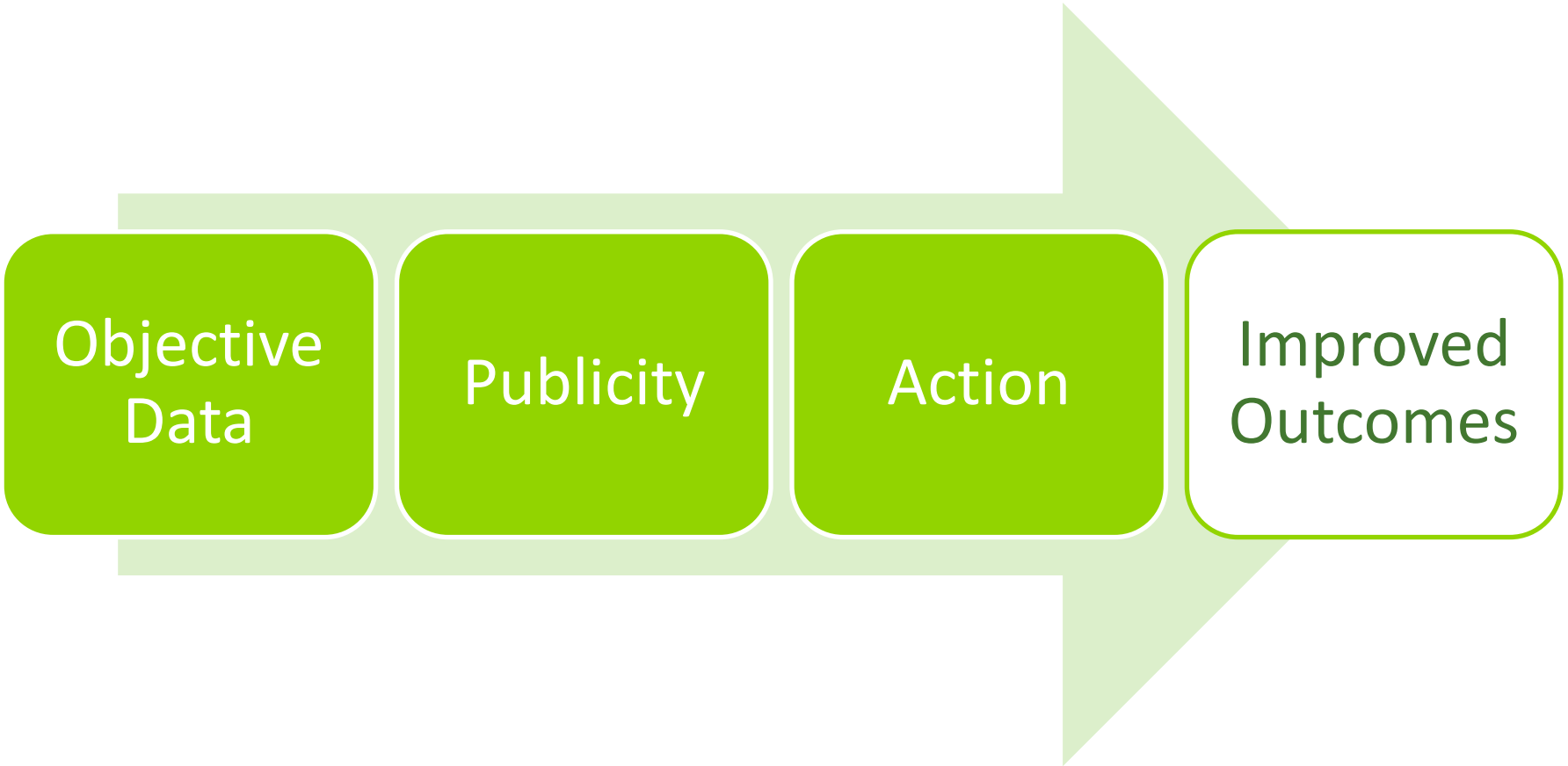
Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

High Stakes Accountability Policy



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Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Low Stakes Accountability Policy for CQI [3]

