Module E – Prioritizing Root Cause and Selecting Solutions

Trainer’s Manual
Module D: Getting to Root Cause

Length of Training: 6 hours

Training Objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able:
  o Define the research surrounding research-based root cause
  o Develop deeper understanding of root cause
  o Re-examine root causes
  o Define solutions of root causes

Training Materials
  • Powerpoint
  • Handouts:
    o Analyzing Data Worksheet
    o Mapping Root-Cause Worksheet
    o Compounding Factors
    o Article Distribution
  • Newsprint and markers
**Introductions, overview of agenda, review objectives, and outline common rules of operation.**

Introduce trainers and the background of each trainer. Allow participants to introduce themselves to the group, this includes name, organization, and responsibilities.

Provide an overview of day by walking team through agenda. It is important to review objectives – walk team through objectives. Once objectives have been reviewed outline common rules of operation. These common rules serve as a contract of how we will converse with each other about disproportionality issues, which will involve talking about race/ethnicity. Write common rules on newsprint. Finally, create a parking lot for those topics that may be a tangent during a specific segment of the training but is relevant to return to at some point during the training.

**Time Allotment:** 15 minutes

**Materials:** Powerpoint

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**Slide 2**

**Trainer’s Segue:** The following slide is a recap of knowledge gained from Modules A-D. The questions conjure a discussion from the team and get them to start prioritizing root cause and selecting solutions.

**Disproportionality Quiz**
- What is disproportionality? How is it calculated?
- How does disproportionality occur in our school buildings?
- What is our community context? Who lives in our community?
- How do our schools accommodate to shifting demographics?
- What do we know about our policies, practices, and beliefs? What is the evidence of our PPB?
- How do we address racial/ethnic and linguistic disproportionality in special education?

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**Module E - Part I: Research on Disproportionality Root Causes**

Part I of this module engages teams in discussing what they gathered from Module C. This includes giving teams an opportunity to articulate their own process of analyzing the articles and looking for patterns in congruence with school policy and their beliefs. Teams
make connections between PPBs around disproportionality.

Instructions: Ask individuals to share their new learnings from the Module C, as well as other things they have considered since the last training. Encourage discussion amongst team members – ask probing questions such as: Why did that resonate for you? How do your beliefs along with the data collection help in framing the picture.

Part I: Research on Disproportionality Root Causes

Slide 4

Activity I: Break the team up into small groups to do the Analysis Worksheet. The worksheet will look at Programs/Practices, its evidence and asking critical questions around PPBs. Initiate a discussion around some of the PPBs regarding minority students. The fourth column will be used to takes notes, write questions and comments.

Trainer’s Segue: Emphasize that school policies are not necessarily coherent with school practices and sometimes beliefs plays a vital role on decisions that impact achievement outcomes and its trajectory of all children and specifically Black and Latino students. An important concept to pose is how does our belief affect student outcomes? How does policy and practices affect students in your school?

When the group resume, use the newsprint to capture a Gallery Walk of their findings and discuss the next steps of getting to root cause.

(Time Allotment: 5-10 minutes)

Root Cause Articles

What did the article state about disproportionality root causes?
What is not clear?
What does it add or further clarify about your root cause story?

Large Group Exercise

Slide 5
Part II: Connecting Race, Ethnicity, Language, and Culture to Disproportionality

Part II: Getting to Root Cause: Developing the Disproportionality Story

Part II of the module involves having teams look at patterns and associations from the Evidence Chart and how it relates to factors that are streamlined in their school and community system.

Activity II: Use the Mapping Root Cause activity sheet to probe some questions around PPBs. It will initiate discussion around the next three slides regarding how some of the factors involving the education of students infiltrate each other. For example: How does instructional staff capacity contributes to instructional factors in the learning process of students? And does the school organization reach out to the community? How does it effect the students in your school? Have the group describe what that story looks like and how does it benefit the students?

Disproportionality Research:

- **What is the role of cultural relevance?**
  - Higher rates and significant levels of disproportionality is found in school districts with predominantly White, middle class teachers (Gay, 1999).
  - Cultural relevance must operate across school arenas (i.e., instruction, administration, curriculum, staffing, etc.).
  - The lack of cultural relevance in one school setting has implications across all arenas (Gay, 1999).

Why is culture relevant in school environments?

Relevance of Culture in Education

- Schooling process operates on cultural nuances (e.g., agriculture calendar, giving teacher an apple, speaking up in class, calling teacher by last name).
- Culture of “others” has historically not been acknowledged in the schooling process and resulted in differential outcomes (Banks, 1987, 2001; Delphit, 1993; Sleeter, 1987).
Module D: Getting to Root Cause

Trainer’s Segue: Use the notes from the Gallery Walk to initiate a discussion around their findings and hypothesize what new knowledge gained from its outcomes. Have to group create several statements regarding PPBs and how the students in their school learn or achieve and in what capacity?

Culturally Responsive Environments
- Using culture and experiences of Latino, African American, Asian American, Native American, and White Americans not part of mainstream culture as a scaffold to learning (Gay, 2004).
- Instruction involves matching knowledge of particular groups with learning environment.

Part III: Naming Root Causes of Disproportionality

Part III of this module involves closely looking at the root causes of disproportionality according to what we have learned from the research. We will be able to quantify the Gallery Walk discussions using the Education Factors (Slide 8) by synthesizing the PPBs and Evidence.

Activity III: As a group exercise have the team read the Compounding Factors handout. After they have read the research, as a team start a discussion around what does the research say about PPBs and how do we know it? You do not have to find solutions but think critically about the PPB process and what the evidence tells us.
Module D: Getting to Root Cause

Building a Culturally Responsive Environment requires…
- Dialogues on race/ethnicity and culture.
- Caring as an active variable (Noddings, 1986; Valenzuela, 1999)
- Analyze school climate – who feels comfortable and safe? Who feels uncomfortable and unsafe?
- Continuously analyze student achievement data
- Professional Development on learning styles

Slide 15

Activity IV: As a group, have them list the Compounding Factors driven from the research and discuss

Slide 16

Trainer’s Segue: In the next slides, the team will select articles according to themes related to disproportionality issues in their region/district such as differentiated instruction and culturally responsive pedagogy, etc… wrapping up the training by discussing what we learned, what are some potential barriers, what’s next and complete the evaluation for this training.

Note: Remember to collect the evaluations and sign in sheets.

Slide 17

What are the real and available solutions?

Slide 18

Wrap-up Conversation
- Trainings meeting expectations
- Further areas of interest based on today’s training
- Potential barriers

Slide 19

Evaluate Training