Field Guide for Implementation of a Breakthrough Series Collaborative in Early Care and Education

Jen Agosti, Stephanie Doyle, Anne Douglass, and Lynne Mendes

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Culture of Continuous Learning Project

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Introduction

This Field Guide was developed as a practical toolkit for those individuals interested in leading a Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC)—a quality improvement methodology specifically designed to help bridge the gap between ***what we know*** and ***what we do***—to help early care and education (ECE) programs improve practice in any content area. It is intended for use by BSC Implementation Teams—the leaders and individuals or staff who plan to lead quality improvement efforts in ECE settings going forward.

While this Field Guide provides a brief review of many of the BSC fundamentals, it is intended to function primarily as an Implementation Guide for those who will be leading a BSC. It assumes that readers have a basic understanding of the BSC methodology and have already identified a content area that needs significant improvement and for which the BSC methodology has been identified as the best methodology for achieving those improvements. Further, it is neither a guide for improving social and emotional learning (SEL) practices in ECE nor a tutorial on the BSC methodology.

Specifically, this field guide shares how the BSC methodology has been used with ECE centers to support the effective testing and implementation of foundational, evidence-based SEL practices and strategies. However, the BSC methodology and implementation techniques outlined in this Field Guide may be applied to any content area or practices relevant to the ECE field (e.g., literacy, mathematics, anti-bias instruction, family engagement, health screenings, etc.). This Field Guide focuses on BSCs in center-based settings because it is informed primarily by the lessons learned from a BSC on social and emotional learning (SEL; BSC-SEL) implemented from 2016 to 2019 in those programs as part of the Culture of Continuous Learning project funded by the Office of

FIELD GUIDE AUDIENCE

The Field Guide has been written specifically for those staff members who will be leading BSCs in early care and education settings. While the examples and stories throughout illustrate a BSC focused on social and emotional learning (SEL), this guide is not specific only to that content area and the Guide can support BSC implementation in other content areas as well. This Field Guide assumes that readers have a basic understanding of the BSC methodology and have identified a content area that needs improvement and for which the BSC is the best method for achieving those improvements. Its primary purpose is to serve as an implementation guide for those who will be leading a BSC.

Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE). BSCs can also be implemented in other types of ECE settings, such as family child care networks.

Implementation Field Guide objectives

This Field Guide has six main sections:

1. **Key Elements of a BSC:** Deepen understanding of the key elements of a BSC. *What makes a BSC a BSC?*
2. **Centers in a BSC: How Do Centers Experience the Journey?** Anticipate what centers experience as they move through a BSC. *What do implementation teams look for to help them along the journey?*
3. **Core Competencies and Infrastructure:** Formalize the core competencies and infrastructure to implement and manage a BSC. *Who does what in a BSC and what skills do they need?*
4. **Key Activities:** Clearly identify the key activities of a BSC in order to prepare and lead them. *How do implementation teams MANAGE a BSC?*
5. **Getting to Culture Change—The Secret Sauce:** Understand how to lead a BSC in a way that facilitates a shared learning environment and fundamentally addresses culture change in ECE centers. *How do implementation teams LEAD and FACILITATE a BSC?*
6. **Early Lessons Learned about Leading Virtual BSCs:** Learn about some of the successes and challenges presented by leading a BSC virtually instead of in person.

While a BSC can never be described as a manualized curriculum or cookie cutter approach, this Field Guide aims to describe the why, what, and how of BSCs by operationalizing the BSC methodology for readers. See Figure 1 for an overview of what readers can expect will be detailed throughout the Field Guide

Figure 1. Topics covered in this Field Guide

Brief history of the BSC methodology and introduction to the BSC-SEL Theory of Change

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) methodology (Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2003) was first developed and used in the health care sector in the mid-1990s by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and Associates in Process Improvement. It was brought into child welfare in 2000 and introduced to the field of ECE around 2012. BSCs have been implemented in center-based ECE settings, school-based preschools, and within a family child care network (Arbour et al., 2016; Bromer et al., 2020; Douglass, Chickerella, & Maroney, 2021; Douglass, Halle, & Tout, 2020). This methodology is based on the premise that those who are closest to the work—in this case, early childhood center directors, educators, and family members—know best what changes will lead to improvement and what it takes to implement those changes. The methodology also recognizes that those closest to the work learn by doing rather than sitting and listening to others. Thus, the BSC methodology focuses on building knowledge about how to improve quality by drawing upon tools and strategies from the fields of process improvement and implementation science. It recognizes the key roles of social and relational dynamics of change to ensure that implementation efforts are effective and sustainable. Participating sites that are working towards achieving a common goal share what they learn from testing changes in their organizations with other sites through a facilitated year-long shared learning environment. This accelerates the pace of change because organizations can borrow new ideas, learn from challenges, and are motivated by the shared goal. And the BSC honors the fact that organizational culture change is often needed to support desired changes in practice—a testament to the proverbial "culture eats strategy for breakfast".[a]

As part of the Culture of Continuous Learning (CCL) project, a Theory of Change was developed to describe how the BSC methodology would ultimately help ECE centers implement improved SEL practices. The Theory of Change suggested that creating and nurturing a culture of continuous learning among participants (a cornerstone of the BSC methodology) would be critical to help centers embrace and implement sustainable practices. This culture of learning is consistent across ECE BSCs, regardless of the content area that is the focus of improvement. Figure 2 is the visual representation of the BSC-SEL Theory of Change and shows how the BSC methodology is thought to achieve results, moving from the key elements of the BSC (Strategies) to the activities (Outputs) to the rationale for how these things bring about change (Mechanisms) in Short-Term Outcomes, Long-Term Outcomes, and Impacts for staff, children, and families. Although this Theory of Change was developed specifically for the BSC-SEL, we believe that it is universal in describing how BSCs function in ECE settings. The short- and long-term outcomes and impacts will vary based on the content area that is the focus of improvement, but the strategy, outputs, and mechanisms will be constant since these are the aspects of a BSC that support centers in achieving outcomes. An expanded overview of the Theory of Change can be found in the OPRE report *The Culture of Continuous Learning Project Theory of Change* (Douglass, Halle, & Tout, 2019).

a. The phrase, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," is often attributed to Peter Drucker, an author and management consultant. The phrase is meant to imply that the culture of an organization determines the success of an initiative regardless of the strategic thinking and efforts that went into designing the initiative.

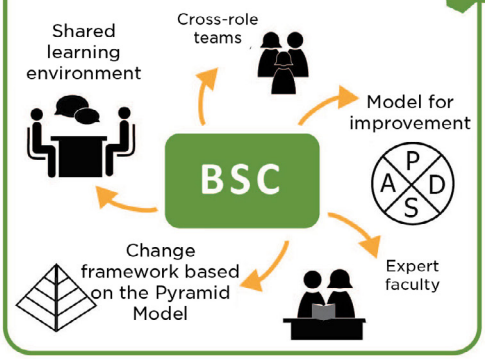
Figure 2. Theory of Change

THEORY OF CHANGE

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) to improve Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in ECE programs

STRATEGY

The BSC on SEL



OUTPUTS

The BSC produces these outputs:

- Learning sessions, monthly metrics,
- Action periods (calls, website posting, PDSAs),
- Consulation with teams.

These outputs establish new structures and work processes for teams

Structures that support relationships (routines for collaborative professional learning: team and affinity group meetings)

Work processes/routines (adoption of protocols for collaborative learning and improvement: organizational self-assessment; PDSAs to test changes and adaptations in practices in the local context)

MECHANISMS

The Strategy and its Outputs activate these mechanisms:

- Shifts in the relational dynamics within and among organizational members,
- Shifts in participants' mindsets about changing their professional practices

Relational dynamics within organizations

- Psychological safety
- Team member efficacy
- Parallel process
- Intra-organizational learning

Relational dynamics among organizations

- Inter-organizational (vicarious) learning

Mindsets

- Inquiry mindset

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

- Increased knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes about SEL, family engagement, racial equity and cultural responsiveness, and how to make and sustain improvements
- Improved organizational climate and culture
- Stronger leadership at all levels of the organization
- Increased sense of individual and collective efficacy

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Supportive relationships and environments
- High-quality SEL teaching practices
- Strong family partnerships
- SEL practices rooted in racial equity and cultural responsiveness
- Organizaional capacity to support continuous learning for improvment

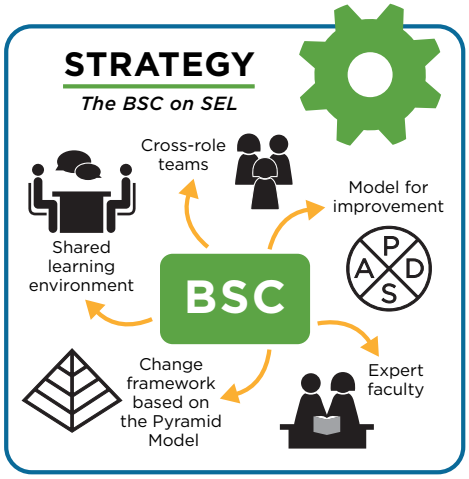
IMPACT

- Improved SEL quality in classrooms and program wide
- Increase in children's social and emotional competence
- Decrease in challenging behaviors

Source: Douglass, Halle & Tout (2019).

Culture of Continuous Learning Project

1. Key Elements of a BSC: What Makes a BSC a BSC?



The Key Elements of a BSC are the characteristics that set it apart from other quality improvement and implementation science approaches. All five of these elements are essential, as the interplay among them is how a BSC achieves the results that it does. While each element is an excellent strategy on its own and can be used alone, using the five strategies *together in combination* makes the approach a true BSC, regardless of topic or content area.

The cross-role teams in the centers include two important aspects. First, the work in a BSC is done by a team at each site. The teams typically include 4 to 7 individuals who are expected to work together closely over the entire period of the BSC as they set priorities; test, learn, and adapt ideas; review their progress; and have honest conversations about what is working and what needs to be changed. They should be teams that are cross-role, meaning teams that include multiple perspectives, various experiences, and all levels of positional leadership in the center. For example, the teams in a BSC in ECE should include the senior leader who is most often the center or program director, program managers or day-to-day managers in larger programs, several teachers, and at least one family representative who has a child enrolled or recently enrolled at the center. Teams are encouraged to consider race/ethnicity, gender, age, and language diversity when building their team. For the BSC-SEL, this allowed all those who had a stake in the SEL teaching of children to have an authentic and meaningful seat at the table. Moreover, these teams created endless opportunities for each team member to test their own changes, realize their own leadership abilities and capacity, and play an active role in the overall improvements. Working as a team in this way is not easy, but with intentionality and purpose, the cross-role team approach ensures that all voices are part of the solutions. For clarity and to distinguish these cross-role teams from the BSC Implementation Team, the cross-role teams are referred to as "centers" throughout this guide.

By asking the **three questions in the Model for Improvement**, centers are continuously reminded to stay focused on their priorities; to use data to assess their progress in real-time; and to test different practices and strategies, drawn from evidence-based practices, to make change. The way centers are able to do this quickly is by using the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process—another classic continuous quality improvement (CQI) method by which changes are initially tested on a very small scale to gather evidence that they might work and to refine the idea. During the PDSA process, staff increase their confidence in the usefulness and effectiveness of the strategy, expand and enlarge the tests to different conditions, and spread the now-accepted practices more broadly as the new practice moves to becoming standard practice. This helps ensure the change is applicable, appropriate, and effective across diverse settings and situations. Further, when a small test

The **Model for Improvement** is the core of continuous quality improvement (CQI) in a BSC. This model is rooted in **three simple questions** that guide not only the work of each individual center but of the BSC as a whole:

What are we trying to accomplish?

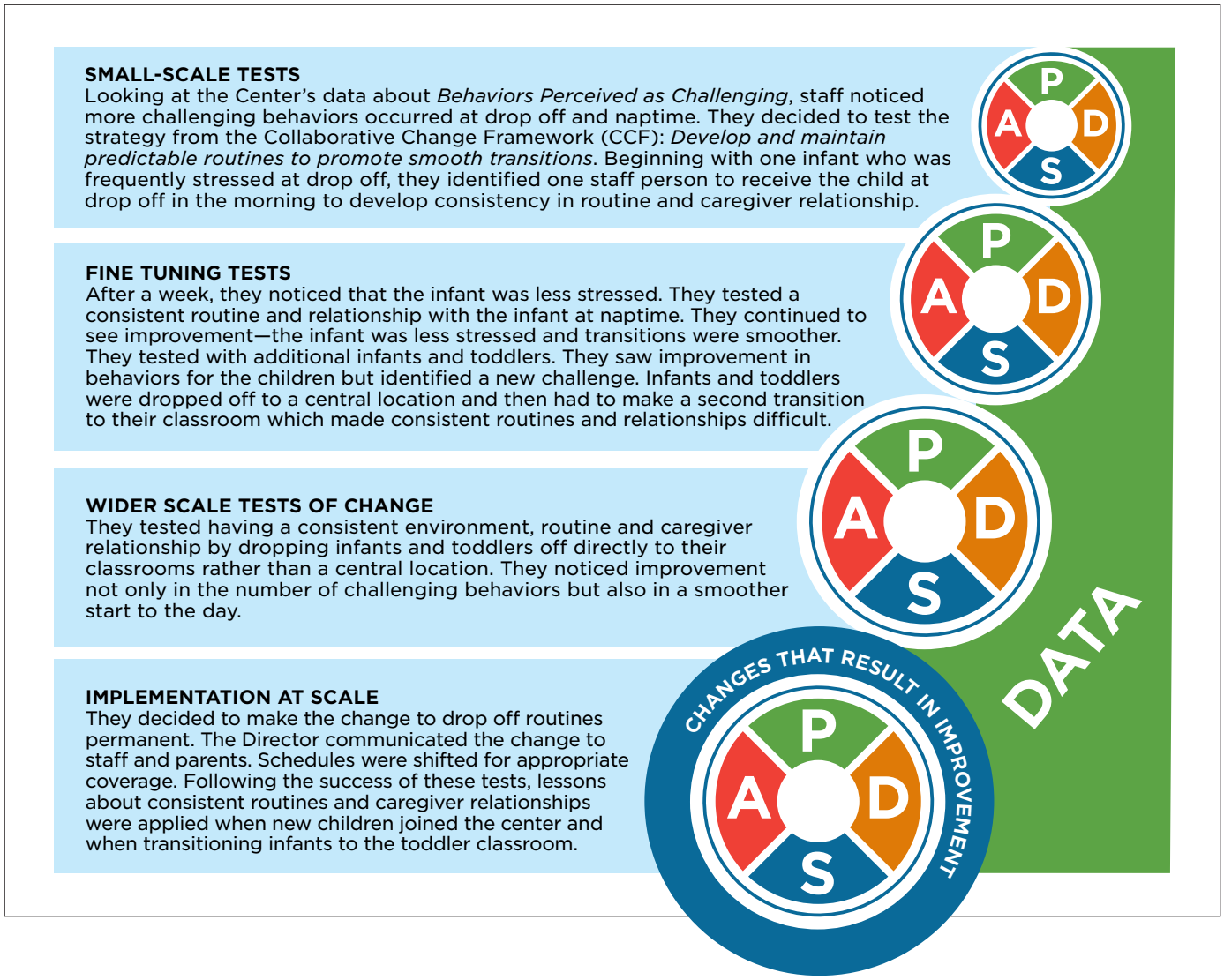
How will we know changes are improvements?

What strategies can we test that will result in improvements?

A **Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)** cycle is a continuous quality improvement process that Core BSC teams use to test and make improvements. A single PDSA cycle involves planning to test a small change, conducting the work to make the change, studying the effects of the change, and acting on what was learned (by adjusting what was done, abandoning the test, or scaling up the change).

of a new practice does not go as planned, centers have the option to adjust it or abandon it entirely, which lowers the risk of implementing a change at large scale and embraces the critical learning that happens from "failure." Through the PDSA process, participants develop an inquiry mindset, which enables them to approach problems of practice with curiosity and an openness to learning. Building skills in the Model for Improvement takes time, effort, and patience for all participants in a BSC. Additionally, it is this process that helps centers implement practices, strategies, and tools that can be scaled up (moved from small tests to full classrooms and centers); spread (to other teachers, staff, programs, and centers); and ultimately sustained.

Figure 3. An example of repeated use of PDSA cycles—from small tests to sustainability.



Faculty Coaches are outside of the participating centers and reflect the same composition as the center teams (i.e., they have had experience as center directors, teachers, or parents); are diverse; have subject matter expertise in the content of the BSC (e.g., SEL practice) and its implementation; and play many roles within the BSC. Faculty coaches teach and lead sessions

on specific topics based on their own unique areas of expertise. They coach the centers by helping centers apply the content using the Model for Improvement and PDSAs, specifically. They advise the BSC Implementation Team, informing the development of in-person meeting agendas, conference calls, and centers' strengths and needs. They lead role-based affinity groups—cross-center groups with participants from different centers in similar roles (e.g., directors, teachers, parents) across centers share their successes and challenges. Faculty coaches also serve as champions for the work, thinking about how the successes and lessons learned can be scaled up, spread, and sustained beyond the centers participating in the BSC. The BSC Implementation Team works closely with these faculty coaches throughout the BSC in all of these various capacities.

Collaborative Change Framework (CCF) is the content anchor for all work that is done by centers in the BSC. It serves as a roadmap throughout the BSC that describes the need and opportunity for improving outcomes in ECE and the overarching aims or goals that the centers in the BSC seek to achieve through adopting evidence-based practices in ways that are ambitious, measurable, and achievable. The Collaborative Change Framework identifies the destination (a shared aim) and guides centers' assessment of their strengths and challenges, where they can improve, and what changes to test as well as tracking their progress over time. The driver diagram is part of the Collaborative Change Framework and describes what elements must change in an ECE center (primary drivers) and how those elements must change to achieve the aims of the BSC (secondary drivers). The Collaborative Change Framework also describes a set of metrics for centers to collect and examine on a weekly or monthly basis to identify opportunities for improvement, understand the problem, and track progress towards achieving the aims of the BSC. As an example, the full Collaborative Change Framework for the BSC-SEL can be found in Appendix B. It was developed by examining the research and practice guidance from the SEL curriculum/model implemented in the BSC and gathering the expertise of faculty coaches and practitioners in the field.

The **shared learning environment** is where a great deal of the magic happens as it provides the luxury of collegial support, brainstorming, validation, ideas, and accountability—something very few centers have the opportunity to take advantage of. Through regular conference calls focused on specific topics, affinity group calls, Learning Sessions (either in-person or virtual), and an interactive BSC web platform, the participants within and across centers develop relationships that help them think through challenges, share successful strategies, feel validated and respected for their hard work, and provide a level of peer accountability that inspires continued progress. This shared learning environment cultivates psychological safety that enables participants to contribute new ideas and share not only successes but failures that promote learning. This collaborative approach taps the power of intra- and inter-organizational learning and

Learning Sessions: Full-day or multi-day learning opportunities that bring together all members of all center-based teams for teaching, sharing, planning, and collaboration. There are typically three to four over the course of a BSC.

Interactive BSC web platform: There are a variety of platforms that can be used for BSCs, including Basecamp, SharePoint, Teams, Google, etc. The purpose is to allow for document sharing, posting, and threaded discussions.

accelerates the change process beyond what might be expected with individual center-specific technical assistance alone.

It is important to reiterate that although other quality improvement methods may enlist one or more of these five elements, *the BSC is unique in that it requires all five elements to be present* and to work together over a period of 12 to 18-months.

2. Centers in a BSC: How Do Centers Experience the Journey?

Before the Implementation Team can fully understand what they will do in a BSC and how they will be doing it, they should have a sense of what participating centers will experience over the course of the BSC. What does it look like for an actual center? There is a "typical" experience that we see in most BSCs for centers, and along with the mechanics and activities, there are also many strategies, techniques, and considerations upon which Implementation Teams can draw.

What we see in centers over time

Centers enter the BSC in a variety of ways—some overly confident and others overly humble. Some centers only want to talk about their strengths; others focus mostly on their challenges. Some centers have teams that have worked closely together for years, and others have been put together just for this BSC. What all this means for the Implementation Team is that they will be dealing with centers that are in entirely different places from the start. Regardless of where centers are initially, there still is a pattern that most BSCs follow as the BSC evolves over time.

The activities and content that form the basic structure of the BSC assumes that centers will learn and apply the various aspects of the methodology (CQI processes, implementation science, and the relational dynamics within and among centers) in a logical order. Figure 4 highlights what centers "typically" focus on during the key phases of the BSC as the Implementation Team helps them move through each activity and phase.

Figure 4. Central activities for each phase of a BSC from the perspective of the centers

Pre-Work

- Finalize membership and develop a sense of team
- Complete first self-assessment based on the Collaborative Change Framework
- Establish working priorities based on self-assessed strengths and challenges
- Develop a data collection plan for the BSC metrics and collect baseline data

Learning Session 1

- Meet and interact with participants from all centers, faculty, and the Implementation Team
- Experience team-building activities to further develop a sense of internal team
- Share strengths and challenges across centers and in affinity groups to develop collaboration across centers
- Focus in on specific drivers in the Collaborative Change Framework to identify strategies to test in priority areas
- Develop an Action Plan for Action Period 1

Action Period 1

- Test changes and strategies identified in the site Action Plan using PDSAs
- Participate in regular center team meetings to review progress and identify both opportunities and challenges
- Raise awareness about the work and its goals
- Participate on BSC calls (affinity groups and all-team) and the BSC web platform to share successes and learnings
- Collect, share, and use monthly metrics
- Receive feedback and coaching on PDSAs and data from faculty and the Implementation Team

Learning Session 2

- Deepen understanding of specific drivers in the Collaborative Change Framework
- Continue to share successes and lessons learned across centers, with centers sharing their PDSAs, metrics, and work
- Review, re-teach, and reinforce PDSAs, metrics, and how they work together for improvement
- Teach PDSA/improvement cycles, demonstrating how small tests of change move toward implementation
- Introduce strategies for bringing others on board and gaining buy-in beyond the core center team
- Develop Action Plans that include new PDSAs, expanding successful PDSAs, and bringing in others

Action Period 2

- Test changes and strategies identified in the center Action Plan using PDSAs
- Adjust, expand, and/or abandon PDSAs to begin moving successes toward implementation
- Participate in regular center team meetings to review progress and identify both opportunities and challenges
- Strategically bring others on board to expand the work
- Participate on BSC calls (affinity groups and all-team) and the BSC web platform to share successes and learnings
- Collect, share, and use monthly metrics to assess progress and make adjustments as needed
- Receive feedback and coaching on PDSAs, implementation, and data from faculty and the Implementation Team

Learning Session 3

- Continue to deepen understanding of specific drivers in the Collaborative Change Framework, with a focus on concrete strategies for improvement
- Continue to share successes and lessons learned across centers, with centers sharing their PDSAs, moves toward implementation, metrics, and bringing in others
- Review, re-teach, and reinforce implementation and spread, metrics, and how they work together for improvement
- Teach how to move from successful PDSAs and “bundles” of PDSAs to scale and speed
- Develop Action Plans that include new PDSAs, expanding successful PDSAs, and spreading and scaling “bundles” of PDSAs

Action Period 3

- Test changes and strategies identified in the center Action Plan using PDSAs
- Adjust, expand, and/or abandon PDSAs to continue moving successes toward implementation
- Use strategies to intentionally spread and scale up successes
- Participate in regular center team meetings to review progress and identify both opportunities and challenges
- Participate on BSC calls (affinity groups and all-team) and the BSC web platform to share successes and learnings
- Collect, share, and use monthly metrics to assess progress and make adjustments as needed
- Receive feedback and coaching on PDSAs, implementation, and data from faculty and the Implementation Team

Learning Session 4

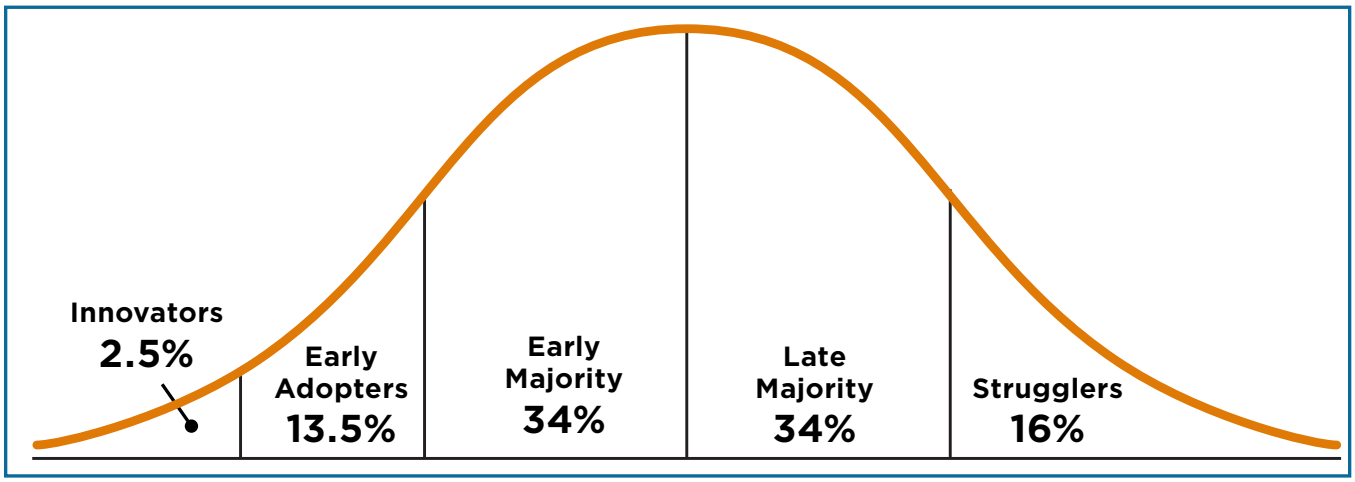
- Identify themes and successes across centers
- Celebrate and share successes and lessons learned across centers, with a focus on centers sharing
- Reinforce all CQI and implementation science concepts, with a focus on spread and scale
- Teach and model sustainability concepts, culture change, and organizational transformation
- Support centers in applying these concepts to their work
- Develop Action Plans that focus on sustainability, with continued attention to new PDSAs and continuous improvement

Important note

While the above is a description of the work of centers in a "typical" BSC, centers vary greatly in their ability to accomplish all the goals listed under each phase. Moreover, each BSC is different as each responds to the unique content, cultures, and compositions of center teams. Generally, one can expect to see most centers feel challenged to apply the Model for Improvement as they simultaneously work to deepen their understanding of the content as well as learn about other CQI methods and implementation concepts. Participating centers will fall along a continuum of engagement and success (see Figure 5).