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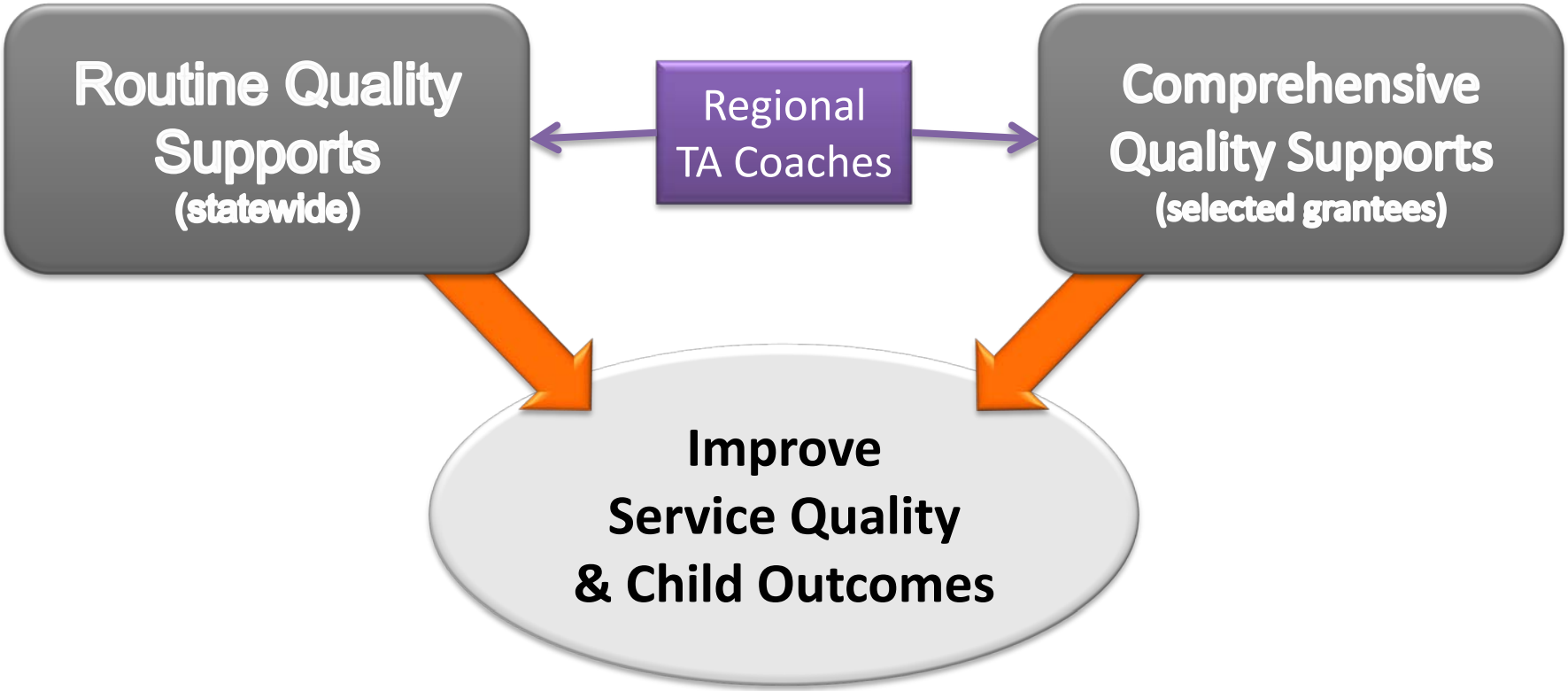
TACSS Project Model in Detail [4,5]

- 5-year project
- 5 FTEs (1 manager, 3 TA/Coaches, 1 support staff)
- 2 PTEs (



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The TACSS Model 2009 - 2010

Routine vs. Comprehensive Supports

Routine

- Statewide - 47 Grantees and 340 Sites
- Annual quality improvement requirements: self-assessment and improvement planning
- Regional trainings based on validated continuous quality improvement intervention
  - Quality Assessment
  - Planning with Data
  - Quality Coaching
  - Youth Work Methods

Comprehensive

- Selected Grantees – 22 Grantees and 115 Sites in 2009
- Assigned TA/Coach
- Required TA-plan rooted in comprehensive data profile (Leading Indicators, Youth PQA assessment)
- Peer Mentor assigned for Project Director

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The TACSS Model

Referral for Comprehensive Supports

- Grantees are referred into the process by MDE for additional support and training
  - Due to status as a new grantee
  - Due to red flags resulting from on-site monitoring visits or other data sources

- Grantees opt into the process on their own due to their interest in access to TACSS resources (if slots are available

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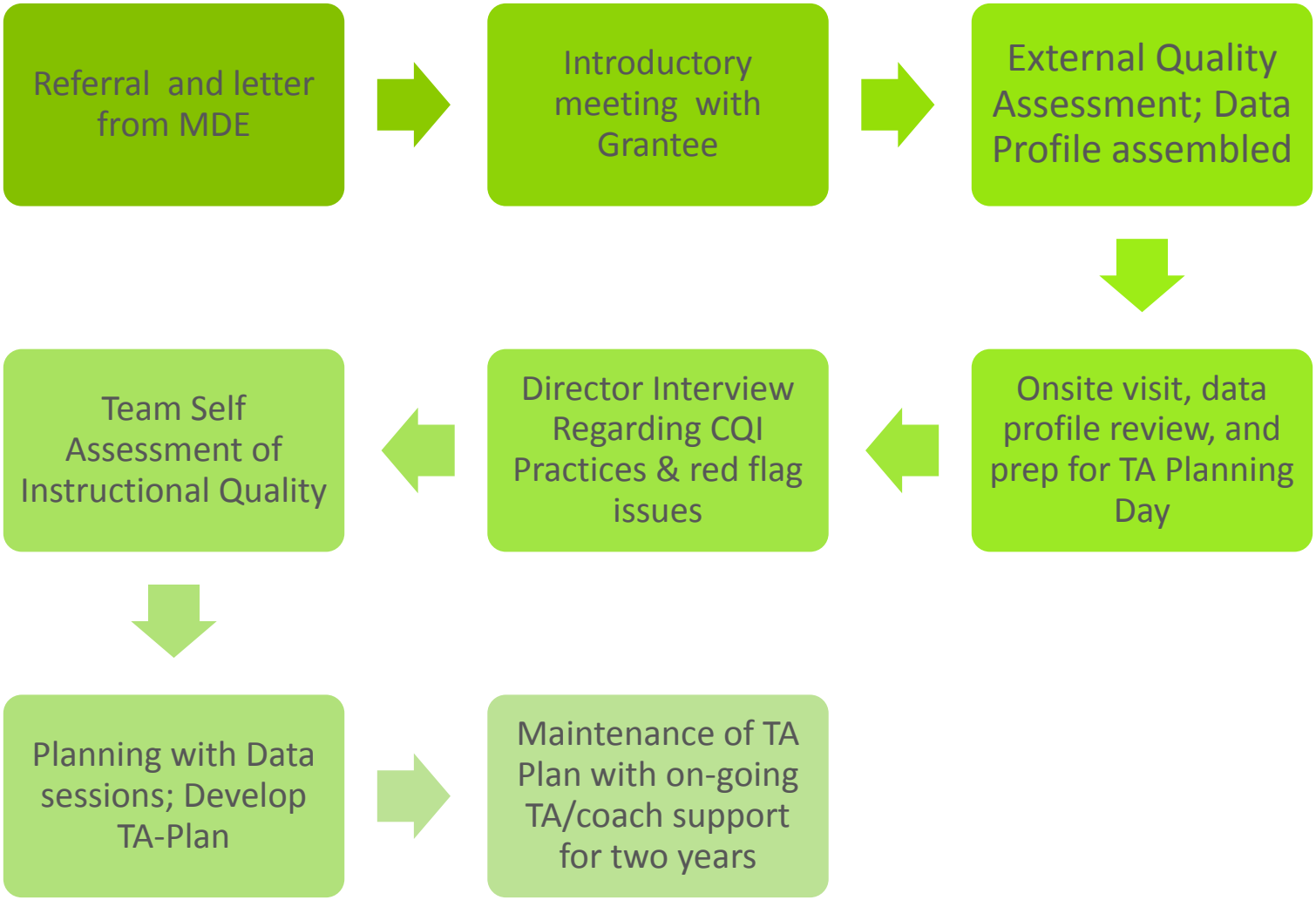
The TACSS Model

Comprehensive Support Sequence



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The TACSS Model

Comprehensive Supports are Flexible and Responsive

- HIGH INTENSITY SITE
- Total hours from TA/Coach over 9 months = 118.75 hours
- Supports provided:
  - Acclimating a new Project Director to afterschool
  - 21st CCLC Grant Overview (understanding the grant)
  - Budget compliance
  - Best practices for hiring and staffing the program
  - Effective team management
  - School district and union issues around staffing
  - Understanding vendor and partnership relationships
  - Training for Conflict Resolution

- LOW INTENSITY SITE
- Total hours from TA/Coach over 9 months = 35.25 hours
- Supports provided:
  - Professional development for staff related to program goals/outcomes
  - Support program self-assessment
  - Support continuation grant /renewal
  - Align Michigan grade level content standards with enrichment activities
  - Site visits to provide quality coaching