The continuum is not a straight line—it mirrors the bell curve that describes the adoption of change by individuals. Thus, a small percentage of centers will likely be in the forefront as they leap into a BSC. These innovators ("Early Adopters") will be the BSC's champions of achievement. Around two-thirds of centers will fall around the middle ("Early Majority" and "Late Majority"), producing an average range of work in quantity, quality, or both. Another small percentage will seem to have a hard time making progress ("Late Adopters"), as the centers may struggle with their participation, implementation, and/or overall understanding of the work of the BSC. In the sections that follow, we share strategies and activities that the Implementation Team can use to support teams across the continuum.

Figure 5. Pattern of how centers are likely to fall along a continuum in their understanding of content and adopting BSC methods and implementation concepts



Source: Adapted from Everett M. Rogers, Diffusion of Innovations, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1963), p.247.

How this is reflected in the center self-assessments

Centers often enter a BSC feeling confident and excited, especially when they have applied to be a part of it. This confidence, followed by their increased openness to learning and reflection, is often seen in their center self-assessments. These are typically completed three times during the BSC: during the pre-work day or period, before the second Learning Session, and before or at the final Learning Session.

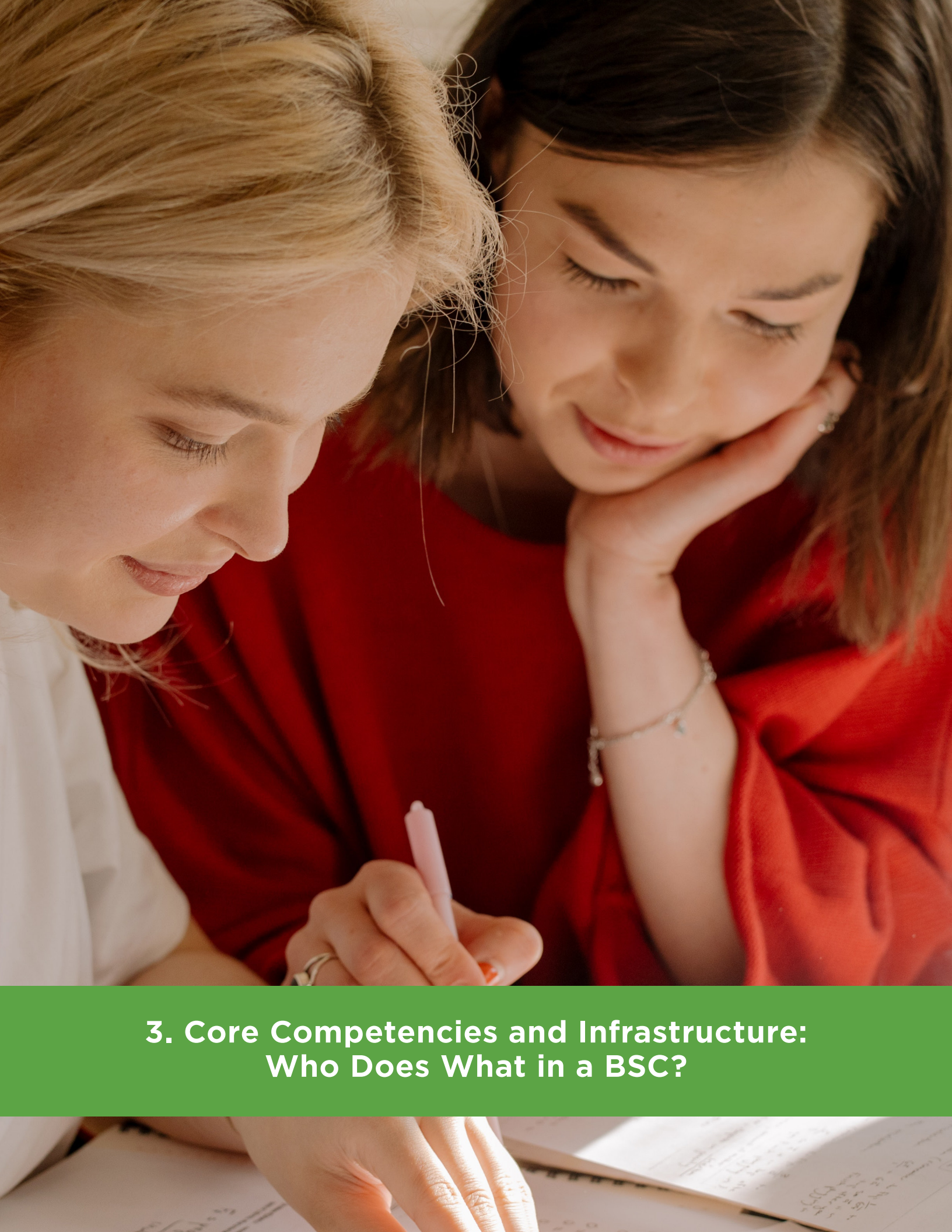
Centers' initial self-assessments often emphasize their strengths. (This can also be the result of entering the BSC with a more traditional "compliance mentality" in which centers are accustomed to putting their best foot forward for accreditation processes or reviews.) Ironically, as centers learn more deeply about the Collaborative Change Framework drivers and simultaneously develop trust within the shared learning environment and advance their inquiry mindset, their self-assessment scores around Learning Session 2 are often lower than their initial self-assessment (see Table 1). This is an important reminder to centers that their scores are not a reflection of their practices getting worse; rather, it is a sign of improvements in their understanding of each of the drivers and an authentic move toward an inquiry mindset. As centers continue testing and expanding successes over time, they often begin to see their self-assessments improve in the third and final assessment period. Below is an example of what a center's self-assessment might look like over time in a single driver from the BSC-SEL.

Table 1. Driver 3 from BSC-SEL Team Self-Assessment (hypothetical example)

Driver 3. Family partnership to promote children's social and emotional competencies	Learning Session 1 (LS1)	Learning Session 2 (LS2)	Learning Session 3 (LS3)
Open, consistent communication with families is used.	3	2	3
Parent participation in the classroom and center is invited and supported.	4	3	3

Driver 3. Family partnership to promote children's social and emotional competencies	Learning Session 1 (LS1)	Learning Session 2 (LS2)	Learning Session 3 (LS3)
Positive, respectful, meaningful, culturally affirming relationships with families are developed.	3	3	4
Families are connected to concrete supports in times of need.	4	4	4
Families are engaged as partners to support the parent-child relationship and the families' promotion of their child's social and emotional competencies.	3	2	3
Parent confidence/competence (parental resilience) is supported and promoted.	3.5	3.5	4

NOTE: The numbers and color coding reflect a center's self-assessment scores at three points (before or at each of three Learning Sessions). The lowest rating is a 1, indicating an area of significant need. The highest rating is a 4, indicating this is standard practice in the center.



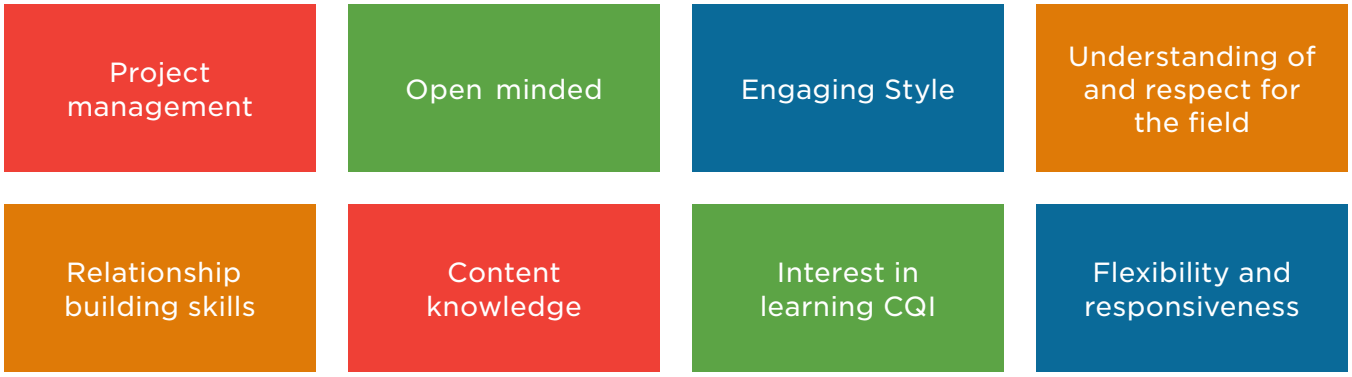
3. Core Competencies and Infrastructure: Who Does What in a BSC?

BSCs require a lot of planning and work (as evidenced by this guide!), so ensuring that the right Implementation Team is on board with defined roles and the right skills is essential. The Implementation Team is a made of three to six members who together plan, coordinate, and facilitate all BSC activities and provide support to the participating centers and their team members. Figure 6 distinguishes the different teams and groups that are referenced throughout this guide. Rather than focusing on specific job titles, which can vary significantly depending on BSC size, funding, organizational structure, and resource allocation, this section describes the competencies, skills, and responsibilities that are most important to understand and embody. The roles and competencies described in this section may be embodied by anywhere from three to six staff positions. The configuration will be highly dependent on a combination of skills and staff level allocations (e.g., whether these are full-time positions as opposed to part-time positions).

Figure 6. Teams and groups referenced in this guide

Overall, for BSC Implementation Teams to be most effective and successful, they need to have project management skills, an open mind, an engaging style, an understanding of and respect for the field, belief in the importance of relationship-building and solid skills in doing so, content knowledge, understanding of or willingness to learn CQI principles and concepts, and a high level of flexibility and responsiveness (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Key Skills for Implementation Team Members



In addition to these skills, at least one member of the Implementation Team should have experience in leading a BSC, either through prior experience or through certification through the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Breakthrough Series College. Because of the complexity of the methodology, this deep level of expertise is critical.

Implementation Team competencies

In addition to the skills described above, Implementation Team members need the additional competencies, though not every team member will have every skill, competency, role, or responsibility. Further, there are obviously more competencies listed below than there are Implementation Team members, so it is common for one member to have primary responsibility for several competencies. The checklist at the end of this section can be used to help ensure that, across all members of the Implementation Team, everything is covered!

BSC leadership

In the spirit of a BSC, leadership happens at every level within the BSC Implementation Team. Nevertheless, much like the participating centers, the Implementation Team needs its own senior leader. This individual (there should only be one senior leader) needs to be someone who has positional authority and responsibility over the BSC. The senior leader will provide support and resources to the rest of the Implementation Team, have ultimate decision-making authority over both content and process issues, reconcile differences of opinion that may arise over the course of the BSC; and serve as the "face" of the BSC.

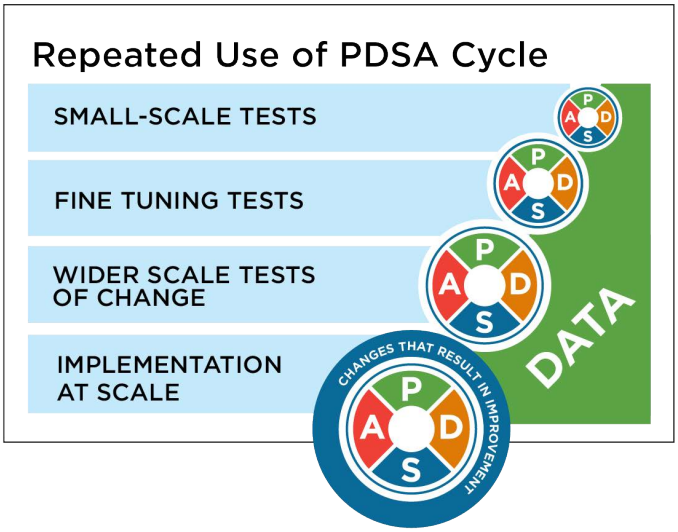
Content expertise

Someone on the Implementation Team needs to have a deep and meaningful understanding of the topic that is the focus for improvement within the BSC. In addition, Implementation Team members need to have a deep and meaningful understanding of racial justice and cultural responsiveness because of the well-documented racial, ethnic, and linguistic disparities that exist in early childhood. For example, if the topic that is the focus for improvement within the BSC is children's language development, someone on the Implementation Team should have deep content knowledge in language acquisition in young children with an equitable, culturally-responsive perspective (e.g., someone with knowledge of evidence-based practices that support the language development of children who are dual language learners). Ideally, this individual will have actually worked in the ECE field and have a respect for the content of the work in the context of ECE. This team member will work closely with the faculty coaches to convey content to the BSC centers, while the Implementation Team will help this individual translate best practices regarding the content into tests of change, improvements, and sustainable implementation.

Quality improvement/BSC methodology coaching

This role is often played by an external advisor (sometimes referred to as an Improvement Advisor) who is highly skilled in quality improvement processes, implementation science, and the BSC methodology overall. This person should have prior experience leading a BSC or have attended the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Breakthrough Series College noted above. This role is a key part of the Implementation Team as the expertise provided can help guide, shape, direct, and sometimes redirect agenda planning, calls, reviews of centers' work, coaching needs, data analysis, and the development of the BSC over time.

Figure 8. Illustration of repeatedly using PDSA cycles that result in improvement



Data capacity

Another key role for an Implementation Team member is an appreciation for and skills with data. In a BSC, this role is not particularly technical in terms of data analytics; instead, it requires someone who not only understands data, but who also specifically understands data-related issues within the context of ECE. This person needs to have credibility among center team members as someone who is knowledgeable about the content and context of ECE. Additionally, this person must have an understanding of what data are available for centers to collect, use, and share; how data are collected and tracked; limitations of current data collection and reporting, including from a diversity standpoint; and how the resulting information is used. Further, this team member needs strong relationship-building skills, as they will be providing coaching and consultation to the centers in an area that can often be confusing, challenging, and new for many centers. Over the course of the BSC, the data lead will help centers first understand what data needs to be collected. Then, this person will work with centers to develop a data collection plan that is minimally burdensome while collecting the most important data. Next, the data lead will provide ongoing support to ensure the centers actually collect the data as planned and are able to enter it in a clear and simple way. Once the data has been collected, this team member will analyze the data and provide easy-to-use, meaningful reports back to the centers, showing the trends over time. With these reports, the data lead will provide support to centers in interpreting, understanding, and using the data to inform their priorities and progress. This role requires a great deal of patience and a variety of skills working together simultaneously. As if this isn't enough, the Implementation Team will also be highly dependent on this role to continuously provide feedback and updates on progress to influence planning for the BSC overall.

Relationship management

While this skill is harder to describe as a specific role, it is an essential role in every BSC. Having a team member (or multiple team members) with strong existing relationships with centers is critical. Participating in a BSC requires significant time and resources for centers. The workload and expectations are high, participants are expected to learn and apply new concepts and skills in real time, and the pace is fast. Having an Implementation Team member who participants from the centers really know and trust can pay dividends in keeping participants engaged, active, and involved in the process. This person is constantly serving as a champion for the centers, knowing the context of the field, understanding their challenges and concerns, and being extremely responsive to their needs—all without "letting up" on the BSC expectations for participation.

Project management/coordination

This is often a single individual on the Implementation Team who essentially is responsible for making sure BSC implementation is unfolding as it should. There are so many tasks, activities, events, and expectations happening simultaneously that this person is typically the "guardian" of the overall BSC timeline and workplan. In fact, developing as detailed a workplan as possible up front with specific timeframes for calls, agenda planning, materials development, etc. is the first responsibility of the role. The timelines go far beyond the call schedule and Learning Sessions. The project manager/coordinator duties must include all of the planning, coordination, and outreach needed for those calls and Learning Sessions to go well. There are more details about these various logistics in Section 4, and the person responsible for project management and coordination should review that section regularly.

Family partner engagement specialist/liaison

One of the most important foundations of a BSC is that the changes are driven by those who are most impacted by them (i.e., the stakeholders). For BSCs conducted in ECE settings, this

means family representatives must be active and engaged members not only on the center teams but also on the faculty team, by having a faculty coach who specifically represents the family perspective. However, family members have their own jobs, lives, and families to care for that can often make participating in this kind of quality improvement initiative challenging. It may be difficult for family representatives to attend the centers' team meetings, BSC calls, and even the Learning Sessions, and family representatives may feel left out of the center teams since they are not in the center itself. There may be jargon that is used that everyone on the center team seems to know except for family representatives. They might feel as if they have less power or experience or expertise or voice. This is where having an Implementation Team member who is specifically responsible for serving as a liaison to family members is essential, regardless of the topic. This team member will do a great deal of relationship and trust building, consistently reinforcing the value of family members in this work. The family partner engagement specialist/liaison will do individual outreach to ensure family members are being actively and authentically engaged— continuously over the course of the BSC—and that their voices are being heard and valued. Liaisons will be "stewards" and champions for family engagement, ensuring that agendas, coaching, and consultation are always infused with this critical perspective as well. Overall, this Implementation Team member will keep the entire BSC infused with the values and expertise of authentic family partnership, all in close partnership with the faculty coach who brings this expertise as well.

Center communication

While all Implementation Team members will communicate with centers throughout the BSC, there needs to be intentionality about which team members will be communicating about what issues and when. Hearing multiple messages from various team members can be confusing for centers. Many BSCs designate a single point person on the Implementation Team who serves as the main point of contact for centers participating. This simplifies communication for the centers and allows for deeper relationship building with that Implementation Team member. With so many moving pieces (including logistics, scheduling, content needs, CQI questions, family engagement work, technology issues, changes within the center, data, etc.), allowing one Implementation Team member to triage these issues within the team allows for a streamlined and clear process in communicating with centers.

Center progress and coaching

Although the work of the BSC can sometimes seem to be mostly logistics and coordination because of the high frequency of contacts, providing coaching to centers is where the "real" work happens. Because this coaching is all connected to the improvements centers are testing, not only does it provide them with essential support, but it also provides invaluable information to inform the BSC—the content for calls, Learning Sessions, and resources related both to the aim of the BSC and to CQI processes. These coaching connections rely on the relationships the implementation team develops and deepens throughout the BSC. The coaching includes both verbal and written feedback in the form of calls, in-person meetings, responses on the web platform, and periodic written progress reports that synthesize a center's work. Implementation Team members and faculty coaches, however, should always be mindful of providing true coaching that is supportive and develops the centers' own internal capacity rather than providing training or more traditional technical assistance. Because the coaching will come from various people over the course of the BSC, including Implementation Team members and faculty coaches depending on the specific needs of the center, everyone must remember that the goal of

> *Make sure that all coaching is geared toward capacity and skill building for sites rather than just providing "training as usual."*

coaching is always to develop centers' knowledge, skills, processes, and confidence such that centers will become less reliant upon coaching over time.

Shared learning

It only makes sense to end where we began—with the shared learning environment. While everyone on the Implementation Team is continuously focused on nurturing this shared learning, someone may be designated as the lead to ensure that what is being learned is truly being shared. This may include discussions that happen on calls, tools that are developed, PDSAs that are posted, and even coaching experiences that have relevance beyond an individual center. One of the most important areas for which this competency is needed is the maintenance of the BSC web platform support to faculty coaches and centers to access and use it. The team member responsible for shared learning may need to curate resources, provide guidance for where information can be found, post engaging questions that inspire cross-team discussions, and even catalogue and/or index the resources, tools, and discussions for easier use. Some BSCs even develop a monthly or quarterly newsletter that is used to highlight the work of centers as well as share new postings and information. Newsletters can be a creative and fun way to share information and even include faculty members and center-based team members as "guest" contributors.

Although the actual staffing of Implementation Teams may vary greatly and may range in size (from three to six people, depending on how staff are allocated in the organization), the checklist below can help ensure that the critical roles are covered by whatever staffing is chosen. Additionally, some roles, such as Content Expertise and Team Progress and Coaching, may be filled by multiple Implementation Team members.

Checklist for core project competencies

Project Role	Who Has Primary Responsibility? (May be more than one team member)
☐ Content Expertise, including racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion	
☐ Quality Improvement/BSC Methodology Coaching	
☐ Data Capacity	
☐ Relationship Management	
☐ Project Management / Coordination	
☐ Family Partner Engagement Specialist / Liaison	
☐ Center Communication	
☐ Team Progress and Coaching	
☐ Shared Learning	

The overlap between these competencies is significant. They intersect in significant ways, and thus, they are not easily assigned as job titles or roles. Perhaps even more important is the way these Implementation Team roles all contribute to the progress of the individual centers and to the BSC overall. For example, as the Family Partner Engagement Specialist finds better

ways to engage family members within centers, this information can be shared by the Shared Learning lead with all centers by posting on the BSC web platform and sharing on affinity group calls.

Implementation Team support structures

In addition to clarity about the competencies, skills, and actual roles of Implementation Team members, a defined structure about how the team works together is also essential, especially when team members are not located in the same physical space. There is simply too much going on at the same time within BSCs to keep track of everything without somewhat formal systems.

Following is brief guidance about a general structure to help the Implementation Team stay in close contact, ensuring that the BSC is progressing in the way that was intended, with centers testing changes, collecting data, learning from one another, and moving along the continuum of improvement.

Meeting frequency

How often will the Implementation Team meet? We recommend one-hour weekly meetings to check in, review the timeline, ensure that all the competencies are being attended to, and identify any needs for centers or faculty coaches. The Implementation Team may consider 30-minute calls instead of an hour, but meeting length depends on how efficient the team is with logistics, content discussions, theme identification, and decision-making.

Agenda setting

How are the meeting agendas set? Is there a process by which all Implementation Team members send in their agenda items ahead of time with one person determining the priority level? Does the responsibility for the agenda rotate each week? With so much happening simultaneously, having an agenda for each Implementation Team meeting can help ensure that nothing falls off the radar and no one is inadvertently duplicating efforts.

Meeting facilitation

Who facilitates the calls? This type of planning is extremely helpful, for even though weekly one-hour meetings may sound like a lot, they go quickly when there is a lot to cover and meetings are highly participatory. Remember that the Implementation Team is addressing content and logistics on these calls must make many decisions. One hour (or a half hour) can fly by when the time and agenda aren't carefully managed.

Example: Two Months before a Learning Session

Activities the Implementation Team needs to discuss on the weekly call:

- Upcoming affinity group calls
- All-Team call
- Coaching centers on PDSAs and data collection
- Responding to center-based teams' questions
- Working with faculty coaches to plan content for Learning Session
- Logistics for Learning Session

Notetaking

Who takes notes during the call? Designating one person for each Implementation Team meeting (this role can rotate!) can be important, to ensure clarity about decisions, next steps, and overall documentation of the process. Consider using a standard format for notetaking so that the team can easily identify action steps, discussions, and decisions. These notes are critical not only for mapping to the workplan and planning logistics but also for bringing issues to the faculty, identifying needs for individual centers, and recognizing themes over time. Finally, having the notes in a systematic format will be helpful if there will be a final report for the centers, a final report that will be shared more broadly, or an evaluation of the BSC.

Tracking the workplan

Who tracks the workplan and timeline? As described in the section about project management, the BSC workplan and timeline are active, dynamic documents that are used and updated continuously. Someone on the team will want to review them at least once a week to ensure everything is staying on track and, perhaps more importantly, that when something needs to shift (it's guaranteed that things will!), other activities in the workplan and timeline are also shifted as needed. For instance, if an all-team call is scheduled for a holiday, it will not only need to be adjusted, but the team will also need to look at the affinity group calls scheduled around that time to ensure that center team members aren't being asked to be on two calls in one week. Then, the team will need to send an updated calendar invitation to teams and faculty coaches for this call far in advance, adjust the date on which the reminder notice is sent to teams, change when the planning for the call happens, update the date in the BSC web platform, and so on.

> *Someone on the Implementation Team needs to keep the workplan and timeline on their daily radar, with continuous check-ins for the rest of the team to stay on track and organized. The BSC logistics and scheduling often have a domino effect, such that changing one thing requires many other changes.*

Follow-up

Who follows up with action items? Beginning each week's meeting with updates from the previous week can be helpful, but there are other strategies as well, such as email threads, a Google doc connected directly to the weekly planning notes, or BSC web platform postings with a To-Do list. The Implementation Team should have a clear plan not only for who is responsible for following up with specific action steps but also for how the team will continuously keep each other up to date. The balance here is a delicate one as some items will naturally feed into the next week's planning and require discussion, while other updates can be shared in writing. For example, experiences from a recent center coaching experience or recommendations shared by a faculty coach may require discussion, but confirming logistics about a Learning Session such as room sizes or lunch options can easily be done via email. Clear follow-up structures help ensure balls aren't dropped, especially when there are so many balls in the air at the same time.