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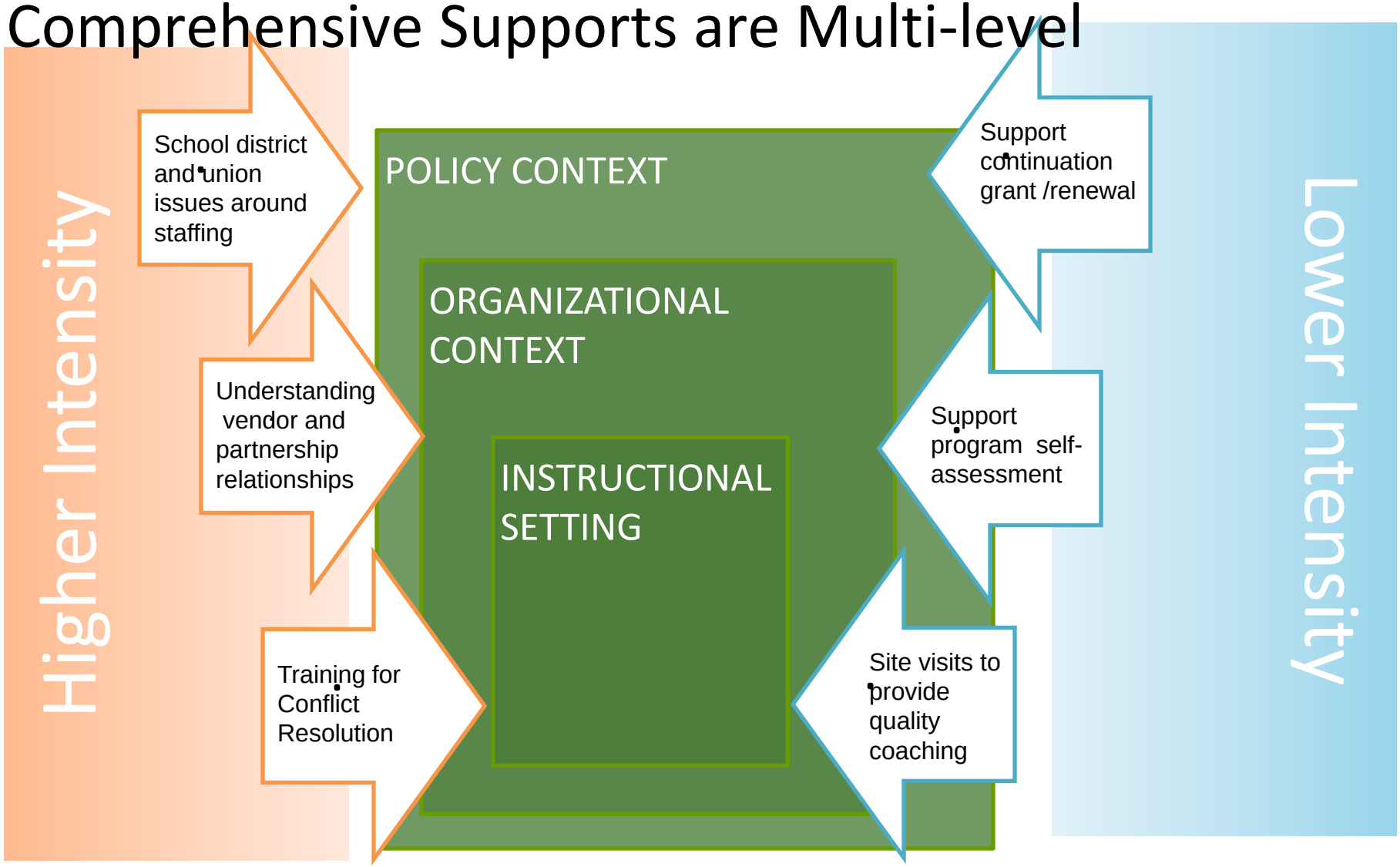
The TACSS Model

Comprehensive Supports are Multi-level



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Performance

Supports, Feedback, and Financials

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Year 1 – Pilot Year

- One Grantee was selected based on MDE recommendation
- Four Program Sites (2 Middle School and High School sites)
- TA supports = Coach and Mentor
- Training supports = YPQA Basics, Planning with Data, Quality Coaching and YWM
- Received 9 months of TA and Coaching services

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Year 2 Performance (4 quarters) [5]

- Total Number of Grantees served = 43
- New and Comprehensive Grantees= 22
- Non- Comprehensive 21st CCLC Grantees = 21
- Total Number of Grantees completing Self Assessment= 46 (100%)
- Total number of contacts = 1,253
- Total Number of trainings = 51
- Total Number of Participants Trained = 1,651
- Total Number of Sites completing Self Assessment= 320 (100%)

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Year 2 Feedback

TACSS Customer Satisfaction Survey Results*	
Survey Item	Result
Did your site assemble a team to complete the self-assessment process?	72% YES (N=22)
How many staff hours did your program use to score the Youth PQA?	•3-10 hours: 68% •21 or more hours: 13.6%
Given the demands of your job, was the Youth PQA self-assessment process a good use of your time?	100% YES (N=22)
Given the demands of your job, was the program improvement plan a good use of your time?	100% YES (N=12)
As a result of participating in the Youth Work Methods workshops did you meet the goals of your improvement plan?	Somewhat: 46% Very Much: 53% (N=16)

* TACSS Customer Satisfaction data collected via Survey Monkey online survey service. The current customer satisfaction survey is still open.