> *Avoid spending too much time doing updates on the weekly calls, as you will quickly run out of time. Focus the weekly calls on discussions, decisions, and action steps.*

Authority/responsibility

Who has authority/responsibility for key decisions? Believe it or not, this can be one of the trickiest parts for the Implementation Team. Because the team is comprised of so much diverse expertise and is working in partnership, identifying one person to hold the primary

responsibility for key decisions can feel awkward. But it is important, as there will be many decisions that need to be made based on the broad input and feedback that is invited over the course of the BSC. Some decisions will be about content and priorities, especially as the faculty coaches (who serve as advisors, not Implementation Team members) may have different perspectives about what the centers should focus on, and how, at any given time. Some decisions will be about the balance between time spent on content and time spent on CQI and implementation processes. Some decisions may be about logistics and how much time is reasonable and realistic for participants to be "away" from their centers at a Learning Session and what the best dates and times may be (e.g., daytime, weekend day, evenings, etc.). Make sure the Implementation Team is clear and transparent about who the right person is for each type of decision, how the decision will be made, and how feedback/input will be incorporated.

> *Ensure that the notes from the weekly meetings have a clear way to designate decisions that have been made and decisions that remain outstanding.*

Checklist for Implementation Team structure

Structure	Details
☐ How often does the Implementation Team meet?	
☐ Who sets the agenda and how is it set?	
☐ Who facilitates Implementation Team meetings?	
☐ Who takes notes and where are they saved?	
☐ Who tracks the workplan and timeline?	
☐ Who follows-up with items?	
☐ Who makes which key decisions?	
☐ Is everyone clear about who has authority over which decisions and how decisions will be made?	

4. Key Activities: How Does an Implementation Team Manage a BSC?

This section explores what a BSC looks like from the inside and is relevant to a BSC implemented in any field. Despite the temptation to jump directly into how a BSC works, the spirit of the BSC methodology is just as important. Because a BSC brings together continuous quality improvement, implementation science, and the relational dynamics of change, why an Implementation Team does things is just as important as how they are done.

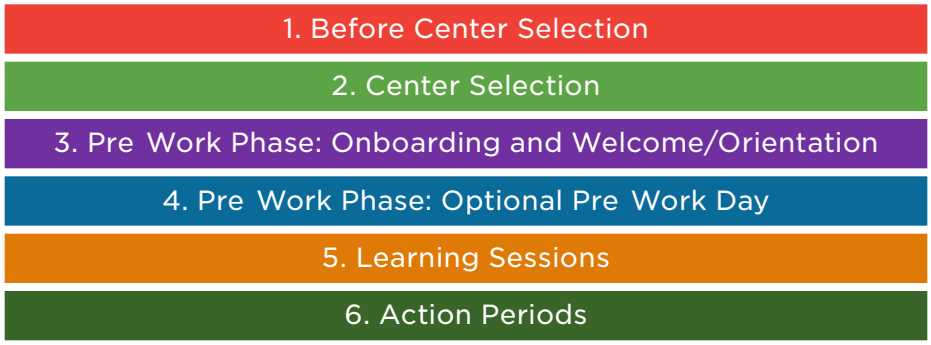
We always caution Implementation Teams to avoid simply using past agendas, following a previous workplan, or managing the BSC as if it is just a series of calls and meetings. At the core of the BSC methodology is responsiveness and adaptation. As the team thinks about the structures and processes they will need to have in place to manage the BSC, they should always use a slight variation of the three questions in the Model for Improvement to check their own processes: What are we trying to accomplish? How will we know things are working for participating centers? And what changes can we make to help centers progress better/faster/in more meaningful ways? The team might even consider asking these questions each week as they look at the workplan, where they are, and what's ahead to ensure they are always staying at least one step ahead of the centers and are anticipating what's coming next. Working with faculty coaches to develop habits around this is equally important.

Three Questions to Ask from the Model for Improvement

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know things are working for participating centers?
- What changes can we make to help centers progress better/faster/in more meaningful ways?

Figure 9 summarizes the key phases of a BSC. In this section, we describe the key activities that the team will want to be prepared for, including why they're important and what to do to be ready for them, in each phase of the BSC. Each of these activities and phases are described in detail. For the Implementation Team, they are simultaneously focused the current phase while also actively preparing for the next. An abbreviated checklist of these activities, by phase, can be found in Appendix C. All of these key activities begin after the Implementation Team, as described in the previous section, has been formed.

Figure 9. Key Phases of a BSC



As a parallel to child development and learning overall, centers' participation in a BSC follows a fairly standard developmental arc when it comes to developing their CQI knowledge and skills. These will be the skills, tools, and methods that teams will use to incorporate the content into their daily, consistent, high-quality practice in order to achieve the shared goal of the BSC. This is matched by the Learning Session development:

- The **optional pre-work day** introduces centers to the process and content.

- **Learning Session 1** begins to dive more deeply and introduces QI methods such as the Model for Improvement, PDSAs, and reflecting on their data.
- **Learning Session 2** helps move teams toward more complete implementation using PDSA cycles while exploring identified content areas in more nuanced ways.
- **Learning Session 3** introduces basic scaling up concepts to expand the successful tests and again address critical content areas.
- **Learning Session 4** takes a laser focus on sustainability to ensure there is buy-in at multiple levels and the tools, processes, and structures in place to sustain the successful practices over time.

Throughout the BSC, keep in mind where each center is relative to the overall objectives for each Learning Session along the continuum. Recognize that there will always be centers that seem to be progressing faster while other centers may seem to be struggling. Sometimes this pattern remains consistent over the course of the BSC, and sometimes it shifts over time. Below are the key objectives for each of the Learning Sessions of a BSC:

1. **Optional Pre-Work Day:** Orientation to the methodology, the Collaborative Change Framework, and the shared learning environment. Strong focus on relationship building within and across centers as well as with faculty coaches and the Implementation Team. Introduction to the Collaborative Change Framework through the completion of the Self-Assessment and data collection plan. (If no pre-work day is held, these are achieved throughout the pre-work phase through structured activities and assignments that the centers complete on their own and can access support from the Implementation Team.)
2. **Learning Session 1:** Exploration of the Collaborative Change Framework primary drivers. Introduction to the Model for Improvement and PDSAs. Cross-center affinity group time and intensive center team time to plan action steps in order to begin testing changes.
3. **Learning Session 2:** Deeper dive into identified Collaborative Change Framework primary drivers. Centers share their successes and challenges, and centers are encouraged to "steal shamelessly" from one another to accelerate the pace of their changes. PDSA cycles are discussed as small tests of change move toward more complete and robust implementation. Cross-center affinity groups share the leadership-champion roles they have assumed in testing their own PDSAs. Center teams identify action steps for new PDSAs as well as PDSAs they are ready to expand.
4. **Learning Session 3:** Centers play a more prominent role as faculty coaches become facilitators, rather than teachers, to support sharing and learning across centers. Content areas are explored in more nuanced ways with a focus on areas in which centers are struggling or avoiding. Concepts related to scaling up and spreading successes are discussed as centers begin to think about spreading and sustaining their work across their centers.
5. **Learning Session 4:** Content focused about sustainability at every level. Affinity groups talk about remaining champions and succession planning to bring in additional champions. Centers craft "elevator speeches" to message and share their work while increasing buy-in in their center. Centers also talk about strategies, tools, structures, policies, processes, and data that are needed to sustain this work overtime.

1. Activities before center selection

Before centers are even selected to participate in a BSC, there are four primary activities the Implementation Team will have to complete, as described below. These activities are typically conducted three to six months before centers are recruited and/or selected to participate.

Before Center Selection
• Development of Collaborative Change Framework • Development of Monthly Metrics • Development of Timeline and Workplan • Selection of Faculty Coaches

Implementation Team activity: development of Collaborative Change Framework

Why This Activity Matters: The Collaborative Change Framework, as described above, is the touchstone for the entire BSC. It explicitly and clearly articulates the mission and shared aim for the entire BSC, including clear answers to each of the three Model for Improvement questions: 1) What are we trying to accomplish [the mission and aim]? 2) How will we know our changes are improvements [the metrics]? And 3) what strategies can we test to result in improvements [the driver diagram]? The creation of a Collaborative Change Framework is typically done through an Expert Meeting process, in which experts who are "on the ground" and closest to the work (in an early childhood context, the typical "on the ground" experts are center directors, teachers, and parents) come together with experts from the topic area to determine what the aim of the BSC will be and what ideal practice should look like. (See the case study example in Box A.) All work done by centers during a BSC is anchored in this document.

> **Essential Note:** To achieve cultural change, we recommend that all Collaborative Change Frameworks address racial equity, cultural humility, and inclusion.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Identify the specific aims of the BSC (*what are we trying to improve?*) and the evidence-informed or experience-informed best practices in the content area that will accomplish the aim (*what changes will result in improvement?*).
- Adapt an existing Collaborative Change Framework to ensure it has a clear scope, mission, aim, and driver diagram that can effectively guide the work of participating centers. The Collaborative Change Framework should effectively communicate why this is an important issue to address and the opportunity for the BSC to do so, in order to ensure teams are committed and motivated.
- Convene an Expert Meeting, if necessary, to refine and finalize the Collaborative Change Framework, including the voices, perspective, and expertise of practitioners who will actually be doing the work, and families.

Box A. Case Study Example: Developing the BSC-SEL Collaborative Change Framework

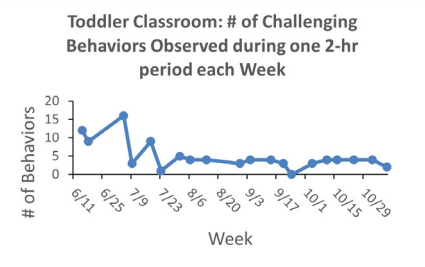
The Collaborative Change Framework development began with a thorough review of the Pyramid Model (the Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices that support social and emotional competence in young children). The BSC-SEL implementation team identified key elements and then mapped them to key "driver" areas. Additionally, the BSC-SEL implementation team reviewed Collaborative Change Frameworks from previous BSCs in ECE, as well as from child welfare, for structure and common foundational elements, such as family engagement, racial equity and cultural responsiveness, and organizational capacity. Based on these sources, the BSC-SEL Implementation Team drafted an initial version of the Collaborative Change Framework and simultaneously identified experts with varied perspectives of SEL and ECE, including center administrators, teachers, family members, ECE researchers and policymakers, and SEL trainers. At a tightly facilitated one-day Expert Meeting, this group deconstructed and provided concrete and specific recommendations that were used to revise and finalize the Collaborative Change Framework that was ultimately used in the BSC.

Implementation Team activity: development of monthly metrics

Why This Activity Matters: Centers can only answer the second question in the Model for Improvement "How will we know our changes are improvements?" if they are tracking metrics regularly. While this is often one of the most challenging aspects of a BSC for participating centers, tracking metrics is critically important as it forms the basis for all CQI, defined as an ongoing and cyclical process in which practitioners use data to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement, then test, implement, learn from, and revise solutions (National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement and Casey Family Programs, 2005). Previous studies in ECE settings suggest that having a dedicated staff person to collect the metrics increases the likelihood of consistent reporting and use of this information for quality improvement (Halle et al., 2021). Crafting metrics for a BSC needs to carefully balance what is realistic for centers to collect, what will be most meaningful for them in assessing their progress, and what data will be sensitive to the types of changes they will be testing over time. For instance, children's developmental growth is a critically important metric but may not always change over the period of a BSC. In the BSC-SEL, teams collected metrics tracking the percent of families with whom teachers had two-way communication in one week and the number of challenging behaviors observed in a two-hour period each week.

What is a "metric" in a BSC?

- Information or data that help centers see their progress related to each of the Collaborative Change Framework domains and aim
- Sensitive to real-time, monthly change
- For improvement, not compliance
- For the center, not for "the BSC"



Activities for the Implementation Team to Complete

- Using the Collaborative Change Framework, identify metrics that may serve as "proxies" for each of the drivers in the Driver Diagram and the overall aim of the BSC. Start by thinking of the ideal metrics, even if they might not be realistic.
- Use the brainstormed "ideal" list to talk with content experts and "on the ground" practioner experts to help determine what is realistic to track in the location the BSC will be conducted on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Test the collection of these metrics with a few faculty members or centers to ensure they are clearly defined, practical, and will be meaningful to participating centers. This will help to ensure that data collection tools and processes are clear and work. [Note: This step may also be done during the pre-work phase as sites are collecting their baseline data in order to help refine the metrics and data collection process at each center.]

Implementation Team activity: development of timeline and workplan

Why This Activity Matters: Once centers are selected to participate, work begins to happen very quickly with many pieces in motion simultaneously throughout the BSC. A clear timeline and workplan from the outset are essential to being able to plan for immediate needs as well as to anticipate the longer-term planning. The timeline and workplan will need to include not only the "big" events, such as Learning Sessions[b] and All-Team Calls with centers, affinity groups, faculty coaches, and the Implementation Team, but also the timelines for agenda planning and material development for each of these events, data collection and reporting timeframes, and individual team outreach and support activities. Individual center support should also be included, such as opportunities to review centers' progress, provide feedback and consultation, and synthesize progress and challenges across centers in ways that inform agenda planning and cross-center learning.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Even before releasing an application for center selection, the Implementation Team needs to map out dates for all the Learning Sessions (at least rough dates), calls with faculty coaches, timeline for center selection and the associated review process, and pre-work activities.
- Once the "big" events are listed on the workplan and timeline, the Implementation Team should determine how much lead time is needed for each to finalize agendas and materials.
- Working backward from the finalization dates, the Implementation Team should include when the planning for each event should begin and what steps will be needed to inform the planning, such as partnering with specific faculty coaches, reaching out to centers, etc.

> *Schedule calls and meetings for the entire BSC up front—even before releasing the application. Standing times typically work best (e.g., the third Friday of each month from 11:00–11:45).*

[b] Definitions of these terms may be found in Appendix A: Glossary.

- The workplan should include the names of who has the primary responsibility for the various tasks, for example, who is responsible for reaching out to faculty coaches or centers, scheduling calls, sending reminders to participants, managing the logistics for the Learning Sessions, creating and monitoring the BSC web platform, taking notes on calls, and so forth.

A template for developing a BSC workplan and timeline can be found in Appendix D.

Implementation Team activity: select and prepare faculty coaches

Why This Activity Matters: Faculty coaches play a critical role throughout the BSC, as described above. They are teachers, coaches, advisors, eyes and ears, and champions for the work. Faculty coaches need to be content experts who are team-players, smart yet humble, open to thinking and learning, inspirational and engaging speakers, and outstanding facilitators. They also must have the time required to play these roles consistently over the course of the BSC. Additionally, faculty coaches should reflect the roles required on the center-based teams themselves (e.g., faculty coaches should include those with experience as a center director, teachers, day-to-day manager, family representative); the diversity of the community; and the content expertise of the BSC. Finally, faculty coaches need to be well prepared to navigate these many expectations over the course of the BSC.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Identify the various perspectives needed to support centers (likely the same expertise and roles as what are included on center teams [e.g., center director, teachers, day-to-day managers, family representative]).
- Identify individuals who reflect those various perspectives, considering diversity including race, ethnicity, gender identity, geography, center type, etc.
- Engage various strategies to understand the expertise and skills potential faculty coaches possess with a specific focus on their ability to coach, facilitate, and support (not just lecture or "teach" in didactic ways).
- Determine availability, expectations for involvement, and possible compensation if/as appropriate.
- Ensure potential faculty understand the expectations, roles, and responsibilities within the context of a BSC. A clear role description is an important tool. See Appendix H for an example.
- Lead various activities and experiences that both teach and model the various roles of faculty. Help them understand what they can expect centers to do as well as what they can anticipate centers will need for support. Model BSC elements and CQI practices through experiential learning exercises (see an example in Box B).

Do some of the activities you plan to do with centers with the faculty first to test them out AND engage the faculty!

Box B. Experiential Learning about the BSC Process through a Mr. Potato Head Activity

The Implementation Team created the Mr. Potato Head Activity to help participants gain a deeper understanding of various aspects of the BSC methodology. It also served as a fun team-building opportunity, mirroring the types of trust and communication issues that are fundamental to positive team functioning. The entire activity, in addition to serving as a metaphor for the BSC overall, was used in the BSC-SEL as a metaphor for social and emotional learning.

The aims for the activity were for each team to put together a Mr. Potato Head in the exact way it was displayed on the screen in the front of the room. The challenges for the activity—and the metaphors—were derived from the fact that some participants were able to see what the Mr. Potato Head should look like but were not allowed to talk to those who were responsible for putting it together (sometimes the experiences of teachers). Others were able to talk and give verbal instructions without being able to see what the end result was supposed to look like (sometimes the experiences of administrators or managers when they're stuck in meetings rather than working directly with children in classrooms). Those who had the responsibility of actually putting Mr. Potato Head together were blindfolded, so they were dependent on the talkers and seers to do anything at all (sometimes experienced by parents and caregivers). This activity was timed, and after the timer went off, all team members rated how well the team achieved the likeness of the Mr. Potato Head displayed on the screen. Teams could confer on strategies for improvement in between trials, and each team had three attempts to do the Mr. Potato Head task.

Over the course of this one-hour, highly engaging activity, teams deepened their relationships within the team, began to understand the nature of the BSC (in terms of trying new things and assessing the success of those efforts in an iterative way), got to practice key aspects of the BSC methodology (e.g., collecting data and evaluating improvement), and developed camaraderie across teams. The Implementation Team used an abbreviated version of this activity with faculty coaches at the faculty orientation session.

2. Activities related to center selection

Some BSCs use a competitive application process to identify centers to participate, while others invite specific centers based on the design and scope of the BSC. Regardless of how centers are chosen, the center selection process typically takes place roughly three to four months prior to the first Learning Session. Center selection must be very intentional as centers in a BSC must have a level of readiness that ensures they will be able to jump into the BSC with both feet as soon as they are notified of their selection and they must demonstrate an authentic commitment to the content area, as the BSC must be a current priority for the center. Following are the key activities the Implementation Team leads in order to promote success in this area.

Center Selection
• Outreach to Potential Centers • Application Process • Clear Expectations for Centers

Implementation Team activity: outreach to potential centers

Why This Activity Matters: A BSC requires centers that are passionate about and committed to the aim. While some CQI initiatives seek out centers with the greatest level of need, a BSC seeks out centers that are interested in innovating, in making improvements, and those that are open to change; that is, centers that are excited about change and feel ready to commit to a fairly time-intensive, long-term initiative. Because of this, reaching out to centers to do some mutual exploration around interest and readiness can be an important place to start. BSCs have included anywhere from 6 to 160 centers (Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2003). The size of the BSC is determined by implementation resources (staffing, space, geography, etc.) and the interest in the field. Often times, Implementation Teams will need to reach out to more centers in order to meet the target number for any particular BSC.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Develop materials, tools, and supports for center outreach. These may include talking points that can be used consistently by various Implementation Team members and/or faculty (if they have been selected), brief videos that can be easily shared, and informational conference calls.
- Identify dissemination channels and opportunities to get the word out about the BSC. Look to various networks, newsletters, e-postings, listservs, existing meetings, and other sources that potentially interested centers might rely upon.
- Develop a readiness checklist or guide that describes what needs to be in place for a center to be poised for success in the BSC. This will be highly connected to the content area of the BSC and may be built off the Collaborative Change Framework or other resources that are foundational to the content area. Further, it will clarify expectations for centers in terms of the representation they will need on their center-based team, including senior leaders (high-level center directors with authority over change), family representatives (families who currently or recently had children at the center), and teachers/aides who work with children on a daily basis.

> In the BSC-SEL, a readiness pre-requisite was prior training in the Pyramid Model (Halle et al., 2021).

- Connect specifically with senior leaders at centers (likely center directors). They play critical and essential roles in the BSC, and the importance of their buy-in and active participation cannot be overstated. This connection also provides another opportunity to reinforce the time commitment needed by all center team members.

- Keep track of who is doing individual center outreach, what the timeframes are, and how relationships with prospective centers are being managed. Tracking contacts carefully can ensure that prospective centers do not fall through the cracks and also allows for periodic follow up and relationship building throughout the outreach process. This may be part of the existing workplan and timeline.

Implementation Team activity: application process

Why This Activity Matters: An application process, even if the selection process is not particularly competitive, helps the Implementation Team get to know prospective centers. Additionally, it can serve as an important opportunity for the centers to do their own readiness work related to the aims of the BSC. The application for a BSC does not have to be long or complex; instead, it can help guide centers through various aspects that will be foundational, such as identifying who will be on their team for each of the roles, senior leader buy-in, a commitment to the goals, and an understanding of the expectations. See Appendix I for an example of a Selection Questionnaire/ Application for center-based programs to participate in a BSC.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Develop an application that balances the information needed to assess readiness and commitment with being minimally burdensome for centers to complete. Include ample background information so that applicants have enough to answer the questions while also helping them decide about whether this is the right fit for them.

- Design questions that will both help select centers and help centers reflect on their strengths, challenges, and goals. Responses to these questions will help design the content of Learning Sessions as well as identify promising practices that can be shared across centers to facilitate the shared learning environment. Example questions might include:

    1. Describe how your center will ensure that the members of the BSC Cross Role Team have the resources and time they need to do the work described as requirements to participate in this BSC.

    2. Name up to four key strengths that your center has that position you well to participate in this BSC and promote children's social and emotional learning.

    3. What data do you collect and use to understand your center's work and progress in terms of supporting the social and emotional learning of children?

    4. Describe a time when your center has worked to improve the quality of your center. What was most helpful in supporting staff to make changes to their practices and classrooms? How did leadership support and engage the staff? How have you engaged children/families when you are making changes?

- Remember that the application process for a BSC is a "mutual selection process" in which centers choose to participate in the BSC as much as the Implementation Team selects centers to join.

- If using a competitive application process, develop clear selection guidance and criteria for reviewing and rating centers. If faculty coaches are in place, engaging them in this review process is a great way to immerse them in the BSC process. Even if all centers that apply will be accepted, this process provides an opportunity to get to know centers in a structured and systematic way from the beginning.

> *Have a clear review process, regardless of whether the center selection process is competitive.*

- If the BSC application process is not competitive, an informational packet with questions can also be important to ensure centers have a clear understanding of BSC expectations. Additionally, responses to this informational packet are helpful to faculty and the Implementation Team in getting to know the centers and planning for calls and Learning Sessions.

Implementation Team activity: clear expectations for centers

Why This Activity Matters: Centers may be interested in participating in the BSC for a wide variety of reasons, but very few centers have ever been involved in a process like this before. Because of that, each center may have its own idea of what to expect based on previous experiences with other CQI initiatives. Being explicit and direct from the very beginning about what this BSC will entail is critical.

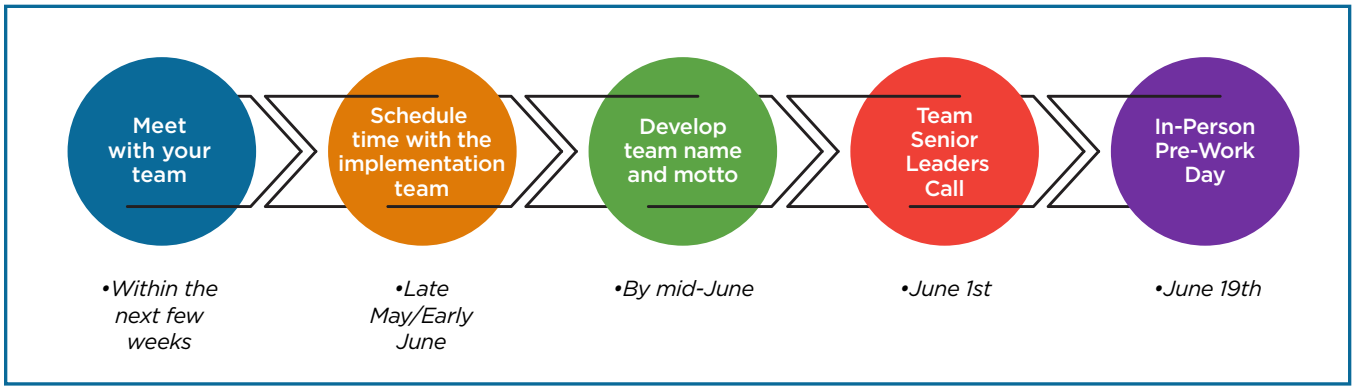
Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Create and deliver messaging about the value of participating in the BSC. Why would a center be interested in participating? What's in it for them?

> *Share clear expectations about both the costs and benefits of participating to prospective centers.*

- Clearly describe the costs of center participation, including time and resources needed. Centers will need to balance realistic expectations for participation with their sense of what they will get out of it. While we never want to discourage centers from applying or participating, we also believe that they need to join informed about what it will really take to do well—this includes thinking through issues related to classroom coverage, leadership continuity, and attendance on calls.
- Notify centers shortly after the application period to model the responsiveness and rapid pace of the BSC methodology. Along with a warm welcome (see more in the section below), once again reinforce the expectations for participation.
- Be very specific about dates, times, upcoming calls, assignments, and the BSC web platform for collaboration. This will help reinforce the specificity of the expectations (see Figure 10 as an example).

Figure 10. Expectations Prior to the Pre-Work Day from BSC-SEL



Source: Field Guide Authors (Agosti, Doyle, Douglass, & Mendes, 2021).

3. Pre-work phase: activities related to onboarding and welcome/orientation

Following the basics of implementation science, readiness and preparation are the beginning phases of any successful implementation process. The Implementation Team has taken care to select centers to participate in the BSC that already demonstrate a certain level of readiness, and now the team will need to help prepare them for the work that is ahead so that they will quickly be able to begin testing actual changes in practice. This is called the Pre-Work Phase.

Pre Work Phase: Onboarding and Welcome/Orientation
• Outreach to Individual Centers • Welcome Packet with Pre-Work Activities • Shared Learning Environment: Calls • Shared Learning Environment: BSC web platform • Preparing for Monthly Metrics

Implementation Team activity: outreach to individual centers

Why This Activity Matters: Immediately upon selection, building relationships with and getting to know each center in a meaningful way contributes strongly to the sense of camaraderie and shared learning that will permeate the BSC experience. Depending on the outreach done during the selection process, this may not be the first time the Implementation Team has reached out to a center, so this post-selection outreach will continue to foster relationships and connections with centers. The team will draw upon these relationships and connections throughout the BSC, so use this time to begin strengthening and deepening them.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Reinforce all of the expectations shared throughout the outreach and selection process. Consider walking through each expectation with each center to ensure they have a full understanding of what their participation will look like.

- Deepen and expand those relationships. Everyone appreciates personal contact and getting to know the senior leader, day-to-day manager, and other members of each center will help with future outreach and communication. Remember that trust is dependent on relationships and that the team wants to create and nurture a sense of trust with the centers.

- Provide an opportunity for centers and team members to ask questions and get a feel for the BSC. Use this opportunity to model the spirit of the BSC with questions being welcomed and creating a sense of humility and openness.

> *Be warm, humble, and open.*

Implementation Team activity: welcome packet with pre-work activities

Why This Activity Matters: Immediately upon selection, the Implementation Team should send centers a Welcome Packet. This informational material should include a who's who in the BSC (including Implementation Team members, faculty coaches, and other teams); key dates for calls and Learning Sessions; guidance on the BSC web platform; and the activities that will be part of the pre-work period. Providing this material up front sets a critical tone for the BSC—one in which there is responsiveness, openness, and clarity around expectations. The Implementation Team is available to answer questions and provide support and reminders continuously as needed.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Include in the welcome packet brief bios or statements of commitment from the Implementation Team and faculty coaches; also include photos where available. The more this section can be personalized and welcoming, the better.

- Use a center team-building activity, such as the creation of a team name and motto, for the first pre-work activity. Make it simple with clear instructions so that centers can be creative and easily tackle this first assignment while beginning to focus together on their goals related to the BSC. Invite centers to post these on the BSC web platform as a way to foster the shared learning environment.

- Invite centers to create a storyboard or poster that they'll be asked to share at the pre-work day. The storyboard or poster allows centers to introduce their team and center to the BSC as well as share their strengths and priorities for improvement. Give instructions in a way that fosters and inspires creativity and additional team building.

> *Make every pre-work activity purposeful and connected directly to the aims of the BSC.*

- Use the initial activities to underscore the importance of shared goals and relationship building within each team. Teams are not created instantaneously when people start attending meetings together. They must be intentionally nurtured as relationships and trust are developed.

Implementation Team activity: shared learning environment—calls

Why This Activity Matters: The shared learning environment is one of the key elements of the BSC methodology and starts from the very beginning with All-Team and Senior Leader calls during the onboarding phase. These regular calls across centers are a critical strategy for fostering a shared learning environment. Ensuring that each call in

the pre-work period is purposeful, engaging, and well-facilitated sets the stage for what participants and centers will grow to expect from the BSC overall, so actively preparing for these calls during the welcome/onboarding phase is essential. There are two to four calls to lead during the pre-work period: one or two Senior Leader Calls and one or two All-Team Calls.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Facilitate Senior Leader Calls. Senior leaders have unique (and critical) roles in a BSC. Thus, getting to know these leaders as individuals as well as part of this group should be done early in the BSC process.

    1. The first call with this group is used to help develop the group dynamic, reinforce the importance of their roles, and introduce transformational and adaptive leadership so that Senior Leaders will be maximally effective.

    2. If there is time for a second call about a month later (depending on how long the pre-work period is), the second call should focus on sharing the progress of their center with their pre-work.

- Host one or two All-Team Calls (where every member of each center-based team participates) prior to the pre-work day to help build the shared learning environment in a meaningful way. Even though there is a lot of information to communicate up front, these first few calls should be engaging and fun so that they set the tone for the BSC as active and focused on relationships. These first few calls can present excellent opportunities to highlight strengths from the applications to model not only the sharing across centers but also the spirit of validation and celebration.

- Avoid leading calls (during pre-work and beyond) that are didactic or involve long presentations. BSC calls should always model the balancing of voices and the elevation of all areas of expertise—not just those of the Implementation Team, faculty coaches, or senior leaders. Be sure to develop agendas for the call with discussion questions. Send questions in advance so that teams can be ready and prepared to participate.

> *Make ALL calls engaging and active. Avoid didactic presentations. Use video (e.g., Zoom) when possible to share visuals, slides, and faces.*

Implementation Team activity: shared learning environment—BSC web platform

Why This Activity Matters: The BSC web platform—or an online platform that meets the team's needs—allows for participants, centers, faculty coaches, and the Implementation Team to share resources, tools, questions, reflections, and progress. It should have functionality for document sharing, posting, and threaded discussions. This is an essential part of the shared learning environment.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Make sure the web platform is up and ready to go immediately upon center selection. Consider using a fun activity as a welcome, such as "introduce yourself" videos; sharing inspirational quotes; or commenting on others' posts.

- Develop a simple user guide for the web platform that includes screen shots and pictures along with instructions.

- Have a resource library already set up that is easy to navigate and has a few resources so participants immediately see value in the web platform. Include the BSC schedule with dates and contact information. The web platform should be something participants will want to come back to and engage with.

- Test the web platform from various locations, organizations, and computers (including different browsers) before inviting participants to join. Faculty coaches are often great "pilot testers" for this.

> *Engage faculty coaches as pilot testers of the web platform to get them oriented and to work out the kinks.*

- Assign a designated Implementation Team member to manage technical issues as participants will definitely have them. Have this Team member also be responsible for curating the resources that are posted to ensure participants are not overwhelmed. Work with faculty coaches to help them "self-curate" and avoid the temptation to "over-post," as this can actually make the web platform less useful for participants when they have a hard time determining what is useful.

- Consider writing a monthly newsletter to share highlights of what is happening in the BSC and specifically on the BSC web platform. This can be a helpful way to draw participants' attention to specific postings and resources, especially when there is a lot of activity. Include hyperlinks in the newsletter so that it takes participants directly to the web platform for more information.

Implementation Team activity: preparing for monthly metrics

Why This Activity Matters: In nearly all BSCs, collecting and using monthly metrics (data) is quite challenging. Yet, these metrics are absolutely essential in order to answer the second of the Model for Improvement questions: How will we know changes are improvements? The metrics form the foundation for the quality improvement aspects of a BSC, and the Implementation Team should be prepared to support centers in navigating challenges with collecting and using monthly metrics from the beginning. Collecting metrics typically takes longer than anyone anticipates up front, so starting the process as early as possible helps prepare for this eventuality.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Develop guidance and concrete examples of what will be collected (see section above about pre-site selection activities). Include information on how the data can be collected, tools centers can use to collect the data, formats that can be helpful, and how the data can be submitted.

- Offer individual consultation and support as needed. The Implementation Team member who is designated as the data point-person should be prepared to provide support multiple times and over a period of time as the metrics collection is often an iterative process.

- Help centers recognize and understand that these metrics ultimately should allow them to track

Tools and Formats for Data Collection in the BSC-SEL

One of the metrics in the BSC-SEL was two-way communication between families and teachers. The Implementation Team worked with a faculty coach and center to develop, test, and refine a "Communication Tracking Log" that teachers could use on a daily basis to help collect these data. This tool, designed as a simple Word document, made it easier for centers to collect and report these data.

improvements in the content area that is the focus of the BSC on an ongoing basis and that the metrics will not be used for accountability nor evaluation. The metrics should be maximally useful to the center and should be collected in a way that will be easy to sustain, even after the BSC has formally ended.

- Support each center in developing a specific plan on how they will collect the metrics each month. Help them test out their plan with a few children or teachers to ensure their plan is realistic and manageable. Once centers are comfortable with data collection, help them create routines to regularly review and reflect on the data in order to inform their testing.

> *Help centers try out their data collection plans using PDSAs. This not only helps them develop realistic plans but also lets them practice using PDSAs to test ideas and changes!*

- Designate specific members of the Implementation Team to manage the various aspects of metrics collection and use, including designating who will send reminders to centers to submit the metrics, when reminders will be sent, who will reach out to centers for support, and who will be responsible for developing and sharing the monthly reports for centers.
- Encourage centers to designate their own data point person who will be primarily responsible for collecting and reporting the monthly metrics. This may be the team's day-to-day manager, the senior leader, or another person at the center.
- Develop template reports that can be used for all centers' monthly reports. Consider using Excel or something with macros that will allow for automatic updating each month when new metrics are submitted. Investing the time up front to create something that will be easy to use and take as little time as possible to complete during the BSC itself is time well spent.
- Ideally each center will submit its first month of metrics before the first Learning Session in order to ensure that once centers begin testing changes and improvements, they will be able to assess their progress against a baseline.

4. Pre-work phase: activities related to the optional pre-work day

Depending on timing, resources, and center participation, the Implementation Team may have centers complete the previously described pre-work assignments on their own over a few months between the selection and Learning Session 1, or they may opt to hold an in-person (or virtual) "pre-work day" to guide and coach centers through the assignments.[c] In the ECE sector, where a BSC is so different from other training and quality improvement supports that centers typically experience, a supported, facilitated, and shared pre-work day can be beneficial. If the Implementation Team decides to lead a pre-work day, we recommend it be scheduled approximately a month after the initial team selection and a month before the first Learning Session. There are four areas of work for the Implementation Team related to this optional pre-work day.

[c] The assignments and activities described above are completed regardless of whether there is a single pre-work day.

Pre Work Day
• Planning and Administration • Outreach and Relationships • Agenda and Flow • Next Steps

Implementation Team activity: planning and administration

Why This Activity Matters: For some quality improvement initiatives, the planning and administration are simple: a date is set, and a location is secured. For a BSC, however, the scheduling and logistics can often be more challenging for two reasons: 1) the inclusive nature of the process and 2) the way learning is done. This is true not only for a pre-work day but also for all in-person meetings held throughout the BSC. Because of the multiple stakeholders involved in the BSC, finding a date and time that works for the entire Implementation Team and all of the faculty coaches—and does not conflict with any other important local professional events—can be hard. Finding a way to ensure that teachers can attend, including securing substitutes as needed, is also essential. This is precisely why scheduling all meetings up front is so important. The earlier dates are on people's calendars, the better! Further, the pre-work day, much like the Learning Sessions, requires a space where teams can comfortably work together, participants can move around easily between various breakout sessions, and experiential activities can be done, assuming the pre-work day can be done in person. All of these are critical aspects to the nature of the BSC.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Consider whether the pre-work day can be in person if at all possible. Consider safety concerns, time of year, and geography of centers. (Section 6 includes early lessons learned for those considering a virtual pre-work day or learning sessions.)
- If the pre-work day can be held in person, make a list of all of the space needs for the sessions in terms of the number of participants expected, the number of centers (ideally each center can have their own table), the layout of the room, etc. Identify opportunities for free space whenever available.
- Do a walk through or in-person visit prior to the meeting to ensure the room will be set up as needed.
- Share directions and instructions about the logistics multiple times, including the day before the pre-work day. Make sure to include information about parking, start and end times, and meals.
- If the session cannot be in person, consider a virtual session of roughly 3–4 hours, ensuring that breakout rooms can be used on the virtual platform. (Although this will be less time than the recommended 5–6 hour in-person day, this is likely the maximum that will be possible in the virtual environment for this meeting.) Regardless of whether meetings are in person or virtual, identify a time that will work for most participants (considering lunch times, nap times, and start and end times of various centers). Evenings or weekends could be considered depending on the requests and preferences of the participating centers and team members.

- If the session is in person, see Box C for important considerations that apply to all in person BSC meetings.

Box C. Universal Considerations for In-Person BSC Meetings

- Depending on your location, make sure you have good signage to direct people where to go. While you may know the ins and outs of a location, imagine coming for the first time and think about what directions or signage would help you best get to where you need to go.
- Consider the accessibility needs of the participants and make accommodations so that everyone can fully participate and feel welcome and included.
- Have information available about access to the internet. Not only will you need it for real-time posting of data and information, but participants will likely want to check in with their centers and/or families over the course of the day.
- Test all technology before starting. This includes slides, microphones, computer audio, and the internet connection. Try to do this at least 30 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to start so that when participants begin arriving you can greet them.
- Develop a detailed materials list and have a concrete workplan for how materials will be printed, collated, and shared with participants. Include deadlines for receiving final materials based on this workplan. Have a plan for who will be obtaining and bringing all the necessary materials and supplies as well as who will be setting up the space.

Implementation Team activity: outreach and relationships

Why This Activity Matters: Relationships are always at the core of the success of a BSC, regardless of the topic. Relationships matter at every level and within and across every group, whether it is the Implementation Team and faculty coaches, faculty coaches and center-based team members, Implementation Team and centers, or among center-based team members themselves. Every bit of work done by the Implementation Team at every point throughout the BSC must be mindful of and focused on nurturing these positive relationships in every direction. If using a pre-work day, this is the first time to be together with centers for an extended period, and thus the nurturing of relationships should be intentional.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Find various opportunities to reach out to and connect with participants on an individual level. Drop them emails or texts. Reply to their BSC web platform posts. Give them a call every so often to check in and see how things are going.
- Be responsive. Part of building trust is being reliable and consistent. The more responsive the team is to participants, the more likely they are to be responsive back.
- Reach out frequently about the pre-work day. Provide the initial logistics well in advance. Send reminders. Ask for RSVPs or registration. Do everything possible to ensure that participants attend. If participants change their response from a yes to a no, reach out and find out why. See if there's anything that can be done to help them attend.

Implementation Team activity: agenda and flow

Why This Activity Matters: This is the first full meeting of the BSC, so the stakes are high. This meeting is where standards and expectations will be set, so having an agenda that is responsive to centers' needs while also boldly pushing them forward is critical. Further, this first full meeting lays the foundation for everything that will follow (in terms of concepts, content, language, interactions, and camaraderie). This meeting will set the tone for the rest of the BSC.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Develop an agenda that is fast-paced and active. Remember that the participants are people who are not accustomed to sitting passively and being talked at. Be sure to include an orientation to the Collaborative Change Framework and primary drivers.
- When introducing the Collaborative Change Framework and the primary drivers, engage the faculty coaches so that participants get to know the coaches and their areas of expertise. Draw participants into the discussions to ensure the drivers have meaning for them and feel relevant and important.
- Craft interesting and engaging activities to convey important concepts and material. (See example in Box B.)
- Invite and inspire creativity and play, recognizing that participants are creative and playful people. Have centers present their storyboards to help facilitate immediate cross-center sharing.
- Coach and facilitate centers in completing a Self-Assessment that is based on the Collaborative Change Framework (see Appendix E). Lead the activity in a way that breaks down the Framework into individual drivers or domains, and provide active coaching and facilitation throughout to model support.
- Whenever possible, use technology and the BSC web platform for real-time data entry, including the Self-Assessment results. This allows centers to practice using the technology while having on-site support by faculty coaches and the Implementation Team.
- Provide individual support on developing the plan for collecting monthly metrics. This is likely a continuation from the support that has already been offered prior to the pre-work day, but providing this type of support in person can be especially helpful.

Implementation Team activity: next steps

Why This Activity Matters: No one wants to leave a meeting—no matter how great it might be—with no idea of what will happen next. Ensuring that participants and faculty coaches leave the pre-work day with a clear and consistent picture of what will come next and how the pre-work day fits into the larger whole of the BSC is important. The conclusion of the pre-work day is an ideal opportunity to give clarity once again about expectations and available support to meet those expectations.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Provide a walkthrough of all of the activities that have been done over the course of the day and describe what will be done with each. Be clear about how each piece is relevant and important for what will happen next. Constantly help participants see how all of the pieces fit together.

- If there is work that was not completed during the pre-work day, have a simple plan for how centers should complete it, including who should be involved, when it should be submitted, how it should be submitted, and who centers should contact if they have questions or need support.
- Provide all participants with next steps, including dates of upcoming all-team calls, BSC web platform activity, metrics collection, and the upcoming Learning Sessions.
- Identify times and a schedule for the various affinity groups to have their monthly calls. It can be helpful to go into the pre-work day with a few options already identified based on the schedule of the assigned faculty coach.
- Share an overview of what the first Learning Session will look like and what centers can anticipate.
- Ask participants to fill out an evaluation of the pre-work day activities and venue (see Appendix F for an example evaluation form).

5. Activities related to learning sessions

The Learning Sessions are the times when all of the participants from all centers come together with the faculty coaches and Implementation Team members. They are active meetings in which centers learn about the content from faculty coaches and one another; brainstorm strategies and practices to test; share successes and challenges; and learn how to test, implement, spread, and sustain their improvements. Whether these are in-person (whenever possible and safe) or virtual (due to travel restrictions, geography, or other safety considerations), these dedicated, focused, all-day events are important touchstones in the sequence of a BSC. Each Learning Session has its own flavor and focus as the centers move across a continuum of progress, from beginning with small tests of change at the first Learning Session to focusing on sustaining and spreading their successes by the final Learning Session.

Learning Sessions
• Planning and Administration • Content Development • Agenda Flow • Faculty Engagement and Roles

Implementation Team activity: planning and administration

Why This Activity Matters: Similar to the pre-work day, the planning and administration for the Learning Sessions should be finalized far in advance of the actual meeting. People will need the dates on their calendars and always enjoy knowing the details, including the location, parking, lunch or dinner options, etc., as described in the pre-work day section. Additional logistical considerations should include thinking through the room set up (e.g., type and number of tables and chairs), the amount of space needed (for experiential activities), and whether additional rooms or spaces for small group breakout sessions are necessary. People learn best when they are in a setting that feels safe, supportive, and comfortable.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Start planning the administrative details roughly three months before the actual Learning Session. As a caution, be wary of getting into a cycle in which the team is always focused only on the next upcoming event rather than staying connected to the bigger picture of the process.

- If a pre-work day was held, make sure to learn from that experience. Consider how the space was used and whether it met the needs of the group, how participants seemed to experience the location, and whether the times for the day seemed to work for people. The participants' responses on the pre-work day evaluation form will also provide helpful feedback. Adjust Learning Session plans based on this experience and feedback. If no pre-work day was held, get input from participants about location and timing as much as possible to maximize their attendance and active participation. Continue to explore how substitute teachers can be brought into centers as needed to ensure that the teachers on the team can attend the Learning Sessions.

- Consider touching base with senior leaders to balance the ideal Learning Session logistics with what might be realistic in terms of times, locations, and even whether Learning Sessions are possible to be held in person.

- Ensure that participants are comfortable and in the "right place" mentally to learn and engage. Consider asking participants to think about setting a "self-goal" for themselves at the start of each Learning Session to encourage them to think about their motivations and intentions for participating in the Learning Session.

- Think about offering fidget toys such as stress balls, clay, or pipe cleaners; seating near windows; and coffee, snacks, and water to meet participants' various needs.

- See Box C for important considerations that apply to all in-person BSC meetings.

Implementation Team activity: content development

Why This Activity Matters: There is nothing formulaic or cookie cutter about any Learning Session, even when a topic has been covered in a previous BSC. The very nature of the BSC methodology relies on responsiveness to participating centers as well as CQI. As noted above, although old Learning Session agendas can be used as a starting point, they will rarely resemble the final version of the agenda. Knowing what the centers are doing, knowing where they are developmentally, and maintaining close connections with the faculty coaches allows for the development of Learning Session agendas that not only meet the needs of the centers but also move them along the developmental continuum towards meaningful and sustainable improvements.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Brainstorm topics with faculty coaches based on centers' strengths and challenges. Invite them to consider what they've heard during affinity group calls, the all-team calls, and the pre-work day (if there was one) as well as what they know about the centers generally. Include topics related specifically to the drivers in the Collaborative Change Framework as well as teaching CQI tools and methods, such as using data or testing PDSAs.

- Carefully review centers' strengths and challenges based on their self-assessments, notes from calls, and individual contacts. Identify themes across centers as well as unique strengths and challenges.

- Organize centers' strengths and challenges based on the domains in the Collaborative Change Framework. Be explicit with this mapping with the faculty coaches and the centers, as the hope is that centers will also get in the habit of organizing their strengths and challenges.

- Identify highlights from centers to bring into the Learning Session agendas. Think about where centers are doing work that should be lifted up at the Learning Session. When doing this, try to identify highlights from all centers to weave throughout the Learning Session rather than leaning too heavily on one "superstar" center. Even at the first Learning Session, centers will have strengths that can be highlighted, and this can set a tone of positive reinforcement and strengths-focused facilitation that will be done throughout the BSC.

- Use the Learning Session agenda development process to model the BSC methodology by highlighting PDSAs, changes that have been tested, continuous improvements in processes, the use of data, etc.

Implementation Team activity: agenda flow

Why This Activity Matters: A Learning Session agenda is much more than a series of unrelated or disconnected sessions. The agenda must be composed in a way that progressively helps participants take in new learning, make meaning of it in their own individual contexts and roles, translate it into action, and then integrate it into their center's overall plan. Moreover, the sessions must combine active, experiential learning; draw upon a variety of learning and teaching styles; engage all types of learners; engage the various faculty coaches; and infuse different voices and perspectives into the delivery of the content. Learning Sessions are not conferences— they are true active learning experiences that activate behavior change.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Reserve time for the four distinct parts of every Learning Session: 1) topic-related content, including racial equity and cultural humility; 2) CQI and implementation science methods; 3) cross-center sharing (e.g., breakout sessions and affinity groups); and 4) individual center team time. While these are sometimes blended together in sessions, make sure there is enough time for each to allow for the learning, sharing, and translating into action that Learning Sessions rely upon.

- Meet centers where they are, but always try to pull them forward as well. Although there's a temptation to back off the high expectations associated with a BSC when centers seem too busy or overwhelmed, it is important to always maintain the high standards and expectations. Centers often talk about how helpful the high expectations and accountability are in a BSC, even when they are not able to meet all of the expectations.

Four Key Parts of Every Learning Session

1) Topic-related content, including racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion

2) CQI and implementation science methods

3) Cross-center sharing

4) Individual center team time

- Always teach "a few lessons ahead." In each successive Learning Session, the agenda will need to go back and review previous content and methods (e.g., PDSAs), but never get stuck just reviewing. Always teach back and then move the group ahead

with new and deeper material. Think of it as a spiral that goes back over but also deeper in the content and skills.

- Remember that the flow of the sessions matters. Even if there are specific content areas and methods that need to be covered, be thoughtful about how they build on and complement one another. It is important to deliver a complete puzzle, not simply hand out disconnected pieces.

- Review the sample agendas in the Appendix G for examples of how these objectives are brought into the content development as well as the flow of each session. **Remember that every BSC is unique, even when the content area is the same. The agendas must be developed based on the unique strengths, needs, and development of the participating centers.**

Implementation Team activity: faculty engagement and roles

Why This Activity Matters: Faculty coaches are engaged throughout every part of the BSC. When it comes time for Learning Session planning and delivery, their role is further elevated. Faculty coaches are the eyes and ears of a BSC; they listen in on Learning Sessions and really get to know the centers and various participants. Ideally, they have their fingers on the pulses of their own affinity groups, with insight into strengths and challenges related to both content and process. Tapping into this expertise is essential when planning each Learning Session, and the ownership faculty coaches have over the development of the agendas feeds directly into their ability to lead and facilitate specific sessions.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Make sure a member of the Implementation Team has been identified to be the primary liaison to the faculty coaches as noted in the Core Competencies and Infrastructure section. Ensure the liaison and coaches have mutual respect for one another and value each other's perspectives.

- Develop and nurture the relationships with the faculty coaches in the same way the Implementation Team does with the centers. Seek opportunities to connect with the faculty coaches to get to know more about their areas of expertise and the unique perspectives they bring to the BSC.

- Play to the unique strengths of faculty coaches in planning Learning Sessions. Understand not only their content expertise but also their facilitation skills, creativity, oral and written communication talents, relational skills, and their ways of thinking about problems and solutions. Consider the ways their various talents and skills can be drawn upon during the Learning Sessions.

- Position the faculty coaches as humble experts to the centers. Give them the opportunity to shine and find ways to highlight their knowledge and skills while also encouraging them to use facilitation and reflection to support the centers to find their own solutions.

- Actively engage the faculty coaches in brainstorming, thinking, and analytic activities, especially when developing Learning Session agendas. Invite them to facilitate sessions of their own development, and provide them the support they need to deliver their sessions in the spirit of the BSC (active and engaging rather than didactic).

- Maintain high expectations for faculty coaches. Encourage them to take leadership roles while at the Learning Sessions and to be a visible and engaged faculty coach.

6. Activities related to action periods

The Action Periods are possibly the most critical part of the entire BSC. Action Periods occur between the Learning Sessions and typically span several months. These are the times when the centers are testing strategies, getting buy in from others at their center, spreading their successes, collecting and using data for improvement, and exploring how they will sustain their work over time. As centers do this, they're participating on BSC all-team calls and calls with their affinity groups, engaging in the web-based platform to interact with other centers, and receiving coaching and support from the Implementation Team and faculty coaches.