MSU Evaluation Survey	
Please rate how useful you found TACSS Coaching and TA Services:	•Very useful: 77% •Somewhat useful: 17% (N=35 project directors)

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Year 2: Key Financials

TACSS Grant	
Year 1 Amount	~ $400,000
Percentage (%) of MI 21st CCLC Annual Funding	< 1%
Average cost per Grantee (n=46 Grantees)	~ $8,700
Average cost per Site (n=340 Sites)	~ $1,175

TACSS Intensive Coaching Services*	
Average value: Low Intensity Coaching Engagement	~ $2,000
Average value: High Intensity Coaching Engagement	~ $6,500

* Intensive Coaching Services beyond routine quality improvement (YPQI) services available to all Grantees/Sites. Value estimates based on coaching/consulting hours delivered by TACSS Coaches.

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Improving the System in Year 3

- Deepen the coaching and TA supports for comprehensive sites, improve efficiency of routine supports
- High school committee:
  - Working with state organizations and conferences to provide High School focused professional development opportunities
  - High School learning community (program site visits)
- Develop or enhance three professional development tracks aligned with MDE program goals for Grantees:
  - Management Development
  - Academic Enrichment and Embedded Learning
  - Maximizing Community Resources and Partnerships

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Improving the System in Year 3

- Reduced caseload per a Coach – reduced the number of Comprehensive Grantees *from* **22** *to* **18**
- Streamlined our service model for all Grantees
  - Reduced the number of regional trainings but increased the capacity for each training
  - Reorganized training locations based on Grantee needs and geographical settings
  - Created a Basic TA structure for the Comprehensive Grantees (125 hours of Coaching, Site based Training, Learning Communities and Mentoring)
  - Streamlined and increased communication between MDE, MSU and TACSS

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Data Driving the System

Leading Indicators Reports

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Data Driving the System

Profiles of Leading Indicators (and Instructional Quality)

- Measurement Purposes
  - Evaluate change at the system, grantee, and site levels
  - Supply high leverage profiles for comprehensive sites
- Measurement Characteristics
  - Balanced mix of outcome and performance metrics/indicators
  - On demand availability
  - Easily disaggregated from system to site
  - Performance measures are:
    - Real time
    - Rooted in behavior
    - Respond to intervention

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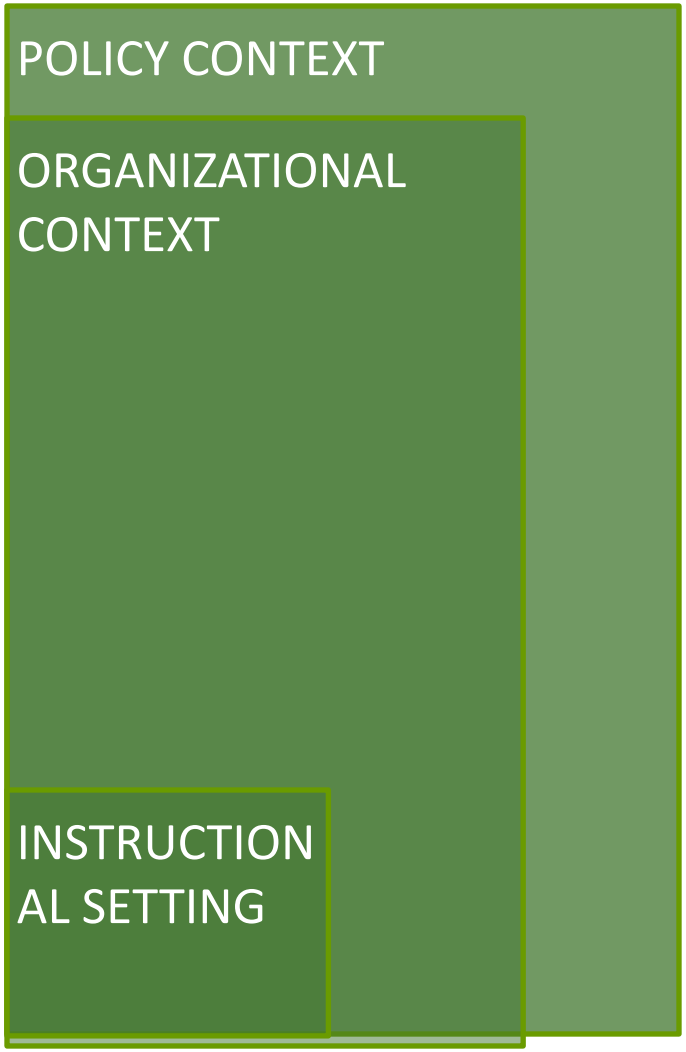
Data Driving the System
Leading Indicators (toward a Balanced Score Card)

- Grantee Management
- Continuous Improvement and Evaluation
- Staff stability
- Site Management
- Staff Experience/Training
- Family Involvement
- Positive Relationships
- Enrollment/Retention