While a great deal of work goes into putting together a great Learning Session, the work that centers do (and the way the Implementation Team supports, nurtures, facilitates, and promotes that work) is how real change happens. For each activity in the Action Periods—whether it is an all-team call, an affinity group call, a BSC web platform posting, a PDSA posted, metrics posted, or an individual consultation visit from an Implementation Team member or faculty coach—the Implementation Team should be continuously focused on:

- What is the purpose of or rationale for this part of the process?
- What are the desired outcomes for this activity?
- What actions in the next phase of work will show whether the activity hits the mark?

The Action Periods are really the crux of what the Implementation Team will be doing with centers. In fact, while this section focuses on the activities and mechanics of what the Implementation Team will need to do during each Action Period, the following chapters of this Field Guide further unpack these activities and mechanics in ways that better describe why they're so important and how they collectively work together to nurture the true spirit of a BSC.

Action Periods
• Supporting the Shared Learning Environment: Calls and Online Communication • Individual Team Consultation: PDSAs, Metrics, Progress • Faculty Support and Engagement • Synthesis of Themes

Implementation Team activity: supporting the Shared Learning Environment — calls and online communication

Why This Activity Matters: Calls and an online web platform are the primary means of communication across centers between the Learning Sessions. They must be well planned, purposeful, engaging, well curated, and meet the needs of centers. Because there are so many calls and so much information, the Implementation Team will constantly be planning forward, taking stock, and maintaining a master calendar that is conscientiously monitored and managed. There are two different types of calls: affinity

group calls and all-team calls. In all-team calls, the Model for Improvement questions should guide the conversations.

Affinity group calls

Affinity groups are the cross-team groups that include participants who share similar roles in different centers, e.g., teachers, managers, directors / administrators, and family partners. These calls are co-led by the assigned faculty coach and an Implementation Team member. Ultimately, the faculty coach will 'drive' the content for these calls, but they may need coaching to keep topics tightly connected to the Collaborative Change Framework. These are not intended to focus on individual center consultation on single events or children. The discussion should always be elevated to focus on "what can you test by next Tuesday?" "Is the practice replicable with other teachers, families, or children?" "Could others do that?" "What did you learn that could carry forward?" The goals of these groups are to develop a sense of trust and camaraderie; inspire leadership from where any participant sits; and share successes and challenges to accelerate improvements.

While each role on the center teams has its own affinity group, two groups merit special note and are discussed later: 1) the senior leaders; and 2) the family partners. Both of these roles are critical to the success of the BSC and the Implementation Team should be prepared to do specific outreach, relationship building, and provide additional support as needed to keep these members engaged, active, and as effective as possible.

All-team calls

These calls occur monthly and are most effective when they are topically-focused. They are always planned in advance based on centers' strengths and needs. The Implementation Team co-leads these calls with an identified faculty coach. The typical flow is roughly 10-15 minutes of presentation / sharing knowledge (either faculty coach or participating center) and then several questions that are shared with centers in advance to spark sharing and discussion. The goal of this call is both cross-team sharing and peer accountability. Calls can feature a center or more to share a PDSA or their data with other centers in order to share what they learned and gather feedback. This can be an opportunity for live coaching about CQI methods. Whenever possible, sharing visuals, videos, etc. on these calls can be incredibly helpful. Turning them into "virtual field trips" to inspire centers to share how things look, feel, and work is an engaging approach.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Designate an Implementation Team member to manage and monitor the calendar by checking weekly at the upcoming week, two weeks ahead, and a month ahead to ensure there is always adequate time for the necessary planning and outreach efforts as noted in Section 3 on Skills and Competencies.
- For all calls, anticipate and try to stay ahead with agenda planning, faculty coach leads, facilitation, and key questions.
- Reach out to faculty coaches for support in planning agendas, developing slides, and thinking through all-team calls and affinity group calls.
- As the BSC progresses, identify and reach out to centers to present and/or co-lead content based on their own areas of success. By the end of the BSC, presentation and

leadership on calls should shift from the Implementation Team and faculty coaches to individual centers and be led almost exclusively by the centers.

- Send call reminders to participants one week ahead of time with any key questions that will be asked. Post call information and slides on the BSC web platform for easy reference.
- On calls, try to make discussions as concrete and specific as possible. Ask questions and invite participants to use the chat to be engaging and helpful to participants.
- For the BSC web platform, develop a plan to ensure someone from the team (Implementation Team or faculty coaches) responds quickly and consistently. Review the web platform to keep it organized and "curated." Provide guidance to faculty coaches about what and how to post and respond to ensure responsiveness while avoiding overwhelming people.

Implementation Team activity: individual team consultation—PDSAs, metrics, progress

Why This Activity Matters: Thse single most important work that centers do in a BSC is their tests of change. They use the PDSA method (see Figure 8 on page 18) to test ideas quickly, gather data in real-time to learn from the test, and then adapt and expand their successes to move towards more complete implementation. Sometimes the real-time data demonstrates that the strategy is not effective or will not work the way it was intended, leading centers to abandon the idea before it has broader implications. Because this is the core work of centers, it also must be central for the Implementation Team. The Implementation Team can provide coaching, support, guidance, and even help teams take a step back to assess their overall progress.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Encourage and support centers to have very regular, internal meetings (ideally once a week). These meetings do not need to be long—they can be as brief as 15 minutes. Routinely touching base is important for the center's team to maintain momentum. These meetings also model the rapid pace of change and learning. Because these are sometimes different processes in ECE, centers may need coaching to learn how to run effective meetings, including support with agenda development, leadership, and facilitation.

> *Provide sites with a template agenda and encourage them to test it out using the PDSA approach.*

- Develop simple ways for centers to track and share their PDSAs and metrics. The tracking should be done in such a way that allows faculty coaches, the Implementation Team, and other centers to easily see one another's work. This process is important for the shared learning environment and should be informed by what centers are most likely to use.
- Provide expectations that centers will be developing and testing their own PDSAs continuously throughout the BSC. Centers will often ask how many PDSAs they should be testing each week. There is no real answer to this as it all depends on their areas of focus and where they are in the BSC process. Overall, the Implementation Team should encourage all participants to test PDSAs that are meaningful to them. And centers should be reminded that the goal is to keep PDSAs both rapid and

progressive, building from a single small test of change to larger and larger cycles, based on the learning and successes.

- Provide expectations for posting and sharing PDSAs. Depending on the tracking process created, centers need to know where and how often they should be updating their PDSAs and progress. Questions the Implementation Team should be ready to answer include "Where and how should they be documented?", "Who should be posting them?", and "How often?"

- The Implementation Team member designated as the lead for PDSAs and the Model for Improvement (see Core Competencies and Infrastructure section) should provide feedback on the PDSAs posted and shared. Consider engaging specific faculty coaches in this feedback process as well. The feedback should always take the form of coaching and validate the engagement, effort, initiative-taking, and the content of the work. Additionally, coaching should help teams consider how to move the PDSA work forward through progressive cycles (or disband) based on what the data showed. To improve PDSA skills, the Implementation Team should provide feedback and coaching on the PDSAs and metrics by posing reflective questions and offering concrete ways to improve their PDSAs. For example, centers often develop PDSAs that are too big or broad to be tested rapidly on a small scale, and coaching can help focus the test to something that can be done by next Tuesday.

- The Implementation Team member who is the lead for metrics should develop a metrics tracking system and clear expectations and processes for data collection and sharing, reviewing, and providing coaching and feedback to centers, specific to the metrics, as described in Section 3. This person will create a monthly report of the centers' metrics to share back as well as an all-BSC report. This is the area where often the most intensive and continuous coaching and assistance is needed. Helping centers begin to marry their data with their PDSAs and tests of change is at the heart of teaching and modeling CQI.

- Once per Action Period, provide one individual consultation opportunity per center. Ideally this is done with the entire center-based team and one or two members of the Implementation Team; the consultation may be done in-person or virtually, and a faculty coach may be invited to join as well. The best scenario is joining an existing, planned center team meeting to observe their process and provide real-time coaching and support. The Implementation Team member(s) are there to help the center reflect on progress and problem solve. Prior to the meeting, the Implementation Team may work with the center director or day-to-day manager to help model agenda planning. This onsite consultation provides an opportunity not only to talk about the content of the center's work but also to reinforce and review CQI tools and methods. Try to help the center develop a tight and focused agenda well in advance, stay on target, connect the center's work intentionally to the Collaborative Change Framework and metrics, and ensure the "right" people (ideally the entire center team) are in the room. As a caution, remember that while individual consultation can be important, it should be used as coaching and capacity building for the centers rather than training efforts or straight technical assistance. The goal is for centers to be able to do this work without the Implementation Team or faculty coaches and to see the other participating centers as experts rather than developing a reliance on the Implementation Team or faculty

Caution!

Individual team coaching should be focused on capacity building. You don't want teams to become dependent on external consultation or to "pull away from" the cross-team collaborative experience.

coaches for support. The Implementation Team members and/or faculty coaches who conduct the consultations should debrief following any consultation to lift up themes across centers that can inform Action Period calls, resources, or the Learning Sessions.

- Consider developing periodic "progress reports" for centers, likely in preparation for each Learning Session. These reports are different from the monthly metrics reports because they intentionally connect the PDSAs to the Collaborative Change Framework and metrics. They are shared with the centers as well as with the faculty coaches. They can be helpful reminders of how much work the center has done and can also help map their tests of change and metrics back to the Collaborative Change Framework drivers. This "view from the balcony" can provide centers with the opportunity to reflect on how they are doing with their priorities, how much progress they've made so far, and where they need to place their attention going forward.

Implementation Team activity: faculty support and engagement

Why This Activity Matters: As described earlier, faculty coaches play an important role within a BSC. During the Action Periods, they sometimes need special attention to help them step into all of the roles the Implementation Team needs them to play. The process is fluid and dynamic. While faculty coaches need to function as content experts and teachers at times, other times they need to coach, facilitate, or just listen and synthesize what they hear.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Develop individual relationships with the faculty coaches as well as facilitate the faculty coach team. (This will primarily be done by the Implementation Team member designated as the faculty coach "point person" as noted in the Core Competencies and Infrastructure section.) This should be intentional and systematic to avoid leaning into faculty coaches only at the last minute or around specific tasks that can otherwise seem disconnected from the rest of the work that is happening.

- Work with faculty coaches around their designated affinity groups. Faculty coaches should develop their own special relationships with their affinity groups, especially as they are assigned based on their own expertise and roles. To this end, support faculty coaches in getting to know their groups and thinking through what their group needs at any given time in the Action Period. Sometimes affinity groups' focus may be on content, but often it is role-specific (especially for the family members and senior leaders). Also keep in mind the need to consistently reinforce CQI methods and tools for all groups and roles to ensure the BSC is truly developing skills, capacity, and leadership at all levels.

- Work with faculty coaches to identify content areas for focus on All-Team Calls. Tap into their experience and what they are hearing in their affinity group calls to identify themes that are emerging related to centers' progress and areas that centers need to address. Refer back to the Collaborative Change Framework drivers to ensure the content areas on All-Team Calls are intentionally related to the Collaborative Change Framework.

- Identify faculty coaches to lead calls based on content and role. Keep track of which faculty coaches are leading which calls so that they are rotating through and not depending on the same voices month after month. Start by asking for volunteers to help lead these calls, as having buy-in and ownership is important. Make sure this

is done well in advance (at least a week) so that the faculty coaches have time to prepare their thoughts as well as questions for centers to discuss.

- Within each Action Period, assign faculty coaches to individual centers not for technical assistance and consultation, but rather for support and outreach. When their center posts on the BSC web platform or has a question, engage faculty coaches actively in the feedback process so that they always feel connected to an actual center. This also allows faculty coaches to get to know centers better. However, faculty coaches should rotate through different centers over the course of the BSC for three reasons.

    1. Allows faculty coaches to get to know all the centers (ideally, depending on the size of the BSC).
    2. Allows centers to benefit from the varied expertise and roles of the different faculty coaches.
    3. Prevents centers from becoming "dependent" on a specific faculty coach as a personal consultant, potentially pulling them away from the shared learning environment.

Implementation Team activity: synthesis of themes

Why This Activity Matters: As critical as the shared learning environment is for the participating centers, it is equally critical for the Implementation Team. While it is essential to keep track of what the individual centers are doing in terms of their content and processes, it is also crucial to understand what is happening across the entire BSC. This not only helps to continually focus and refocus priority content areas, but it also helps Implementation Teams understand where centers are on the continuum of implementation, continuous improvement, and sustainability.

Activities for the Implementation Team to complete

- Regularly review the work across centers and identify key themes, strengths, and areas of need. Most of these details will be captured through the regular BSC contacts with centers, such as all-team calls and affinity group calls. In pulling together all of these information sources, the Implementation Team should be looking intentionally at four things:

    1. Content of tests of change (Which Collaborative Change Framework drivers are being addressed within individual PDSAs and in what ways?)
    2. Metrics (In which classrooms or for which teachers are data being collected?, What are the metrics showing?)
    3. CQI methods, such as using PDSAs, the Model for Improvement questions, solution-focused brainstorming, etc. (How are centers using these types of CQI methods and what additional support is needed?)
    4. Center team dynamics (How are centers doing with their internal team dynamics, including engaging all members, meeting regularly, hearing all voices, etc.?)

- Develop process for documenting and sharing information from across the entire BSC with the Implementation Team. Even harder than doing this thematic review and analysis regularly is finding ways to communicate it to the rest of the Implementation Team in a systematic way. If one Implementation Team member keeps all of this in their head, it can be hard to infuse into planning, feedback, and follow up efforts.

Consider different ways to communicate this information, such as building it into Implementation Team meeting updates, using a google sheet to track thoughts, or having a template to keep notes and reflections.

- Find ways to share themes with faculty coaches periodically. While it is important not to overwhelm faculty coaches with information, they will often become focused on whichever center they are assigned to at a given time. Their feedback and reflections are important parts of the synthesis, but faculty coaches also need to look up and hear what's happening across the BSC in order to be most effective.
- Find ways to share themes with BSC centers. The luxury of the shared learning environment is only a luxury when it is actively facilitated. Reminding centers of what is happening across the entire Collaborative can be validating, supportive, inspiring, and motivating as centers often experience the collective progress as their own.

Final reflections on how the BSC Implementation Team manages the BSC

While we know reading through this detailed list of activities can feel overwhelming, the combination of these BSC activities helps develop structures and work processes not only for the Implementation Team but also within and among the participating centers. For example, the BSC provides agendas and structures for meetings (e.g., Learning Sessions, monthly calls, affinity group calls). These agendas and structures foster routines for professional learning, building relationships, and improving communication. As another example, the BSC teaches participants how to use tools to collect and use data for improvement and to test changes in practice. These tools include logs for recording and tracking small tests of changes and a data reporting form to track monthly progress measures. These work processes can help centers develop and test changes in their practices immediately as well as for the long term (beyond the life of the BSC).

5. Getting to Culture Change: The BSC Secret Sauce — How does the Implementation Team LEAD and FACILITATE a BSC?

Now that there is a sense of who the Implementation Team needs in order to lead a BSC as well as what the team needs to do to lead one, we now focus on **how** to do it in the spirit of the BSC methodology. Leading and facilitating a BSC is not a simple project management activity. It relies on an intentional focus on **leadership at all levels, relationships and experiential, shared learning** to promote changes in organizational culture—far beyond simple changes in concrete and specific practices.

Remember that as complicated as the mechanics and administration of a BSC may feel and as tempting as it sometimes may be to get lost in those details, a BSC is ultimately about **responsiveness, flexibility, and adaptation**. It is important for implementors to meet centers where they are while pushing them forward. The team should be supportive and understanding of their constraints and competing demands, but the team should not relent or ease up too much on the BSC expectations or striving for the shared goal to improve quality for infants, young children, families, and staff.

Intentional focus on:
Leadership at all levels
Relationships
Experiential, shared learning

The Theory of Change for the BSC-SEL describes how the BSC activities and the structures and work processes activate specific types of changes for participants and their centers. We believe that these changes ultimately help centers achieve the short- and long-term outcomes we are striving for. The top three sections of the Theory of Change—Strategy, Outputs, and Mechanisms—apply to all BSCs in ECE. Only the Outcomes and Impacts are specific to a particular content-area.

The goals for all BSCs in ECE are for all of the activities done by the Implementation Team to facilitate:

- Shifts in the relational dynamics within organizations
- Shifts in the relational dynamics among organizations
- Shifts in participants' mindsets about making and leading change

Shifts in the relational dynamics within organizations: Participating centers, through their own internal teams, will deepen their own relationships. The team will strive to promote leadership at all levels, inspire creativity and curiosity, create intentional space for testing changes and learning from them, and provide tools and capacity building for all participants. This will mean considering power dynamics that can come from titles and race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational background, and other identities to create learning and growth spaces for everyone to participate. In doing these things, the team will be purposefully fostering relationships within the centers as they experience this process and these activities together. Through these shared experiences, growing leadership, and collective capacity building, their relationships will become more meaningful and stronger. Ultimately, these relationships within each center help promote the lasting changes in their organizational cultures, especially as they grow to trust each other and discover that it is safe—and essential—to learn from mistakes.

Strong relationships support learning from mistakes—creating a culture of learning.

Shifts in the relational dynamics among organizations: As the various centers work towards a common goal from the outset, this shared vision helps build momentum and support for change from the beginning. Through the shared learning environment, centers will discover the power of working in partnership with other centers. They will realize the commonalities they

When one center wins, we all win!

share in both challenges and opportunities and will develop relationships that remain beyond the formal duration of the BSC itself. Additionally, as centers continuously share their successes and lessons learned in near real-time, all centers' improvements are accelerated by problem-solving together, adapting others' best practices, and anticipating challenges as they work in their own center. They develop a sense of accountability to one another (no center ever wants to be the only one in the room or on the call with nothing new to share), and they have a sense of camaraderie that nurtures the sense that when one center does something great, all centers benefit. Although the mantra "steal shamelessly" can have a negative connotation in some contexts, in the light-hearted spirit of the BSC, it is a reminder that we all learn when we are willing to share.

Shifts in participants' mindsets about making and leading change: As all participants are treated as leaders, regardless of their titles or roles, they feel empowered to collect and use data, test their own ideas, and more importantly, realize how powerful their own changes can be. This professional development cultivates a spirit of self-agency, competence, and confidence with all participants. Further, the spirit of the BSC encourages all participants to "fail forward"—learning from and openly sharing their failures as well as their successes. Participants gain trust with one another over time and eventually can honestly talk about things that did not work as they expected, which often results in some of the richest learning opportunities. Through this process, participants become more open to asking questions, being curious, and seeking multiple solutions. This approach to problem-solving and inquiry is often sustained long after the BSC officially ends.

> An inquiry mindset is rooted in curiosity and seeks out collaborative problem-solving.

The role of the Implementation Team in activating these shifts in organizational dynamics and distributed leadership

While these shifts in organizational dynamics and distributed leadership may seem aspirational, the Implementation Team should constantly be thinking about every activity they do in Section 3 with these in mind. The activities are the "whats" that need to be done, but equally important is the "how." In a more typical CQI initiative, some of the activities such as pre-work assignments would be formally written up and sent out and impersonal reminders would be sent as the due dates approached. With BSCs, even these seemingly rote activities are done in thoughtful ways that continuously pay attention to the relationships and unique contexts of the individual centers and participants.

Based on this, there is no single recipe for how to implement and lead a BSC. No "how-to guide" can be created for an Implementation Team to pick up and use as a prescriptive manual. However, after decades of leading BSCs, we have learned quite a bit about how to make a BSC "secret sauce" that promotes the types of relationships and leadership development that are essential (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. The Secret Sauce: Ingredients and Techniques

Source: Field Guide Authors (Agosti, Doyle, Douglass, & Mendes, 2021).

Credibility: As noted in the Core Competencies and Infrastructure section, having at least one Implementation Team member with credibility in the field of ECE is essential. This person should already be a respected and credible part of the ECE community and someone who knows first-hand the passion, joys, and challenges of the work. This team member is not only likely to be valued by the participating centers, as they see themselves reflected on the team, but they also serve as a champion and sometimes "protector" of participants, fully understanding the challenges they face. Equally important is the content expertise this team member brings to the Implementation Team, as they help adapt the methodology, activities, scheduling, and any logistics as needed. In designing the Implementation Team, intentionality should be given to:

> *Regardless of the topic, fostering positive and meaningful relationships is vital to the success of any BSC!*

- Recruiting at least one Implementation Team member with expertise, credibility, and respect in the field of ECE.

- Elevating this role internally to best inform the mechanics, activities, and content of the BSC.
- Creating an explicit outward facing role for this individual so that this team member has the most direct contact with participating centers.
- Working in partnership between the ECE expert and the BSC expert(s) on the Implementation Team to continuously balance the BSC process with the ECE-specific context.

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships: The importance of Implementation Team members developing positive and meaningful relationships with centers and participants cannot be overstated. We found that relationships served as a continuous thread and parallel process through all of our work: from the Implementation Team to centers and participants, within centers from senior leaders to teachers to family members, across centers from participant to participant, and ultimately within the centers from teachers and staff to family members. Ideally, a member of the Implementation Team already has existing relationships with centers and participants prior to the BSC. When this is not the case, Implementation Team members should find and use both formal and informal strategies for developing relationships early in the BSC process. Ideas for doing this may include:

- Setting up a brief one-on-one introductory call that's personal and unstructured in nature.
- Offering individual support and help around due dates and assignments rather than just sending general all-team reminders.
- Responding quickly and supportively to BSC web platform posts.
- Visibly validating and celebrating centers' early work.
- Building in time on calls and at Learning Sessions specifically focused on relationship building.

Make time for ice breakers as an opportunity to build relationships. Relationships happen through joyful interactions and by connecting to who we are as people.

Respect and Trust: Stemming directly from the development of relationships (as well as being a product of those relationships) is a sense of respect and trust that is essential for this work. Although it may seem obvious, being intentional and purposeful in demonstrating respect for all participants and centers, regardless of role or participation, goes a long way. This must be authentic and explicit. Having Implementation Team members who truly value the hard work of teachers, parents, caregivers, and ECE staff is essentially a requirement for this job, in addition to all of the more concrete skills and competencies described in Section 3. This should be done in many ways, continuously throughout the life of the BSC by:

- Treating participants, including teachers and family members, as the true experts in this work.
- Clearly communicating with centers about upcoming activities and directions for activities. Transparency and direct communication is key to trust.
- Inviting family members and teachers into large group conversations and validating their perspectives and expertise.

- Being responsive to the expressed needs of all participants to demonstrate they can trust the Implementation Team to do what they say they will do in a timely way.
- Creating opportunities for both small group and large group discussions, ensuring all voices have the opportunity to be heard and valued.
- Facilitating calls and small groups within individual affinity groups (by role) to provide safe spaces where participants at different levels and in different roles have their own opportunities to share challenges and ideas.
- Providing specific coaching and guidance to faculty and centers in order to authentically integrate families and teachers in discussions and in testing their own changes.
- Elevating and amplifying the voices, perspectives, experiences, and tests done by those who may not be as vocal or heard as often (e.g. parent representatives, assistant teachers, etc.).
- Continuously and authentically validating the good work that centers are doing.
- Honoring the various challenges that ECE staff often face.
- Creating a culture in the shared learning environment in which praise is common and gratitude is the norm.

Joyful Adult Learning: Part of the BSC methodology relies on the active engagement of participants in their own learning. We know a great deal about adult learning, and most research tells us that experiential education—learning by doing—is how most people learn best. Thus, meetings and learning opportunities should be built upon and structured around this concept. We recommend that Implementation Teams challenge themselves to craft teaching moments in ways that never include more than 15 minutes of didactic presentation. An important part of adult learning is reflection—the opportunity to think about and consider what an experience felt for individuals and what they learned. This helps in the application and integration into participants' daily practice and adapting to each unique context. Ideas include:

- Develop and use games as metaphors to teach complex concepts. For example, we used tennis balls and a peg board game to teach the PDSA cycles (see Box D).
- Modify children's learning activities to teach adults, such as story-telling cards to understand deeper relationship building and using puppets and role plays to model practices related to family engagement.

Box D. Using Tennis Balls to Teach PDSA Cycles

This is a thirty-minute experiential exercise that helps participants understand the value of Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles (PDSA; small tests of change) and sharing information across teams in real-time. Teams learn to make changes for the purpose of improvement, measure improvements, share (and steal) lessons learned, apply and adapt successes, and try not to spend more time planning than doing.

Each table forms a team of 5–10 people that works together throughout the exercise to try to achieve the goals of the game (the "improvement measures"): 1) time and 2) ball drops.

Teams establish a ball-passing order and then are instructed to identify a single strategy that would maintain the passing order, decrease their time, and decrease their ball drops. The single strategy is their PDSA, and the data they collect each round is their data for improvement.

After each round, participants share across teams to model the opportunity to "steal shamelessly" from other teams as they learn and improve, using small tests of change and data to assess their progress.

- Create opportunities for small group conversations so that everyone can be actively engaged in dialogues and have meaningful discussions.
- Use a fast-paced format that keeps participants moving during longer Learning Sessions to mirror the pace they are accustomed to during their day, rather than being asked to sit passively for long periods of time. Be mindful of diverse abilities and be ready to be responsive.
- Mirror the child care/school environment with activities such as "virtual field trips" in which centers can share some highlights with one another and a "BSC yearbook" to highlight centers' progress over the course of the BSC.
- Make sure that resources and strategies are specifically relevant to the ECE setting, including routines, handbooks, staff meetings, etc.
- Provide structured opportunities for reflection—asking participants to reflect on what they are learning through journaling, sharing with a partner, or talking in a small group.
- Create activities and learning opportunities that are anchored in creativity, such as role plays, dancing, music, crafts, storytelling, etc.