- Academic Press
- Enrichment Access
- Instructional Quality



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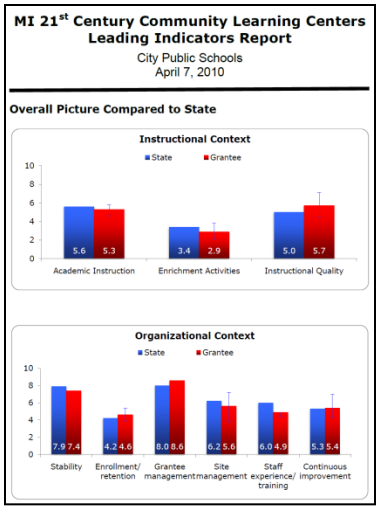
Data Driving the System

From Leading Indicators to Program Improvement

Grantee Profile



MI 21st Century Community Learning Centers Leading Indicators Report

City Public Schools
April 7, 2010

Overall Picture Compared to State

Instructional Context

State Grantee

	State	Grantee
Academic Instruction	5.6	5.3
Enrichment Activities	3.4	2.9
Instructional Quality	5.0	5.7

Organizational Context

State Grantee

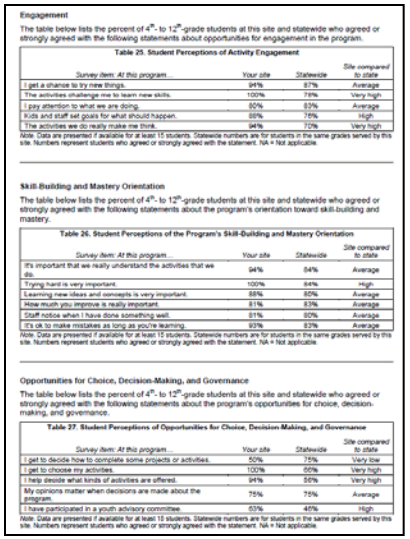
	State	Grantee
Stability	7.9	7.4
Enrollment/ retention	4.2	4.6
Grantee management	8.0	8.6
Site management	6.2	5.6
Staff experience/ training	6.0	4.9
Continuous improvement	5.3	5.4

Site Profiles

Instructional Context

	MI	Org	Sites 1	2	3	4	5
Academic Instruction	**5.6**	**5.3**	**5.2**	**5.8**	**5.6**	**4.6**	**5.1**
Connection to school[b]	74%	80%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Formal policy for connecting with teachers[b]	12%	0%	No	No	No	No	No
Full-time Site Coordinator[b]	63%	100%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Academic activity participation[c]	81%	70%	67%	89%	82%	45%	76%
Provision of homework help[c]	43%	63%	67%	89%	71%	36%	60%
Provision of academic enrichment[c]	53%	47%	51%	12%	78%	33%	68%
Provision of tutoring[c]	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Academics is top priority[d]	86%	77%	60%	70%	50%	100%	67%
Certified teachers provide academic support[c]	42%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student reports of academic support quality[f]	53%	59%	50%	81%	50%	27%	88%

Site Detail



Engagement

The table below lists the percent of 4th- to 12th-grade students at this site and statewide who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about opportunities for engagement in the program.

Table 25. Student Perceptions of Activity Engagement

Survey item: At this program...	Your site	Statewide	Site compared to state
I get a chance to try new things.	94%	87%	Average
The activities challenge me to learn new skills.	100%	78%	Very high
I pay attention to what we are doing.	80%	83%	Average
Kids and staff set goals for what should happen.	88%	78%	High
The activities we do really make me think.	94%	70%	Very high

Note. Data are presented if available for at least 15 students. Statewide numbers are for students in the same grades served by this site. Numbers represent students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. NA = Not applicable.

Skill-Building and Mastery Orientation

The table below lists the percent of 4th- to 12th-grade students at this site and statewide who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about the program's orientation toward skill-building and mastery.

Table 26. Student Perceptions of the Program's Skill-Building and Mastery Orientation

Survey item: At this program...	Your site	Statewide	Site compared to state
It's important that we really understand the activities that we do.	94%	84%	Average
Trying hard is very important.	100%	94%	High
Learning new ideas and concepts is very important.	88%	80%	Average
How much you improve is really important.	81%	83%	Average
Staff notice when I have done something well.	81%	80%	Average
It's ok to make mistakes as long as you're learning.	93%	83%	Average

Note. Data are presented if available for at least 15 students. Statewide numbers are for students in the same grades served by this site. Numbers represent students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. NA = Not applicable.

Opportunities for Choice, Decision-Making, and Governance

The table below lists the percent of 4th- to 12th-grade students at this site and statewide who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about the program's opportunities for choice, decision-making, and governance.