Staff Well-Being: Staff well-being should be woven through every aspect of interaction with all BSCs that address issues related to children and families. While it is absolutely connected to the ingredients of relationships, respect, and trust, staff well-being deserves its own listing. Staff in ECE centers have incredibly hard jobs—now more than ever. A BSC needs to build in staff well-being as part of its focus on organizational culture. Regardless of whether staff well-being is a section in a BSC's Collaborative Change Framework or Driver Diagram, it is something to attend to in purposeful ways. Strategies for the Implementation Team include:

- Building ample time into Learning Sessions for mindful moments, breathing, self-care, and other opportunities to reinforce the fact that staff well-being is not something that should only happen outside of work time.
- Honoring and recognizing how culture is key to center staff's strength and well-being.
- Normalizing the stress and discomfort of the job and validating how important the work is, including the work of improvement and change in order to improve outcomes for children and families.
- Taking time on calls to check on participants personally and not just always focusing on "the work." Staff well-being, along with staff relationships, are critical parts of the work.

> *There is no one single way to support staff well-being, but racial equity, cultural humility and inclusion are always essential parts of wellness.*

- Validating and celebrating centers when they model caring for staff well-being in concrete and practical ways, especially when the strategies can be adapted and/or replicated by others.
- Being mindful of competing priorities and demands when scheduling by giving participants ample time to complete assignments, schedule calls and activities, attend meetings, and actively participate (see Section 3, Core Competencies and Infrastructure, for reminders about the importance of thoughtful and intentional scheduling).

- Building well-being into the organizational culture, systems, and infrastructure. Well-being is more than self-care activities such as a yoga class, manicures, or massages that teachers are expected to squeeze into their already busy days. Well-being needs to be part of the foundation of the center itself.
- Devoting time and attention to reflection, mindfulness, and relationships and recognizing that these elements are critical to staff well-being.

As the team embarks upon their own BSC, consider which "cooking techniques" will provide the secret sauce that is needed. The team will need to rely on creativity, passion, skill, humility, warmth, humor, flexibility, and boundless energy. Different groups have entirely different dynamics, and a BSC that is being done virtually may have an entirely different feel than one in which participants can get together in person and share a meal. (See Section 6 for more on leading a virtual BSC.) While the techniques may vary at different points during the BSC, all five of the ingredients described here in this section are essential. Implementation Team members may mix these ingredients in a variety of ways but omitting even one ingredient means the final result isn't what it would be if the Implementation Team included all the ingredients.

Well-Being as a Part of Organizational Culture

One center in the BSC-SEL instituted a "Take Five" practice in which teachers could call a "Take Five" when they needed a break and someone would step in and give them a five-minute break to step away. The center even developed a clever poem and visible poster as a reminder to encourage and normalize the practice.

6. Early Lessons Learned about Leading Virtual BSCs

Recognizing that times today are significantly different than when past BSCs have been done, here are a few hints and tips for conducting a BSC during and following the Covid-19 pandemic, where all of the interactions that have been described in this guide may be virtual rather than in-person.

Relationships, relationships, relationships

Continue to focus on relationships within centers and across centers. Just because there may be little to no in-person interaction, relationships at every level are to the core of the BSC.

Time intensiveness for planning

It actually takes even more time to plan for virtual activities. There is less time to deliver the content that is needed to be share. There is a greater need to be active and engaging, as keeping participants engaged virtually is tremendously difficult. Moreover, trying to make virtual learning activities, especially those related to team-building, engaging requires both technical planning and practice before doing with actual centers. Planning a virtual Learning Session can take four to five times longer than in-person Learning Sessions!

Technological expertise

While not listed as a required Implementation Team competency in the previous section, additional comprehensive technological expertise is needed to deliver engaging virtual experiences. There will need to be team members who have technical expertise in online video conferencing and learning platforms to support all of the other content, process, and logistical details.

Creativity

Creativity is always part of BSCs, but when translating activities to a virtual platform, it is important to find ways to mirror and recreate some of the most engaging in-person activities in a virtual setting. For instance, host a virtual coffee hour, hallway chat, or table talk by using breakout rooms and different types of structured and unstructured activities.

Time considerations for attention span

For effective learning, people cannot tolerate more than 50 minutes at a single sitting. This means planning shorter sessions for large groups with many smaller breakout sessions that allow for discussion and interaction. The longest single day recommended for a virtual Learning Session is about five hours, and it may be preferable to do two consecutive three-hour virtual sessions to keep participants engaged and fresh.

The longest day recommended for a virtual session is about five hours.

Engagement of participants

Do everything possible to keep participants engaged. Play music during breaks and encourage everyone who is comfortable to keep their video cameras on throughout (except while taking breaks and being flexible to participants' needs and preferences). Use surveys, polling, the chat function, small group breakout sessions, and activities. Take breaks every hour. Do chair yoga, mindfulness activities, and stretch breaks. Keep people moving and talking to prevent them from getting "Zoom fatigue." One challenge we have continued to see when leading virtual Learning Sessions is that participants are not always able to protect the time as they can when they are away from the center. They get pulled in and out of the session because they are right there, physically in the center. Reminding participants of planned break times—and sticking to them—can be a helpful way to keep this to a minimum.

Although everyone prefers to be in-person and there is so much more richness when we can be together, see each other face-to-face, sit around a table together, share coffee and snacks, and be able to read body language and engagement from the front of the room, the reality is that a BSC can still happen virtually. And as long as transformation and improvement is a desired goal for our organizations, it's still worth it. That being said, if it is ever a choice between virtual and in-person, nothing can top the relational, collaborative, engaging spirit of an in-person BSC!

Key Considerations for Conducting a Virtual BSC in ECE

In considering whether to conduct a BSC virtually (or any aspect of a BSC virtually), keep in mind that although it may feel more economical or convenient in the short run (i.e., no costs for space or travel and easier to avoid asking teachers and staff to leave their centers for a day or two), it has some real disadvantages:

- Meaningful relationships across center teams are much harder to develop and promote.
- Participants are more distracted and less likely to protect their time.
- Learning and content must be condensed into much shorter timeframes than desirable resulting in less content and an inability to go as deeply into the content.
- Some important conversations and dialogues, such as racial equity and family partnership, are extremely difficult to have in virtual forums outside of trusting relationships.

Virtual formats may be used for a single Learning Session, but they are far from ideal for an entire BSC.

Final thoughts

A BSC starts with the end in mind: What will centers accomplish and what can be done to help them get there? What needs to be adjusted along the way? How can high expectations be shared and maintained while being supportive? How can the Implementation Team model what they most want centers to do?

Remember that this guide is not a manual or a cookbook. The Implementation Team will always be thinking, changing, reacting, responding, brainstorming, and tweaking. The learning that happens between the BSC activities and events (including calls) is just as important—if not more important—than the activities and events themselves.

This guide highlights the interconnectedness of the technical and relational components of implementing a BSC. This unique quality improvement methodology equips, empowers, and supports participants to lead change, learn by doing, and co-create a culture of continuous and collaborative learning.

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Appendix A: Glossary

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Action Period	Action Period	Period between Learning Sessions when Core BSC teams collected metrics data and tested changes in practice by using the Model for Improvement and PDSAs. The Sustainability Action Period took place after the fourth and final learning session.
Affinity group	affinity group	Role-specific groups (Senior Leader, Team Leader, teacher, and parent) facilitated by faculty coaches to bring Core BSC team members with similar roles and from different centers together to share progress and challenges with the BSC methodology, and to share ideas for PDSAs.
All-team calls	all-team calls	Videoconferencing calls facilitated by Implementation Team Members to bring together all Core BSC teams to share progress, challenges, and ideas for PDSAs typically conducted on a monthly basis and focused on specific pre-identified topics.
Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC or "Collaborative")	BSC or Collaborative	A quality improvement methodology aimed at helping organizations build a shared knowledge of evidence-based best practices and an understanding of how to implement improvements within their unique contexts.
BSC artifacts	BSC artifacts	Administrative documents collected by the Implementation Team Members over the course of the BSC-SEL. These documents included ECE center applications to participate in the BSC-SEL, completed assignments from the Pre-Work Day, monthly metrics submissions, attendance trackers, PDSA trackers, site visit notes, Basecamp postings, and Learning Session evaluations collected from attendees.
BSC-SEL	BSC-SEL	The name of the BSC implemented in early care and education centers focused on social and emotional learning (SEL). The SEL content for the BSC-SEL was based on the **Pyramid Model**.

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Basecamp	Basecamp	Basecamp is a cloud-based application that provides tools for team collaboration online, using message boards, timelines, file sharing, and task assignments. Core BSC teams posted pictures of their PDSA forms, commented on others' posts, asked questions, and shared resources related to SEL and quality improvement.
Collaborative Change Framework (CCF; *also known as the Driver Diagram***)**	CCF	A guiding document for a BSC to guide the changes tested by teams. In the BSC-SEL the CCF was based on the Pyramid Model that outlined key elements or primary drivers linked to SEL outcomes. The CCF broke down each primary driver into secondary drivers, or specific opportunities and strategies, that centers could try out and test over the course of the BSC-SEL to influence and improve children's SEL outcomes.
Culture of Continuous Learning Project (CCL)	Culture of Continuous Learning Project (CCL)	Culture of Continuous Learning project that included implementing the BSC methodology and studying its feasibility in ECE centers.
Core BSC teams/ cross-role team	Core BSC team/ cross-role team	Multi-level, inclusive teams from each ECE center participating in the BSC-SEL. Each team is made up of representatives from different center leadership levels (e.g., program directors, administrative staff, teachers, and parents). Each team appointed a senior leader (typically a center director) and a team leader (typically an administrative staff person or teacher). These teams were direct participants in the BSC methodology.
Driver Diagram *(also known as the Collaborative Change Framework)*	Driver Diagram	A guiding document for a BSC to guide the changes tested by teams. In the BSC-SEL the Driver Diagram was based on the Pyramid Model that outlined key elements or primary drivers linked to SEL outcomes. The Driver Diagram broke down each primary driver into secondary drivers, or specific opportunities and strategies, that centers could try out and test over the course of the BSC-SEL to influence and improve children's SEL outcomes.
ECE	ECE	Early care and education

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Embedded case study design	embedded case study design	Study design that includes embedded cross-site comparisons
Expert faculty coaches	faculty coaches	Individuals who have specific content expertise related to the BSC who serve as advisors to the Implementation Team (faculty) and as coaches to the participating BSC teams. In the BSC-SEL, faculty coaches included an ECE teacher, a parent, an ECE Director, an ECE policymaker, and a trainer in the Pyramid model,
Feasibility Study Team	Feasibility Study Team	Researchers, from Child Trends, who led the study assessing the feasibility of using the BSC methodology in ECE centers.
Implementation Team/BSC Implementers	Implementation Team	Experts in BSC methodology and ECE program operations who facilitated the BSC and oversaw implementation in participating centers as part of the project staff.
Inquiry mindset	inquiry mindset	The way people "approach their problems of practice with curiosity and a desire to test possible solutions and strategies to learn what works and what may not work" (Douglass et al., 2019).
Learning Sessions	Learning Sessions	Full-day, in-person meetings offered over the course of a BSC for all Core BSC team members that 1) focused on various topics, or drivers, for making improvements in practices; 2) taught key quality improvement concepts and tools; 3) provided time for teams to develop and make plans for the period of time in between Learning Sessions. In the BSC-SEL, there were four full-day Learning Sessions over a ten-month period.
Mechanisms	mechanisms	In the CCL Theory of Change, the dynamics and mindsets that specify how the outputs "activate changes that result in achieving the short-term and long-term outcomes."

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Model for Improvement	Model for Improvement	Three key questions that help Core BSC teams clarify their goals for improvement, establish measures to determine if a specific change actually leads to an improvement, and select the most important changes to work towards. The three questions are: 1) what are we trying to accomplish? 2) how do we know a change is an improvement? and 3) what changes can we test that will result in improvement?
Monthly metrics	monthly metrics	Monthly data collected by Core BSC teams and submitted to BSC Implementation Team to help teams quantify their progress in key domains of the CCF. In the BSC-SEL, monthly metrics included children's behaviors and two-way communication with families.
Other center staff	other center staff	Early care and education staff who are not members of the Core-BSC team.
Outputs	outputs	In the CCL theory of change, the "primary activities and products of the BSC process (e.g. learning sessions, monthly metrics, Action Periods)" (Douglass et al., 2019).
Plan Do Study Act cycle (PDSA)	PDSA	A continuous quality improvement process that Core BSC teams used to test and make improvements. A single PDSA cycle involves planning to test a small change, conducting the work to make the change, studying the effects of the change, and acting on what was learned (by adjusting what was done, abandoning the test, or scaling up the change).
Pre-work	pre-work	A series of assignments done by BSC teams prior to the first Learning Session. Some assignments are conducted during the Pre-Work Day while others are done in the time between the Pre-Work Day and Learning Session 1. Assignments often include developing a team name, a team motto, completed a self-assessment based on the CCF, developing a data collection plan, and creating a "storyboard" for their team.

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Pre-Work Day	Pre-Work Day	An introductory in-person kick-off session held before the first Learning Session to help Core BSC teams get oriented to the BSC methodology, assess their center based on the CCF, and get to know the faculty coaches and other BSC teams.
Psychological safety	psychological safety	The feeling people develop when they "begin to feel more safety around sharing their opinions, voicing new or different ideas, testing changes on their own, sharing data, learning from both successes and failures, and learning from one another."
Pyramid Model	Pyramid Model	The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children is a framework of evidence-based practices that support social and emotional competence in infants and young children that provided the content delivered through the BSC-SEL. It guided the creation of the CCF for the BSC-SEL.
SEL	SEL	Social and emotional learning
Senior Leader	Senior Leader	High-level administrator or leader from the center (e.g., Center Director) participating in the BSC. This person is responsible for providing leadership, support, and advocacy on behalf of the BSC team. They also focus on how successful changes tested by the team can be scaled up, spread, and sustained.
Short-term outcomes	short-term outcomes	The desired increase in knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes as a result of the mechanisms that "activate individual and collective learning and improvement"
Structures	structures	The secondary outputs produced by the BSC that "foster new routines for collaborative professional learning, building relationships, and improving communication."
Team leader (or team manager)	Team Leader	Center staff member who oversees team activities and actively guides the work of the BSC team. They serve as the liaison for all BSC-related assignments and activities, including data. Possible team leaders might include an associate director, education coordinator, or family engagement specialist.

Term	How the term appears in the middle of a sentence	Definition
Work processes	work processes	The secondary outputs produced by "the BSC that teach participants how to change practices by using tools to collect and use data to inform tests of change and improvement."

Appendix B: Collaborative Change Framework

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to support social and emotional learning in early education and head start

Collaborative Change Framework

Introduction

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start is being sponsored by the Culture of Continuous Learning (CCL) Project, funded by the federal Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, to assess the feasibility of implementing a BSC in child care and Head Start settings. UMASS Boston is leading the BSC in which eight child care and Head Start programs in Boston, MA will participate. This unique quality improvement collaborative will take place over the course of a one-year period as programs make improvements in their practices, policies, and environments to support children's social and emotional learning (SEL), using the Pyramid Model from the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). The Pyramid model has been extensively studied in early childhood and early childhood special education settings, and is used widely in child care and Head Start programs.

What Is a Breakthrough Series Collaborative?

The Breakthrough Series Collaborative methodology differs from other ECE quality improvement initiatives as it supports change by building capacity and recognizing leaders across an organization, rather than through a single coach or consultant. It promotes change through collaborative teams that include staff at all levels and families, and engages teams in problem-solving that takes local context into account. A goal of the BSC is to spread and sustain change. BSCs have supported practice and process improvements in the health, child trauma, and child welfare fields, but has not yet been widely tested in ECE. It includes:

- Learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills in social and emotional learning and quality improvement.
- Collaborative teams (teachers, administrators, and families) working with faculty and BSC staff to become skilled at quality improvement, to set specific goals and test improvements.
- A Collaborative Change Framework that is the roadmap for teams to move beyond concepts in Social and Emotional Learning to actual change strategies.
- A supportive learning collaborative where teams network, learn from one another, share ideas and problem solve challenges together.
- Collecting and using data to learn about what is going well and where improvements are needed.
- Small tests of change, or Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles (PDSAs), to build evidence to make and spread improvements in early childhood care and education settings.

What Is the Collaborative Change Framework?

The Collaborative Change Framework (CCF) is the *content* anchor for all work that is done by teams in the BSC. It serves a roadmap throughout the BSC to guide teams' assessment of their strengths and challenges, where they can improve, and what changes to test as well as tracking their progress over time. The CCF describes **the need and opportunity** for improving

social and emotional learning in child care and Head Start and the **overarching aims** that the centers in the Collaborative seek to achieve through adopting evidence-based practices in SEL. The **driver diagram** describes *what* elements (primary drivers) must change in a child care or Head Start program and *how* those elements must change (secondary drivers) to achieve the aims of the BSC. This CCF was developed by examining the research and practice guidance from the Pyramid Model, and gathering the expertise of faculty, coaches, and practitioners in the field.

The need and opportunity for improving social and emotional learning practices

From infancy onward, children's growing ability to express, understand, and regulate emotions and to form social connections are essential to their development. Socially- and emotionally-competent children understand their own and others' emotions, form positive relationships, and have developmentally appropriate levels of self-regulation. They are more likely to take advantage of learning opportunities in the classroom and to achieve academic success as they move through school. Social and emotional development has received considerable attention from the early childhood research and practice communities (e.g., Denham, 2006; Feldman Barrett, Lewis, & Haviland-Jones, 2016; Hyson, 2004). This attention has focused on two of the overarching aims for teacher practices: 1) to increase positive social behavior in young children and 2) to reduce challenging behaviors (Hemmeter & Fox, 2008).

It is widely recognized that social and emotional learning is an area in which instructional quality can be improved and teachers often express interest in additional supports (Cimino, Forrest, Smith, & Stainback-Tracy, 2007; Fox et al., 2003; Hemmeter & Fox, 2008). For example, challenging behaviors is an area for which early educators frequently seek additional professional development supports (Cimino et al., 2007). Early educators play a key role when it comes to supporting the development of young children's social skills and positive behaviors. Early learning policies reflect a growing attention to enhancing teaching quality in this domain, as demonstrated in the prioritization of social-emotional health in the reauthorized CCDBG and in Head Start. In addition, recent policy statements from both Head Start[d] and federal agencies address expulsion and suspension practices in early care and education settings (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2016) resulting in a growing need for teachers to be equipped with the right skills to manage challenging behavior in the classroom with a culturally competent approach.

A commonly used approach to promoting SEL is the Pyramid model intervention (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003). The Pyramid model (Fox et al., 2003) has been extensively studied in early childhood and early childhood special education settings, and is used widely in child care and Head Start programs in Massachusetts. The model was developed to provide early educators with guidance on how to support young children's social-emotional development and address challenging behavior. It clearly articulates the teaching practices that support children at three levels: universal/primary strategies, targeted/secondary strategies, and individualized/tertiary strategies.

Overarching aims

Over the course of the BSC, all teams will be striving to achieve three overarching aims:

- Increase the number of classrooms that show improvement in providing high quality, SEL environments;
- Increase children's social and emotional competence; and
- Reduce challenging behaviors.

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[d] See http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-16-01 for links to new requirements in the Head Start Performance Standards about expulsions and suspensions.

The Driver Diagram

The five primary drivers in this CCF, along with their related secondary drivers, describe the structures, processes, practices, and norms required for social and emotional learning practices to be adopted by participating centers in the BSC and for teams to achieve the overarching aims.

1. **Nurturing, responsive and supportive relationships and environments** are critical factors in supporting social and emotional development and promoting appropriate, pro-social behaviors. Children learn and develop through their relationships with adults. By building nurturing, positive relationships with children, teachers can support children's self-esteem, sense of safety, and positively influence behavior. The design of classrooms, schedules and activities can contribute to promoting children's positive engagement in their environments and prevent challenging behaviors.

2. **Teaching social skills and emotional competencies** *in the context of children's culture and language*: Children develop social skills and emotional competencies through explicit teaching of emotional literacy, problem-solving skills, and positive peer relationship skills and practicing those skills with the support of teachers in daily interactions and when challenges arise.

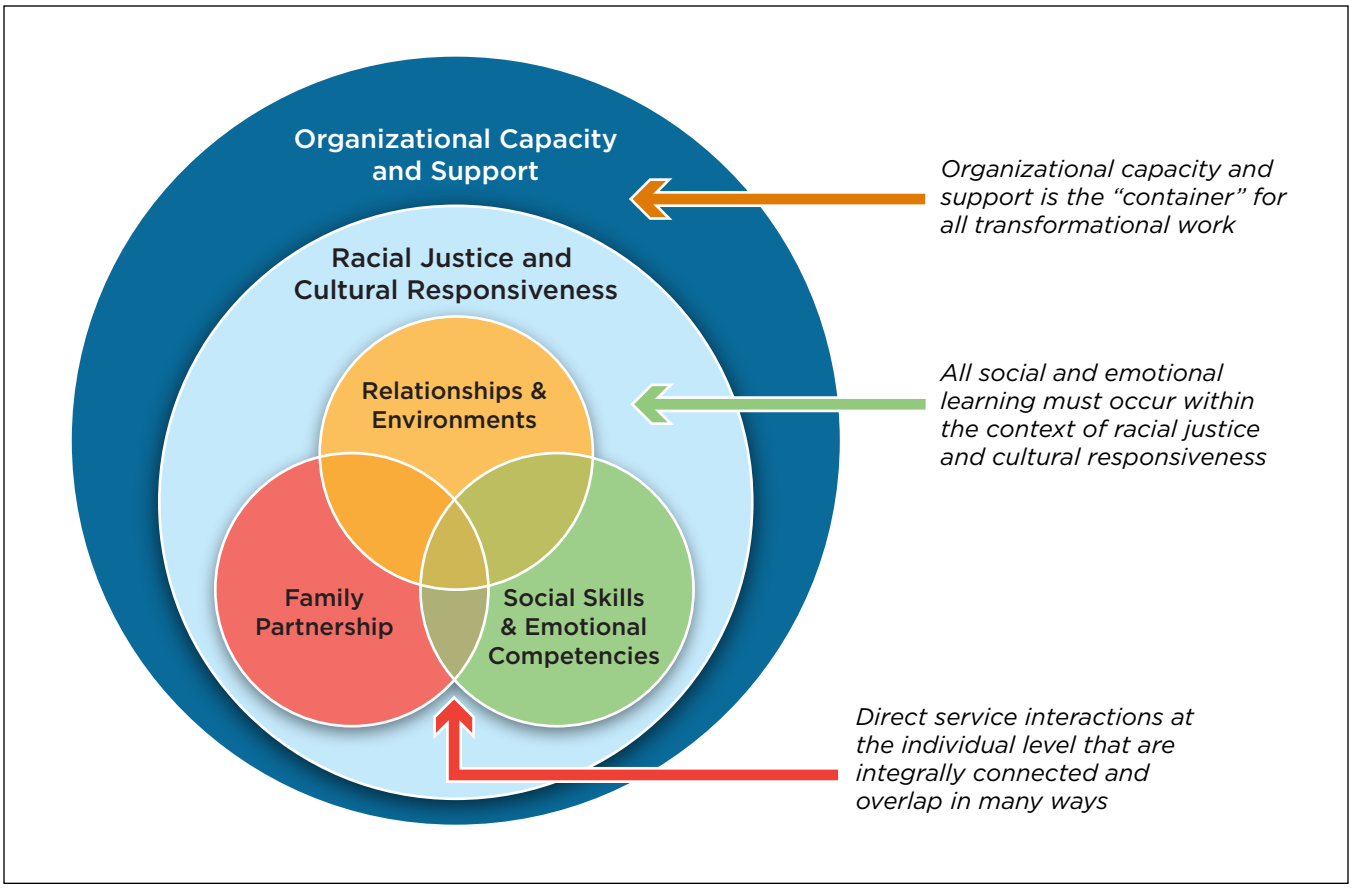
3. **Family partnership** *to promote the adoption of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) practices*: Families are children's first teachers. It is critical for early education centers to collaborate with families to promote their children's social and emotional development at home and in the center through developing positive relationships with parents, promoting parents' confidence and competence, and connecting to concrete supports when needed.

4. **Racial equity and cultural responsiveness** *in promoting the adoption of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) practices*: To implement the Pyramid Model effectively, centers must address implicit bias and promote cultural responsiveness and equity. These are essential to nurturing positive adult-child relationships; supporting positive adult-adult relationships (staff-staff and staff-families); promoting positive identity development for children; and reducing inequities in perceptions of and responses to children's behaviors, including decisions about disciplinary actions.

5. **Organizational capacity and support** *to promote the adoption of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) practices*: In order to support the social and emotional development of children, teachers must feel valued, respected, and supported by their colleagues and leadership as well as have the tools, resources and training necessary to effectively implement the Pyramid Model practices.

Figure 12 provides a visual display of the inter-relationships among the five primary drivers in this BSC. Although we know that the primary drivers are inter-related and inter-connected, calling them out as distinct helps break the more complex issues into discrete and manageable "chunks." The drivers help teams recognize the need for change at various "levels" of their system.

Figure 12. How the Five Primary Drivers Are Related and Connected



Source: Field Guide Authors (Agosti, Doyle, Douglass, & Mendes, 2021).

Each of these primary drivers is then further broken down into more specific opportunities and strategies that centers can test out in practice called Secondary Drivers, described in the figure below:

Figure 13. Driver Diagram

Primary Drivers	Secondary Drivers
Relationships and Environments	• Design classrooms in responsive ways • Develop and maintain predictable schedules, routines and activities to promote smooth transitions • Design activities to promote engagement • Provide directions • Teach behavior expectations • Teachers develop nurturing, meaningful relationships with children and colleagues
Social Skills and Emotional Competencies	• Teach children to express emotions appropriately • Teach children problem solving skills • Teach children positive peer relationship skills • Encourge children's autonomy • Embed opportunities for children to practice skills in daily routines and interactions • Use effective strategies to respond to challenging behaviors
Family Partnership	• Use open, consistent communication with families • Invite and support parent participation in the classroom and center • Develop positive, respectful, meaningful, culturally affirming relationships with families • Connect families to concrete supports in times of need • Collaborate with families to support the parent-child relationship and the families' promotion of their child's social and emotional competencies • Support/promote parent confidence/competence (parental resilience)
Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	• Have and use a system to collect and review data by race/ethnicty, language, gender, and ability • Provide ongoing professional development and reflection opportunities for staff on cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and race equity • Honor and reflect diverse identities and families in the classroom and center environment • Develop clear policies and guidelines for preventing challenging behaviors that are free from bias, and ensure equity and fairness
Organizational Capacity and Support	• Create a culture of collaboration in the classroom and center • Use facilitative leadership and reflective supervision • Support healthy staff, stress-reduction, adult relational competencies, self-regulation • Use data systems to track behavior and social and emotional competence • Ensure access to mental health consultation to support individualized interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviors, disabilities, or developmental challenges • Maintain effective staffing patterns (ratios, hours, breaks, time off, staffing consistency, primary caregiver model, continuity of care model) • Nurture a positive workplace climate where staff feel supported and valued • Provide ongoing training and coaching

Appendix C: Overall Checklist of Key BSC Activities

How Do You Manage a BSC?

Activities Related to Before Site Selection

✔ Development of Collaborative Change Framework

- ☐ Identify the aim
- ☐ Adapt an existing CCF to ensure it has a clear scope, mission, aim, and driver diagram that can effectively guide the work of participating centers
- ☐ Convene Expert Meeting

✔ Development of Monthly Metrics

- ☐ Identify metrics to assess progress in the CCF domains
- ☐ Determine what is realistic for centers to collect and what will be sensitive to real-time change
- ☐ Test the collection of metrics

✔ Development of Timeline and Workplan

- ☐ Schedule dates for all Learning Sessions (meetings) and calls
- ☐ Determine lead times for meeting and call planning and preparation
- ☐ Include who has responsibility for the various tasks

✔ Selection of Expert Faculty Coaches

- ☐ Identify perspectives needed to support center-based teams
- ☐ Identify individuals who reflect those various perspective
- ☐ Understand the expertise and skills potential faculty coaches possess
- ☐ Determine availability, expectations for involvement, and possible compensation if/as appropriate
- ☐ Share a clear role description
- ☐ Lead various activities and experiences that both teach and model the various roles of faculty

Activities Related to Center Selection

✔ Outreach to Potential Centers

- ☐ Develop materials and tools for outreach
- ☐ Identify dissemination channels and opportunities to get the word out about the BSC
- ☐ Develop readiness checklist or guide for pre-requisites to apply
- ☐ Connect with Senior Leaders at potential centers
- ☐ Keep track of outreach and contact efforts

✔ Application Process

- ☐ Balance the information needed to assess readiness and commitment with being minimally burdensome for centers to complete
- ☐ Design questions that will both help select centers and help centers reflect on what their strengths, challenges and goals are
- ☐ Remember that the application process for a BSC is a "mutual selection process"
- ☐ Develop clear selection guidance and criteria for reviewing and rating centers
- ☐ Develop an informational packet with questions to ensure centers have a clear understanding of BSC expectations

✔ Clear Expectations for Centers

- ☐ Create and deliver clear messaging about the value of participating in the BSC
- ☐ Clearly describe the costs of site participation, including time and resources needed
- ☐ Notify centers shortly after the application period to model the responsiveness and rapid pace of the BSC methodology
- ☐ Be very clear and specific about dates, times, upcoming calls, assignments, and the BSC internet site for collaboration
- ☐ Create and invite all participants to a BSC collaborative website

Activities Related to Onboarding and Welcome/Orientation

✔ Outreach to Individual Centers

- ☐ Reinforce all of the expectations you shared throughout the outreach and selection process
- ☐ Deepen and expand those relationships
- ☐ Provide an opportunity for centers and team members to ask questions and get a feel for the BSC

✔ Welcome Packet with Pre-Work Activities

- ☐ Include in the welcome packet brief bios or statements of commitment from the Implementation Team and faculty coaches
- ☐ Use a center team-building activity, such as the creation of a team name and motto, for the first pre-work activity
- ☐ Invite centers to create a storyboard that they'll be asked to share at the pre-work day
- ☐ Use the initial activities to underscore the importance of shared goals and relationship building within each team

✔ Shared Learning Environment: Calls

- ☐ Facilitate Senior Leader calls
- ☐ Host one or two all-team calls (where every member of each center-based team participates) prior to the pre-work day
- ☐ Avoid leading calls (during pre-work and beyond) that are didactic or involve long presentations

✔ Shared Learning Environment: BSC Website

- ☐ Make sure the website is up and ready to go immediately upon center selection
- ☐ Develop a clear user guide
- ☐ Have a resource library set up that is easy to navigate
- ☐ Do a lot of testing from various locations, organizations, and computers
- ☐ Assign a designated Implementation Team member to manage technical issues
- ☐ Consider writing a monthly newsletter to share highlights of what is happening in the BSC

✔ Preparing for Monthly Metrics

- ☐ Develop clear guidance and concrete examples of what will be collected
- ☐ Offer individual consultation and support as needed
- ☐ Help centers recognize and understand that these metrics should be useful for them
- ☐ Support each center in developing a specific plan on how they will collect the metrics each month
- ☐ Designate specific members of the Implementation Team to manage the various aspects of metrics collection and use
- ☐ Encourage centers to designate their own data point person
- ☐ Develop template reports that can be used for all centers' monthly reports

Activities Related to Pre-Work Day

✔ Planning and Administration

- ☐ Consider whether the pre-work day can be in-person if at all possible
- ☐ Make a list of all of the space needs for the sessions
- ☐ Do a walk through or in-person visit prior to the meeting
- ☐ Share clear directions and instructions about the logistics multiple times
- ☐ If the session cannot be in-person, consider doing a virtual session of roughly 3-4 hours

✔ Outreach and Relationships

- ☐ Find various opportunities to reach out to and connect with participants on an individual level
- ☐ Be responsive
- ☐ Reach out frequently about the pre-work day

✔ Agenda and Flow

- ☐ Develop an agenda that is fast-paced and active
- ☐ Craft interesting and engaging activities to convey important concepts and material
- ☐ Invite and inspire creativity
- ☐ Engage the faculty coaches so that participants get to know them around their areas of expertise
- ☐ Coach and facilitate sites in completing a Self-Assessment that is based on the CCF
- ☐ Use technology and the BSC website for real-time data entry
- ☐ Provide individual support on monthly metrics

✔ Expectations and Follow-Up

- ☐ Provide a clear walk through of all of the activities that have been done over the course of the day and describe what will be done with each
- ☐ Have a clear and simple plan for how centers should complete the work that wasn't completed during the pre-work day
- ☐ Provide all participants with clear next steps, including dates
- ☐ Identify times and a schedule for the various Affinity Groups to have their monthly calls
- ☐ Share an overview of what the first Learning Session will look like and what they can anticipate
- ☐ Ask participants to fill out an evaluation of the pre-work day

Activities Related to Learning Sessions

✔ Planning and Administration

- ☐ Start planning the administrative details roughly three months before the actual Learning Session
- ☐ Learn from your experiences with the pre-work day
- ☐ Touch base with Senior Leaders and team members for additional feedback
- ☐ Ensure that participants are comfortable and in the "right place" mentally to learn and engage

✔ Content Development

- ☐ Brainstorm topics with faculty coaches based on centers' strengths and challenges
- ☐ Carefully review centers' strengths and challenges based on their self-assessments, notes from calls, and individual contacts
- ☐ Organize centers' strengths and challenges based on the domains in the CCF
- ☐ Identify highlights from centers to bring into the Learning Session agendas
- ☐ Use the Learning Session agenda development process to model the BSC methodology

✔ Agenda Flow

- ☐ Reserve time for the four distinct parts of a Learning Sessions
- ☐ Meet centers where they are, while also trying to pull them forward
- ☐ Teach "a few lessons ahead
- ☐ Be thoughtful about the flow of the sessions

✔ Faculty Engagement and Roles

- ☐ Have a clearly designated Implementation Team member as liaison
- ☐ Develop and nurture the relationships with the faculty coaches in the same way you do with center and participants
- ☐ Play to the unique strengths of faculty coaches in planning Learning Sessions
- ☐ Position the faculty coaches as humble experts to the centers
- ☐ Actively engage them in brainstorming, thinking, and analytic activities, especially when developing Learning Session agendas
- ☐ Maintain high expectations for faculty coaches, just as you do for centers

✔ Developmental Arc of Learning Sessions

- ☐ Keep in mind where each center is relative to the overall objectives for each Learning Session in the developmental arc

Activities Related to Action Periods

✔ Supporting the Shared Learning Environment: Calls and Online Communication

- ☐ Designate an Implementation Team member to manage and monitor the calendar
- ☐ Anticipate and try to stay roughly two weeks ahead with agenda planning, faculty coach leads, facilitation, key questions
- ☐ Reach out to faculty coaches for planning agendas, developing slides, and thinking through all-team calls and affinity group calls
- ☐ Identify and reach out to centers to present and/or co-lead content based on their own areas of success
- ☐ Send call reminders to participants one week ahead of time with any key questions that will be asked
- ☐ Make discussions as concrete and specific as possible
- ☐ Develop a plan to ensure someone from the team responds quickly and consistently to postings on the BSC website

✔ Individual Team Consultation: PDSAs, Metrics, Progress

- ☐ Encourage and support centers to have very regular (ideally once a week) meetings internally
- ☐ Develop simple ways for centers to track and share their PDSAs and metrics
- ☐ Provide clear expectations that centers will be developing and testing their own PDSAs continuously throughout the BSC
- ☐ Provide clear expectations for posting and sharing PDSAs
- ☐ Provide feedback on the PDSAs posted and shared
- ☐ Develop a metrics tracking system, clear expectations and process for data collection and sharing, reviewing, and providing coaching and feedback, specific to the metrics
- ☐ Provide one individual center consultation opportunity per center
- ☐ Consider developing periodic "progress reports" for centers, likely in preparation for each Learning Session

✔ Faculty Support and Engagement

- ☐ Develop individual relationships with the faculty coaches as well as facilitate the faculty coach team
- ☐ Work with faculty coaches around their designated Affinity Groups
- ☐ Work with faculty coaches to identify content areas for focus on All-Team Calls
- ☐ Identify faculty coaches to lead calls based on content and role
- ☐ Within each Action Period, assign faculty coaches to individual center not for technical assistance and consultation, but for support and outreach

✔ Synthesis of Themes

- ☐ Regularly review the work across centers and identify key themes, strengths, and areas of need
- ☐ Develop process for documenting and sharing information from "the balcony" across the Implementation Team
- ☐ Find ways to share these themes with faculty coaches periodically
- ☐ Find ways to share these themes with BSC center

Appendix D: Sample Workplan and Timeline

Culture of Continuous Learning Project: A Breakthrough Series Collaborative for Improving Child Care and Head Start Quality

Sample Workplan and Timeline

Phase 1. Development of the Collaborative Change Framework (Driver Diagram)

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Finalize content / topic selection	Prior to the development of a driver diagram, the content area must be finalized. This helps form the basis for identifying evidence, including practice and data, both of which are essential elements of the driver diagram development.	Finalize selection of content area and model (Pyramid Model)	1/20/17	
Draft initial driver diagram and Collaborative Change Framework	This driver diagram and change framework serves as the basis for all work that will be done by teams in the BSC. It lays out the aim(s), primary and secondary drivers (levers of change) in which teams will test strategies and ideas to effectively and sustainability implement the work. The driver diagram / framework must be user-friendly, jargon free, culturally responsive, and accessible to multiple perspectives within and outside the early care and education field. The aim(s) will be measurable, and change can be observed and measured over the project period.	Research the Pyramid Model for both child care and Head Start settings to inform the development of the Driver Diagram	Jan-Feb	
		Identify draft aim(s) and possible primary drivers	2/13/17	
		Identify possible secondary drivers	2/17/17	
		Prepare draft of driver diagram to share for feedback	2/21/17	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Solicit feedback and input from identified experts	Because the driver diagram is so integral to the BSC, it is essential to get feedback from a variety of perspectives. The drawn upon in this phase will represent various roles within the early care and education field in the Boston area. These experts are key stakeholders in the local implementation context. Their focus will be specific to the Pyramid Model, and provide insights into the design of the driver diagram. They will also be provided a brief overview of the project.	Identify list of up to 30 invitees for the virtual content focus meeting call series (local Pyramid Model trainers, faculty, early childhood mental health professionals, and program staff)	2/13/17	
		Develop agenda for the calls	2/17/17	
		Invite participants to expert meeting calls	Early Feb. 2017	
		Prepare draft material and share with experts prior to calls	Mid-Feb. 2017	
		Conduct two expert meeting calls with key stakeholders for input and feedback	Late Feb/ Early March 2017	
Establish metrics	Throughout the BSC, participating teams will not only collect and share monthly data, but they will also be taught to use these data to assess their progress (CQI in action). During Phase I, we will identify the set of metrics that teams will be expected to track and use in this way based on the finalized driver diagram.	Identify subgroup from the content expert call series listed above, and invite 3-4 to participate in a third call focused on establishing metrics	Late Feb. 2017	
		Send out invitation for virtual meeting (likely 2 hour call using WebEx)	Early March 2017	
		Draft metrics	Early March 2017	
		Develop agenda for meeting	Early March 2017	
		Send out draft metrics, pre-reading, and key questions to attendees	Mid-March 2017	
		Conduct metrics call	Mid-March 2017	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Finalize driver diagram / CCF	Synthesize feedback from the content expert calls to inform necessary changes in the draft driver diagram.	Pull together notes from discussions with experts	Late March 2017	
		Finalize driver diagram	3/31/17	
		Identify issues/ questions and finalize driver diagram / CCF	Early April 2017	
Finalize metrics	Synthesize feedback from the metrics call to inform necessary changes to the recommended metrics. Discussions within the COR and in partnership with OPRE partners will likely be needed to reach consensus on some issues to ensure clarity, consistency, and comprehensiveness. Factors that will be taken into account to help finalize metrics will include: 1) how well the metrics serve as adequate proxies for the drivers; 2) what is already collected by centers; 3) how easy they are for child care and Head Start centers to collect; 4) how sensitive they are to changes over the period of the BSC; 5) balancing requirements (all teams collect something specific) and flexibility (teams have latitude within some prescribed choices); and 6) the right balance between "enough to see improvement" without overwhelming teams with data requirements.	Pull together notes from discussions with experts	Late March 2017	
		Identify and resolve any remaining key issues in partnership with OPRE	Early April 2017	
		Finalize metrics	4/28/17	
		Draft initial user-friendly guidance for teams on what each metric is, what it indicates, how it might be collected, and what support will be available to collect and interpret it and get feedback from selected local	August 2017	
		Identify key roles in centers (e.g., teachers, lead teachers, administrators, etc.) that need to be part of each BSC core team in order for them to achieve the aims	August 2017	

Phase 2. Develop the Full Implementation Team/Faculty Coaching

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Select faculty	A cadre of faculty (roughly 3-5) will be selected to serve as advisors to the BSC staff team. They will primarily provide teaching, team coaching at Learning Sessions and on monthly calls, and facilitation as they work directly with all teams in-person at the Learning Sessions under the guidance of the BSC project staff. They will also help inform the development of agendas (Learning Sessions and conference calls); and regularly share feedback about team progress, successes, and concerns. One faculty member will be a parent leader, and will facilitate the monthly parent affinity group meetings.	Identify key areas of expertise to be represented by faculty	August 2017	
		Identify potential faculty	August 2017	
		Develop roles/ responsibilities and expectations of faculty	August 2017	
		Develop application based on roles, responsibilities, and expectations; develop individual strengths and needs assessment for use with selected faculty	Late August 2017	
		Disseminate application to potential faculty	September 2017	
		Select and invite faculty	October 2017	
		Sign contracts / agreements with faculty	November 2017	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Begin to build the implementa-tion/ faculty team	Because this team will work closely together for the entire duration of the BSC, building a sense of collaboration, camaraderie, and an esprit de corps among the members is important. This early team-building helps make the team function more effectively as they plan meetings, activities, training, and coaching for the participating sites.	Conduct bimonthly conference calls	Beginning November 2017	
		Guide team members in completing individual strengths and needs assessment related to the BSC work (process and content)	November 2017	
		Compile and synthesize results to identify themes and areas of team strength and need	December 2017	
		Facilitate additional virtual team-building opportunities and activities (online and via phone)	Dec 2017 to Jan 2018	
Conduct 1 day orientation and training for implementa-tion team and faculty	This 1.5 day in-person meeting serves as the culmination of the team-building that happens within the implementation team before the active site selection process begins. It allows the implementation team and faculty to learn more about their individual and collective strengths, as well as for some "level-setting" to occur relative to the BSC methodology as well as the Pyramid Model. It is also provides comprehensive orientation to the driver diagram, process, flow, and logistics of the BSC itself, helping set appropriate expectations for all.	Plan for meeting logistics (date / location)	October 2017	
		Develop agenda and materials for training	October 2017	
		Send out pre-work to participants	November 2017	
		Conduct meeting	Dec 2017 to Jan 2018	
		Synthesize feedback from meeting to identify individual as well as group strengths and needs related to additional training and coaching	Jan. 2018	

Phase 3. Site Exploration/Mutual Team Selection and Preparation

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Active outreach in selected location	Outreach will be conducted with a minimum of 20 sites (with a goal of having 6-8 that will ultimately participate in the BSC). Outreach will involve offering informational meetings to share information and expectations about the project, including a video developed by the Child Trends' communications team to share information about the BSC. During outreach meetings, information will be gathered from sites about their interests and needs.	Develop agenda and materials for informational meetings, including basic assessments to assess site interest, need, readiness, and capacity for OMB Clearance process	April 2017	
		Develop informational video about BSC to be used to inspire interest	June-Aug 2017	
		Identify key stakeholders and potential partners to connect with and recruit potential sites	Sept-Oct 2017	
		Schedule up to 3 informational meetings (logistics including date, time, location)	Sept-Oct 2017	
		Disseminate invitations to meetings together with video, requesting RSVPs to anticipate participation	Oct 2017	
		Host informational meetings	Nov 2017	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Develop selection process	A selection process will be used to identify the teams that ultimately will be invited to participate in the BSC. In this process, prospective teams will be asked to describe their interest in participating in a BSC, share information about how they are currently addressing the Pyramid Model, their strengths and challenges in using evidence-based practices in this area, and their initial goals for improvement. They also will describe how the site has implemented changes or a new program in the past including what went well, their challenges and their organizational approach. Additionally, they will receive details about the expectations and anticipate work related to participation. The selection process will be led by the implementation team with the faculty serving as additional reviewers.	Draft selection information based on driver diagram and metrics	March – April 2017	
		Finalize selection packet for submission to OMB	April 2017	
		Develop review and selection process, including review teams, scoring guidelines, and clear criteria for review and recommendations in consultation with OPRE.	Nov 2017	
		Disseminate selection packet to interested teams (estimated 10-20)	Jan 2018	
		Receive selection packets from interested teams	Feb 2018	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Select 6-8 teams	Based on the responses from interested teams, along with other information that IT members or faculty have about the sites, up to 8 teams will be invited to participate. The selection process will have both an objective portion (scored and rated questions) as well as a subjective portion (other information about the site, especially as it relates to readiness, capacity, context, and leadership). The goal of this process will be to invite all teams that demonstrate the requisite characteristics, thus if 8 or fewer teams submit selection packets, it is possible that all will be invited (although not guaranteed).	Invite all reviewers (including IT and faculty) to individually review and discuss interested teams based on the information submitted	Feb-Mar 2018	
		Convene at least one meeting with each review subcommittee (each subcommittee will have a mix of IT and faculty members) and one meeting with the full selection committee to share recommendations	Feb-Mar 2018	
		Identify strengths and areas of concern for potential teams based on feedback from reviewers	Feb-Mar 2018	
		Use clear process to resolve differences of opinions in selection (e.g., gradients of agreement; identification of "show-stoppers;" etc.)	Feb-Mar 2018	
		Finalize up to 8 selected teams, with identification of issues for follow up	Feb-Mar 2018	
		Memo on site selection process	April 15, 2018	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Prepare teams for expectations of BSC including data, PDSA testing, collection and cross-team sharing, and information about the feasibility study	The BSC has several expectations related to data collection and use as well as sharing work using technology. We have learned from previous experiences that teams often need specific support, technical assistance, and coaching in these areas. Offering this support prior to Learning Session 1 allows teams to "hit the ground running" immediately following the Learning Session, with a focus on the content of the BSC rather than the mechanics. This support will be provided by the implementation team.	Develop interactive shared internet site for BSC teams to use throughout the project to share progress and lessons learned	Mar-Apr 2018	
		Develop "user guide" and clear instructions for teams on using the shared internet site	Apr 2018	
		Provide technical assistance and coaching for teams to access the BSC internet site, with a focus on sharing their strengths, needs, and lessons learned	Apr-May 2018	
		Work with teams individually to review the data they currently collect and how it connects or may be used for the BSC	Apr-May 2018	
		Support teams individually to help them develop a data collection plan that will result in minimal burden for them and maximum usefulness to guiding their discussions, decisions, and progress	Apr-May 2018	
		Help teams collect baseline data based on their own individual data collection plan	Apr-May 2018	
		Provide onsite technical assistance to help teams practice having discussions using their own data, connected explicitly to the driver diagram	Apr-May 2018	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Prepare teams for Learning Session 1	Intentional preparation of teams prior to the first Learning Session: setting specific objectives for team involvement in the BSC, developing a strong sense of "team," introducing the BSC methodology, developing relationships and trust between the sites, project team and faculty, identifying available data, and completing a team self-assessment.	Develop self-assessment based on the driver diagram for OMB Clearance Process	March - April 2017	
		Develop Welcome Packet, complete with conference call dates, Learning Session dates, clear expectations for participation, and a written / signed mutual agreement / letter of commitment	Jan-Feb 2018	
		Share the following documents with teams: pre-work assignments, including team- building, self-assessment, and data collection	Mar-Apr 2018	
		Meet once (either in person or via phone) with each selected team to ensure that teams fully understand the expectations of the Collaborative. Address any questions related to their participation	May 2018	
		Host Senior Leader and Team Leaders calls	May-June 2018	
		Host all-team calls	May-June 2018	
		Host parent leader call	May-June 2018	
		Continue to host faculty calls	Ongoing	

Phase 4. Learning Sessions

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Plan for and conduct Learning Session 1	Each Learning Session is a dynamic and multi-faceted experience that requires a great deal of thought, intentionality, and preparation.	Plan logistics: identify space, media needs, materials, etc.	16 weeks before Learning Session	
		Draft and refine Learning Session 1 agenda based on teams' strengths and needs (observed and self-identified)	8 weeks before Learning Session	
		Finalize Learning Session 1 agenda	4 weeks before Learning Session	
		Draft faculty guide	3 weeks before Learning Session	
		Finalize Learning Session 1 materials	2 weeks before Learning Session	
		Finalize faculty guide	2 weeks before Learning Session	
		Develop onsite logistics plan	3 weeks before Learning Session	
		Host Learning Session 1	June 2018	
		Synthesize evaluations from Learning Session and transcribe notes	July 2018	
		Host faculty debrief call for Learning Session 1	July 2018	
Plan for and conduct Learning Session 2	Same as above		Oct 2018	
Plan for and conduct Learning Session 3	Same as above		Jan 2019	
Plan for and conduct Learning Session 4	Same as above		May 2019	

Phase 5. Action Periods and General Consultation

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Host regular conference calls across the BSC	Facilitating cross-team collaboration throughout the BSC is a core element of the methodology. Thus rather than depending exclusively – or even primarily – on individual technical assistance or coaching, finding ways to support cross-team sharing, learning, support, and accountability is critical. Regular calls, some focused on key topics and others supporting the "affinity groups" across teams, are important strategies to support this collaboration. The affinity groups allow participants to connect with those from other teams who are in "like" roles. This helps validate their role, develop their sense of efficacy and leadership, provides peer support, and helps them identify strategies that work for them.	Develop call schedule for regular monthly topically-focused all-participant calls	Prior to LS1	
		Develop call schedule for Senior Leaders	Prior to LS1	
		Develop call schedule for team leaders	Prior to LS1	
		Develop call schedule for parent leaders	Prior to LS1	
		Develop call schedule for other affinity groups (e.g., teachers, non-teaching staff), as indicated	At LS1	
		Develop call agenda for all calls	2 weeks prior to each call	
		Send out agenda and materials to all participants	1 week prior to each call	
		Host monthly all-participant calls, focused on topics as determined by staff, faculty, and teams	1 per month	
		Host bi-monthly Senior Leader calls, focusing on improvements tested, outcomes, replicability of successes, spread, and sustainability	1 every other month	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
		Host monthly team leader calls, focusing on the dynamics of their teams, collection/use of data, understanding and use of CQI, etc.	Monthly	
		Host affinity group calls, including parent leaders, teachers, non-teaching staff, focusing on topics identified by the affinity groups	Likely monthly for each group	
		Share themes and needs with faculty to plan for 1) individual team support; 2) upcoming call agendas; and 3) upcoming Learning Session	Within two weeks of each call	
		Share themes and needs with all teams to inspire and support cross-team learning (e.g., develop monthly newsletter or highlights)	Within two weeks of each call	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Actively engage teams, affinity groups, and individual participants	In addition to the various monthly calls (all-team calls, Senior Leader calls, affinity team calls) that are used to foster and support an engaged collaborative environment, the IT and faculty will use various strategies to ensure that teams, affinity groups, and individual participants remain actively engaged in all parts of the BSC.	Identify and invite individual teams to share successes on all-team calls, depending on topics and work done by the team	Minimum two weeks prior to each all-team call	
		Identify and invite individuals to lead/host affinity team calls	Minimum two weeks prior to each all-team call	
		Do individual outreach to parent leaders and use other strategies to support continuous participation	Quarterly (or as needed if engage-ment wanes	
		Offer quarterly in-person affinity team meetings	Quarterly	
		Use the online site to encourage individual and team sharing and celebration	Every other week	

Key Activity	Brief Description	Key Tasks	Planned Timeframe	Primary Responsibility
Provide continuous feedback to teams to inform their improvement strategies and build their capacity in quality improvement. Identify themes across the BSC for continuous feedback to inform implementation of the BSC.	Maintain close contact with what teams are doing to provide feedback and build their capacity to implement and adapt their PDSAs, collect and analyze data, engage their entire sites, and spread and sustain successful strategies. This will be determined based on the individual needs of teams and will be kept to a minimum to encourage and support cross-team learning and internal capacity building rather than significant amounts of onsite consultant/faculty technical assistance. Based on site specific needs, faculty may also provide consultation on Pyramid Model practices being tested and implemented, but as much as possible will be done in the collaborative environment. Facilitate sharing of best practices, strengths, and needs across the BSC and use to inform planning.	Review and provide feedback on PDSAs	Monthly	
		Review monthly metrics	Monthly	
		Respond to identified team needs and challenges related to using CQI methods and tools to test, spread and sustain the Pyramid Model as indicated	If/as needed	
		Develop periodic team consultation reports that display the teams' progress in metrics over time, summarizes progress of PDSAs, and provides discussion questions or suggestions for future testing.	Monthly	
		Host individual team consultation calls	Two times during the BSC	
		Host faculty calls	Monthly	
		Synthesize and share work across the BSC via monthly newsletter, regular update, etc.	Monthly	

Appendix E: Sample Team Self-Assessment

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Team Self-Assessment

Purpose

This self-assessment tool is designed to help your team review the practices and systems you currently have in place that help support social and emotional learning practices in your center or program. It is organized by the five primary drivers described in the Driver Diagram. We recognize that your team is a partnership that includes staff at many levels as well as parents. Thus, this self-assessment can help do the following for your team:

1. Build a shared framework and develop a common language and understanding about the how you are doing in your current practices.
2. Act as a team-building exercise to help your entire Core Team think about and discuss your practices from different points of view and begin focusing on this work with a single vision.
3. Help your team identify key successes, challenges, and priority areas for improvement.