Table 27. Student Perceptions of Opportunities for Choice, Decision-Making, and Governance

Survey item: At this program...	Your site	Statewide	Site compared to state
I get to decide how to complete some projects or activities.	50%	75%	Very low
I get to choose my activities.	100%	66%	Very high
I help decide what kinds of activities are offered.	94%	66%	Very high
My opinions matter when decisions are made about the program.	75%	75%	Average
I have participated in a youth advisory committee.	63%	40%	High

Note. Data are presented if available for at least 15 students. Statewide numbers are for students in the same grades served by this site. Numbers represent students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. NA = Not applicable.

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Site Profiles

			Site					
	MI	Org	1	2	3	4	5	6
Site Program Management	**5.8**	**7.0**	**3.6**	**9.7**	**7.7**	**5.6**	**4.8**	**6.0**
Site Coordinators provide effective support to staff[d]	50%	66%	17%	100%	100%	20%	80%	33%
Effective staff meetings[d]	79%	94%	80%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%
Staff are part of decision-making process[d]	29%	47%	0%	86%	60%	20%	20%	0%
Site Coordinators refer to state standards when designing the program[e]	54%	54%	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Site Coordinators are familiar with grant objectives[e]	87%	92%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

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TA Planning Timeline

- **Intro meeting (PD) - NEW ONLY**
  - What is TACSS?
  - Training Services and Calendar
  - Introduction to Mentor if they have one.
  - Relationship building and general troubleshooting
- **Coaching Session 1 (PD)**
  - Site visits and reflection conversation
  - Introduce TA Binder
- **Coaching Session 2 (PD)**
  - Site visits and reflection conversation
  - Form B/Program Assessment of Grantee structure
- **Coaching session 3 (PD & LE)**
  - Site visits and reflection conversation
  - Compare scores on Form B, highlight themes
  - Leading indicator overview
- **Pre Planning Day (PD & LE)**
  - Recap of leading indicators and Form B results
  - Review/ Discussion of Improvement plans 2010
  - Empowering PD to co-facilitate Planning Day
- **Planning Day (PD, SC & LE)**
  - On-site meeting with all grantee stakeholders to complete Priority Assessment Form.
  - Create goals, strategies, activities, and benchmarks tied to people and timeframes.
- **Planning Day Follow Up (PD)**
  - Allocate TA Coach resources

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TA Planning Timeline

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Intro Meeting		■	■									
Coaching 1			■	■								
Coaching 2				■	■							
Coaching 3					■	■						
Pre Planning Day						■	■					
Planning Day							■					
Post Planning Day								■				
Self Assessment (Trainings, Observations, Scoring Meetings				■	■	■						
External Assessment						■	■					
Planning With Data							■					
Improvement Plans						■	■					
Program Improvement								■	■	■	■	■
Annual Report Form					■	■	■					
Data Reporting to Statewide Evaluator							■	■	■	■	■	■

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Stories from the Field

Christine Benecke

Youth First Program Director

Saginaw Community Foundation

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Summary

TACSS Coaching Principles

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II: Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Coaching Values & Methods

- Strengths Based

- Compliance and continuous improvement are different and ALL programs, higher and lower quality, struggle to do both

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II: Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Coaching Values & Methods

- Strengths Based
- Balanced

- TA/coaches must build relationships and be advocates for their programs while maintaining priorities of the policy/funder

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II: Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Coaching Values & Methods

- Strengths Based
- Balanced
- Purpose Driven

- Instructional quality and adult-child relationships should always be in focus as ultimate purposes

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II: Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Coaching Values & Methods

- Strengths Based
- Balanced
- Purpose Driven
- Reform Oriented

- Team based, Data driven, Context dependent, On-going

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II: Important Concepts Underpinning TACSS

Coaching Values & Methods

- Strengths Based
- Balanced
- Purpose Driven
- Reform Oriented
- Aligned

- Policies and administrators must be on board

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Reflection

- On one index card, write one thing you learned.
- On another index card, write one question you still have.

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References

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5. Garner, A. (2010) "TACSS Project Update." Presentation to Michigan's 21st CCLC Advisory Committee. June 2010. Lansing, MI.

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Case Study Brief #2
January 2010

The Michigan Technical Assistance and Coaching Support Services (TACSS) Initiative

Background

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the state fiduciary for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funding, has worked with the Weikart Center since 2003 to improve instructional quality in Michigan afterschool programs. Since 2004, MDE has required 21st CCLC grantees to conduct self-assessments using the Youth Program Quality Assessment (Youth PQA). The TACSS Initiative was developed to support grantees across the full range of needs for technical assistance related to continuous quality improvement.

Intervention Design

In 2009, MDE partnered with the Weikart Center to provide increased professional development offerings for all grantees and intensive training, coaching, and technical assistance (TA) for a subset of referred grantees. These services are provided by regional TA/Coaches, hired by the Weikart Center. The TACSS initiative was developed as a scalable quality improvement intervention, drawing heavily on the national Head Start program's technical assistance model.[1]

The initiative aims to grow a culture of performance accountability and an infrastructure for continuous quality improvement and sustainable change in Michigan's 21st CCLC program. By providing resources at the grantee level, the TACSS team supports Project Directors to align those resources and develop improvement plans targeting academic and developmental outcomes for young people. One main purpose of TACSS is to extend the reach of MDE's support for grantees so that issues of quality and compliance can be identified and addressed without sanction. The TA/Coaches maintain live online service logs that are accessible to MDE consultants, and are in regular communication with MDE consultants.

This brief describes the four components of the initiative: annual quality support services, intensive training and technical assistance (T&TA) planning, individualized training and coaching, and leading indicators.

Annual Quality Support Services

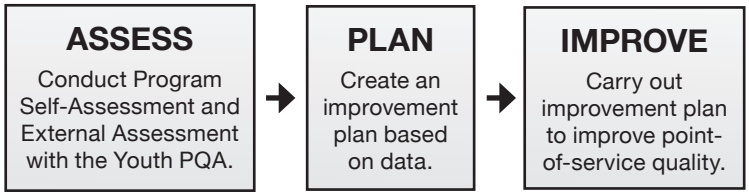
TA/Coaches provide key training supports for the experimentally validated Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)[2] on a regional basis to all 21st CCLC staff and vendors throughout the state. TA/Coaches also help MDE plan and execute

[1] Rosenberg, L., Derr, M. Boller, K., Hallgren, K., Hawkinson, L., Marton, K., & Dadgar, M. (2006). *Meeting Head Start and Early Head Start Grantee Needs for Training and Technical Assistance: Final Report of the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Quality Assurance Study.* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.

[2] The Youth Program Quality Intervention is a research-validated process for improving program quality. Training supports include Youth PQA Basics (live or online), Planning with Data, External Assessment, and Quality Coaching for site management and aligned Youth Work Methods for instructional staff.

annual Kick-off events and present at afterschool conferences throughout the year.

The Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)



Grantee Intensive T&TA Planning

TA/Coaches work intensively with a smaller set of referred grantees for a period of two years, developing detailed quality improvement plans using data from various sources, including Youth PQA,[3] attendance[4] and parent, youth and teacher surveys.

Individualized TA and Coaching

TA/Coaches provide on-site, on-line and regional supports to carry out T&TA plans, provide coaching and resource referrals for sites and individuals, and help connect new and struggling grantees with experienced project director "mentors". All Michigan 21st CCLC grantees are eligible and welcome to participate in the regional trainings provided throughout the state. MDE referred seven grantees for these supports in the pilot year, as well as all newly funded grantees. Upon learning about the initiative, several other grantees requested to be involved.

> ***"The TACSS Initiative is an outstanding program that will hopefully serve as a national model for all out-of-school time programs."***

Leading Indicators

The Weikart Center has worked closely with MDE and Michigan State University, the state evaluator for the 21st CCLC grant, to develop grantee-level Leading Indicators to track progress over time in the areas of organizational operation, instructional quality and youth development. These indicators are comprised of multiple weighted measures and data profiles are available on demand at the state, grantee and site levels of aggregation. They highlight components endorsed by the 21st Century Statewide Advisory Committee as representative of high-quality programs, particularly of programs that promote academic success. TA/Coaches use these to inform and model data-driven planning procedures for referred grantees and provide strategic support throughout the actual planning process. Evaluators at Michigan State University will use the indicators to evaluate performance of the overall TACSS initiative.

Progress So Far

TA/Coaches were hired in June of 2009. The TACSS team received training in the Weikart Center's YPQI content, and also worked closely with MDE and other experienced Project Directors around the state to develop the Project Director Resource Guide, available to grantees on a flash drive. The TA/Coaches worked with MDE to coordinate that year's Kick-off event, as well as the Orientation for new grantees. At each event, they presented information about the TACSS initiative and met with their assigned grantees. By December 2009, 22 out of 90 grantees (representing 115 of 340 sites) were receiving intensive T&TA support from a TA/coach. In the first six months of the 2009-2010 21st CCLC program year, the TACSS team conducted 27 trainings (live and online) with more than 900 attendees.

Next Steps

The Weikart Center expects to have the online training platform launched by fall of 2010, and is developing a cadre of afterschool professionals to serve as mentors for programs around the state. The TACSS team looks forward to working with MDE as they continue to develop additional resources to support grantees around the state.

[3] The Youth PQA is a research-validated instrument designed to assess point of service quality in out-of-school time programs. It is both an evaluation and a learning tool: robust enough for research and high stakes accountability, and user-friendly enough for program self-assessment. For validation information see Smith, C., & Hohmann, C. (2005). *Full findings from the Youth PQA Validation Study.* Ypsilanti: High/Scope Press.

[4] EZReports is the software utilized by Michigan's 21st Century Community Learning Centers to track youth attendance and participation.