The results of this self-assessment will be shared with the BSC Implementation Team and Faculty who will be coaching your team throughout the Collaborative. This will help them better understand your current program and center so that they can provide you with the most supportive coaching possible. You will be asked to update this assessment at various points throughout the Collaborative to help you reflect on your progress and revise your priorities. In the spirit of collaboration, the self-assessments will also be shared across teams to help you identify opportunities for learning from others.

After completing the self-assessment, your team should think about priorities based on your identified areas of need. Your team may even come up with ideas and strategies for change during this self-assessment process. Keep track of those ideas and bring them to the first Learning Session. However, the tool is not intended to help you think about how to improve; it is designed to help you assess where you are now.

Instructions for Completion

It is important that your entire Core Team complete this tool together. The discussions that you will have together are critical to your team's development and growth. On the following pages, each table shows one of the five primary drivers described in the Driver Diagram. Each primary driver will include a series of secondary drivers that you will rate on a 4-point scale.

- To complete this self-assessment, fill in the point value that best describes your current **overall** center's level of functioning ***(not just a single classroom or teachers who will be involved in this project)***.
- Because your team includes many perspectives, some questions may be more relevant for some, rather than others.
- To the greatest extent possible, we encourage you to have strong and honest discussions to complete your ratings.

We recognize this is not a scientific tool, but think it is a useful way of having open discussions about what you currently do. We encourage you to be honest about where you are right now. There are no right or wrong answers, nor are there judgments being made about your responses. Your candid responses will allow you to most accurately prioritize your efforts in this project and also to take advantage of the greatest opportunity for true center-wide improvements.

For each driver, please use the "Comments" section to note specific examples or to explain briefly why you chose the score you did. You may also use the "Comments" section to describe differences in perspectives that were shared in your discussions. At the end of each area there is room for a brief narrative discussion. You can use this section to comment on why you are currently functioning at that designated level; to identify the strengths of your center in that driver; to detail barriers that exist to improving your work in that driver; and/or to begin to brainstorm about opportunities that exist for improvement.

Scoring Guidelines and Considerations

When scoring each driver, please base your scoring on the following:

Serious Challenges or Does Not Yet Exist 1	Some Challenges or Exists Only in a Limited Way 2	Shows Strengths or Exists in a Fairly Consistent Way 3	Very Strong or Exists in a Clearly Defined Way 4
For this driver, there are numerous **barriers and challenges** within our current work. There are few or no known policies, procedures, or daily practice examples to guide us in this area. We agree that we need practices, policies, procedures, and/or trainings developed in this area to establish capacity.	For this driver, there are **some challenges and barriers** in our current work. We may do some of this (or have the capacity to do it), but it is sporadic and person-dependent, rather than relying on established practices, policies, protocols, or training.	For this driver, there **are some strengths** within our current work. We have some practices, policies, procedures, and/or trainings in place that are followed by most staff and/or partners on a daily basis. We still need work to make this the way all our work is done on a systematic and clearly defined way, but we have successes that we can build on.	For this driver, there are **numerous strengths** in our work. We agree that we currently have practices, policies and protocols that are clearly in place and are used by **all** staff and/or partners on a daily basis. We agree that there are many strengths for us in this area such that we can **share them with other teams** in the BSC and will not need to focus on it as a priority in this project.

I Driver 1. Nurturing, responsive and supportive relationships and environments

Secondary Drivers to Rate	Score (1 4)	Comments
Classrooms are designed in responsive ways.		
Predictable schedules, routines and activities are developed and maintained to promote smooth transitions.		
Activities are designed to promote engagement.		
Clear directions are provided.		
Behavior expectations are taught.		
Nurturing, meaningful relationships are developed by teachers with children and colleagues.		

OVERALL COMMENTS ON DRIVER 1: Nurturing, responsive and supportive relationships and environments

II Driver 2. Teaching social skills and emotional competencies

Secondary Drivers to Rate	Score (1 4)	Comments
Children are taught to express emotions appropriately.		
Children are taught problem solving skills.		
Children are taught positive peer relationship skills.		
Children's autonomy is encouraged.		
Opportunities for children to practice skills in daily routines and interactions are embedded.		
Effective strategies are used to respond to challenging behaviors.		

OVERALL COMMENTS ON DRIVER 2: Teaching social skills and emotional competencies

III Driver 3. Family partnership to promote children's social and emotional competencies

Secondary Drivers to Rate	Score (1 4)	Comments
Open, consistent communication with families is used.		
Parent participation in the classroom and center is invited and supported.		
Positive, respectful, meaningful, culturally affirming relationships with families are developed.		
Families are connected to concrete supports in times of need.		
Families are engaged as partners to support the parent-child relationship and the families' promotion of their child's social and emotional competencies.		
Parent confidence/competence (parental resilience) is supported and promoted.		

OVERALL COMMENTS ON DRIVER 3: Family partnership to promote children's social and emotional competencies

IV Driver 4. Racial equity and cultural responsiveness in promoting children's social and emotional competencies

Secondary Drivers to Rate	Score (1 4)	Comments
A system to collect and review data by race/ethnicity, language, gender, and ability exists and is used.		
Ongoing professional development and reflection opportunities for staff on cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and race equity is provided.		
Diverse identities and families in the classroom and center environment are honored and respected.		
Clear policies and guidelines for preventing challenging behaviors that are free from bias, and ensure equity and fairness are developed.		

OVERALL COMMENTS ON DRIVER 4: Racial equity and cultural responsiveness in promoting children's social and emotional competencies

V Driver 5. Organizational capacity and support to promote social and emotional competence of children

Secondary Drivers to Rate	Score (1 4)	Comments
A culture of collaboration in the classroom and center exists.		
Facilitative leadership and reflective supervision are used.		
Healthy staff, stress-reduction, adult relational competencies, and self-regulation are supported.		
Data systems to track behavior and social and emotional competence are used.		
Access to mental health consultation is ensured to support individualized interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviors, disabilities, or developmental challenges.		
Effective staffing patterns (ratios, hours, breaks, time off, staffing consistency, primary caregiver model, continuity of care model) are maintained.		
A positive workplace climate where staff feel supported and valued is nurtured.		
Ongoing training and coaching is provided.		

OVERALL COMMENTS ON DRIVER 5: Organizational capacity and support to promote social and emotional competence of children

Appendix F: Evaluation Form — Example from BSC-SEL

Overall Evaluation

This evaluation is intended to help assess how well this pre-work session was able to meet our goals. It is anonymous and is for planning purposes only, so please be candid!

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Comments
1. The **Opening Sessions** (including team introductions and session overview) helped me understand the expectations for the meeting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2. The **Mr. Potato Head Game** gave me an opportunity to better know my team, as well as gave me a sense of the overall flow of this Breakthrough Series Collaborative project.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3. The **Team Time** was important to give my team time to think about our strengths and challenges and process what we learned.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4. The **Parent Partnership Café** (small 4-person conversations) gave me a chance to develop new relationships across teams and to think more deeply about what partnering with parents means.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Comments
5. The **Affinity Group Session** (meetings by role) allowed me to share my leadership strengths with others in like roles from other teams.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
6. **Inspiration and Commitment:** Overall, I am leaving today feeling inspired, empowered, and committed to working with my team when I return home.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
7. **Flow and Structure of the Day:** This meeting had the right mix of small group and large group discussions to ensure all voices and perspectives were heard.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
8. **Overall:** This pre-work session was a good use of my time, with a solid focus, engaging activities, and concrete results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

9. Which Affinity Group meeting did you attend?

- ☐ Parent Leader
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Team Leader
- ☐ Senior Leader

10. What (if anything) **surprised** you about this pre-work day?

11. Please use the space below to comment on what you thought was **best** about the pre-work day.

12. Please use the space below to comment on what you thought could **most use improvement** about this pre-work day.

13. Please use the space below to provide any other reflections, comments, or recommendations you have about the pre-work day or the BSC overall.

Appendix G: Participant Agendas — Examples from BSC-SEL

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Pre-Work Day

The **Pre-work Session** will be our first opportunity to come together as a Collaborative and begin to learn from one another. During this session, you will:

- Complete a Team Self-Assessment, based on the Collaborative Change Framework
- Learn about how the Breakthrough Series Collaborative works and set initial team priorities
- Meet as "affinity groups" (like roles from the various teams) to share ideas

Agenda

Est. Time	Overview of Session
8:30-9:00	**REGISTRATION/SIGN-IN**
9:00-9:15	**Welcome and Overview** *A brief who's who and orientation to the objectives for the day*
9:15-9:45	**Team Introductions**
9:45-10:30	**Blindfolded Silent Challenge (Mr. Potato Head)** *An experiential activity to build a sense of team*
10:30-10:45	**BREAK**
10:45-12:15	**Identifying Priorities Using the Collaborative Change Framework** *Introduction to the Collaborative Change Framework*
12:15-1:15	**LUNCH**
1:15-2:00	**Family Partnership Café** *Explore successes and challenges with partnering with families*
2:00-2:30	**Affinity Groups** *Facilitated cross-team discussions focused on what this work means specifically for each individual role*
2:30-2:45	**BREAK / MOVE TO TEAM MEETINGS**
2:45-3:00	**Metrics in the BSC So Far** *Brief updates from teams about how metrics are going so far*
3:00-3:30	**Team Meeting 2: How We Work as a Team** *Concrete plans for next steps*
3:30-3:45	**What Happens Next?** *Project staff share plans for next steps (and get ideas from teams)*
3:45-4:00	**Evaluations and Closing**

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Learning Session 1: "It's All About Relationships"

Learning Session 1 will be when we start to dig into social and emotional learning and making actions plans for your center. During this meeting, you will:

- Learn more about the Collaborative Change Framework from Faculty
- Meet in small groups about specific areas in the Collaborative Change Framework
- Meet in affinity groups to talk about shared experiences and learning
- Meet with your team to talk about priorities and plan for testing changes
- Leave with a clear Action Plan to guide your work

Objectives for the Day

Over the course of this day, you will:

Deepen your knowledge about social and emotional learning strategies and practices	Deepen your relationships within and across teams	Develop clear action plans that include changes you will test immediately upon returning to your center

Planned Agenda for the Day

Est. Time	Overview of Session
8:00-9:00	**REGISTRATION / SIGN IN / METRICS "OPEN HELP" SESSION**
9:00-9:30	**Welcome and Review Agenda** *A brief overview of the objectives for the day*
9:30-10:00	**Re-Introductions and Highlights Since We Were Last Together** *Brief activity to share highlights related to this work since the pre-work day*
10:00-10:30	**Accelerating Improvement** *Teach and model PDSAs and tests of change using the Model for Improvement*
10:30-10:40	**BREAK**
10:40-11:25	**Nurturing Children's Positive Self-Identity** *Begin to identify concrete strategies related to nurturing children's positive self-identity through a mix of large group and interactive activities*
11:25-11:30	**MOVE TO AFFINITY GROUPS**
11:30-12:15	**The Base of the Pyramid – It's All About Relationships!** *Begin to identify concrete strategies related to "the base of the pyramid" through a mix of large group and interactive activities*
12:15-1:00	**LUNCH**
1:00-1:40	**Breakout Sessions** *Content focused breakout sessions anchored in the CCF* • 1–Honoring Diverse Identities and Families • 2–Healthy Staff and Workplace • 3–Positive Peer Relationships • 4–Predictable Routines and Transitions
1:40-2:00	**Speed Sharing** *Fast-paced activity to share ideas across teams within affinity groups*
2:00-2:15	**BREAK / MOVE TO TEAM MEETINGS**
2:15-3:00	**Team Meeting: What Can We Test by Next Tuesday? (Planning for Action!)** *Teams identify concrete tests of change and action plan for Action Period 1*
3:00-3:30	**Sharing Plans of Action** *Teams share their plans of action*
3:30-3:45	**Action Period 1: What Happens Next?** *Project staff share plans for next steps (and get ideas from teams)*
3:45-4:00	**Reflections and Evaluations** *Final reflections and completion of evaluations*

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Learning Session 2: "The Three P's: Positive Pyramid Promotion"

Learning Session 2 Objectives

- Learn more about what other teams have tested
- Meet in small groups to deepen knowledge about the second level of the Pyramid: Social and Emotional Learning
- Meet in affinity groups to talk about shared experiences and learning
- Meet with team to talk about next priorities, testing changes, and expanding successes
- Leave with a clear Action Plan that includes concrete and specific strategies and tools that will guide the next phase of your work

Planned Agenda for the Day

Est. Time	Overview of Session
8:00-9:00	**REGISTRATION / SIGN IN / METRICS "OPEN HELP" SESSION**
9:00-9:15	**Welcome Back and Review Agenda** *Planning team provides a brief overview of the objectives for the day*
9:15-10:00	**Re-Introductions and Highlights Since We Were Last Together** *Activity to allow each team (and faculty) to share highlights of their work*
10:00-10:30	**Team Meeting: Taking Stock** *Get re-grounded, revisit self-assessment, and review metrics*
10:30-10:45	**BREAK**
10:45-11:30	**Accelerating Improvement in Affinity Groups** *Teach and model PDSAs and tests of change using the Model for Improvement*
11:30-12:15	**LUNCH**
12:15-1:45	**Level Two of the Pyramid: A Carousel of Strategies and Tools** *Fast paced session focused on concrete strategies and tools that teams can test related to level two of the Pyramid*
1:45-2:00	**BREAK / MOVE TO BREAKOUT SESSIONS**
2:00-2:50	**Breakout Sessions** *Content focused breakout sessions anchored in the Carousel Strategies*
2:50-3:00	**MOVE BACK TO TEAMS**
3:00-3:30	**Team Meeting: Planning for Action** *Teams identify concrete tests of change and action plan for Action Period 2*

Est. Time	Overview of Session
3:30-4:00	**Sharing Plans of Action, Reflections, and Evaluations** *Teams share their plans for action, reflect on the day, discuss next steps, and complete evaluations*

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Learning Session 3: "Promoting Positive Relationships for SEL: Unpacking the Box"

Learning Session 3 Objectives

- Learn more about what other teams have tested
- Unpack what it means to promote positive relationships for social emotional learning at various levels (teacher to teacher; staff with families; and using a racial equity lens)
- Meet with team to plan new PDSAs to test and expand successes
- Leave with a clear Action Plan that includes concrete and specific strategies and tools that will guide the next phase of work focused on promoting positive relationships

Planned Agenda for the Day

Est. Time	Overview of Session
9:00-10:00	**OPTIONAL TEAM CONSULTATION & SUPPORT TIME**
10:00-10:20	**Welcome Back and Re-Orientation** *Re-orient returning participants and provide brief context to new participants*
10:20-11:30	**Collaborative Learning and Teaming to Promote a Positive Workplace Climate** *Activity to demonstrate what it looks like to have a positive workplace climate*
11:30-12:00	**LUNCH**
12:00-12:45	**Collaboration and Teaming with Families to Promote Social and Emotional Learning** *Interactive session focused on the rationale for and concrete strategies and tools related to partnering with families around social and emotional learning*
12:45-2:00	**A Deeper Dive into Promoting and Strengthening Positive Nurturing Relationships and Teaching SEL with a Racial Equity Lens** *Discussions and activities focused on strategies to promote and strengthen positive nurturing relationships with a racial equity lens*
2:00-2:10	**STRETCH AND BREATHING BREAK**
2:10-2:40	**Sustaining This Work for the Long Haul** *Interactive brainstorming session to identify strategies to spread and sustain this work beyond the life of this project*
2:40-3:10	**Team Meeting: Planning for Action** *Identify concrete tests of change and action plan for Action Period 3*
3:10-3:30	**Sharing Plans of Action, Next Steps, and Evaluations** *Teams share their plans of action; project staff shared next steps*

Est. Time	Overview of Session
3:30-4:15	**OPTIONAL TEAM CONSULTATION & SUPPORT TIME**

A Breakthrough Series Collaborative to Support Social and Emotional Learning in Early Education and Head Start

Learning Session 4: Putting the Pieces Together with Relationships at the Core

Learning Session 4 Objectives

- Continue to learn what other teams have tested and spread
- Meet with your team to plan for spreading promising practices, strategies, and tools
- Focus on what needs to be in place to sustain the improvements you've made

Planned Agenda for the Day

Est. Time	Overview of Session
9:00-10:00	**OPTIONAL TEAM CONSULTATION & SUPPORT TIME**
10:00-10:15	**Welcome Back and Resetting Our Positivity** *Brief opening to welcome everyone back and set the stage for positivity*
10:15-10:40	**Sharing Our Center's Experiences in This BSC** *Each team will be invited to share some of their experiences in creative ways*
10:40-11:40	**Relationships at the Core: Focus on Families** *Weaving together the threads of relationships, family partnership, and cultural responsiveness (Drivers 1, 2, 3, and 4)*
11:40-12:10	**LUNCH**
12:10-1:10	**Relationships at the Core: Focus on Staff** *Weaving together relationships at the organizational level (Drivers 1 and 5)*
1:10-2:00	**Moving from Small Tests to Permanent and Sustained Improvements** *Interactive brainstorming session to identify strategies to spread and sustain this work beyond the life of this project*
2:00-2:10	**STRETCH AND BREATHING BREAK**
2:10-3:00	**Team Meeting: Putting the Pieces Together and Sharing Inspiration** *Teams reflect on their strategies and share their inspiration from the BSC*
3:00-3:25	**Sharing Inspiration and Celebration** *Teams share some of their inspirations and celebrate their journey together*
3:25-3:30	**Next Steps, Reflections and Evaluations** *Final reflections and completion of evaluations*
3:30-4:00	**OPTIONAL TEAM CONSULTATION & SUPPORT TIME**

Appendix H: Faculty Role Description

Culture of Continuous Learning Breakthrough Series Collaborative Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

Faculty coaches are critical to the success of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) to Support Social and Emotional Learning Practices in Early Education and Head Start. They represent key stakeholders in early education with a focus on social and emotional learning practices, partnering with families, racial equity and cultural competency and leadership and play unique, multi-faceted roles.

The BSC methodology helps teams bridge the gap between "what we know" and "what we do." (See page 3 for more on the BSC methodology and how it works.) In this BSC, the faculty fulfill a set of key roles that are essential for its success:

1. Practice Expert: The BSC faculty serve as practice experts in at least one of the four primary drivers of the Collaborative Change Framework, which is the guiding document for the BSC. They are called upon to share their expertise, perspectives, and experience. This sharing often includes data, research, stories that highlight specific changes or improvements, and practical advice about evidence-informed practices, successes, and lessons learned.
2. Coach and Mentor: Faculty play a critical role in supporting and coaching teams, as they help them understand the BSC methodology, apply the Collaborative Change Framework, and brainstorm changes to test throughout the BSC. As part of coaching and mentoring teams, faculty review teams' metrics and implementation plans, facilitate creative brainstorming and problem-solving, share practical tools and resources, and provide "in real time" coaching at Learning Sessions and on conference calls.
3. Internal Consultant: Faculty serve as internal consultants to the BSC project staff. They participate in the planning of the agendas for Learning Sessions and Collaborative conference calls, and help develop content-related materials. They provide feedback and recommendations about the progress of the BSC teams and identify team-specific issues that need to be addressed. They identify themes, successes, and challenges occurring across teams, and serve as a "think tank" with project staff to resolve problems that may arise throughout the BSC.
4. Facilitator: Faculty lead and participate in BSC events such as All-Collaborative calls, plenaries or breakout sessions during Learning Sessions, and monthly affinity group calls. These efforts require preparation and close collaboration with the BSC project staff. Fostering a culture of cross-team learning within the Breakthrough Series Collaborative, faculty ensure communication within and between teams by using the Collaborative conference calls and extranet site to facilitate sharing of ideas, solutions and tools.
5. Champion: Faculty advocate for the goals, purpose and process of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative and work with BSC project staff to answer questions and provide clarity to teams and other stakeholders.

Faculty Characteristics

Faculty in a BSC are different from faculty in academic institutions. Faculty should possess all of the following characteristics, in order to best carry out the roles described above.

- Apply Content Expertise and Experience: Expertise and experience in at least one of the primary drivers of the Change Framework: the Pyramid Model, family engagement, racial equity and cultural competency, and early education and care leadership and an ability to apply that expertise and experience to work with teams.
- Learn and Teach the BSC Methodology: A willingness to learn and teach the BSC methodology, including the use of data to drive improvement and how small tests of change will lead to large system improvements.
- Explore Complexity: A willingness to explore complicated organizational change issues with teams and in larger conversations with the planning team and faculty.
- Facilitate: A capacity to facilitate and support cross-team sharing and collaboration, with the teams themselves serving as the primary experts and teachers of other teams as the BSC progresses.
- Engage in Critical Conversations: A willingness to engage respectfully in "critical conversations" that involve exploring and discussing complicated, often value-laden issues.
- Participate in Various Activities: Participate actively in team selection process, Collaborative calls, faculty planning calls, and Learning Sessions, provide mentoring and support to teams as required, and navigate and use the project extranet site.
- Provide Input and Feedback: Ability to provide input within given timeframes, and a willingness to accept decisions that are made, even when they are unable to participate in them.
- Invest in Team Progress: An investment in teams' progress that is demonstrated by taking time to review teams' postings on the extranet and listen to their work on conference calls.

Expectations and Time Commitment

Faculty participation in the Breakthrough Series Collaborative will be from November/ December 2017 to June 2019 and includes:

- A day-long orientation and training to the Breakthrough Series Collaborative model and faculty role (January) and involvement in the team selection process Winter 2018.
- Four Learning Sessions (1 2-day Learning Session, and 3 1-day Learning Sessions) throughout the BSC where faculty facilitate plenaries and breakouts and provide "real time" coaching to teams.
- Monthly (and bi-monthly, when needed) one-hour faculty calls to plan Learning Sessions and conference calls, assess teams' progress, and develop solutions and recommendations.
- Monthly one-hour All-Collaborative calls in which faculty listen to teams' progress and/or deliver topic specific content.
- Monthly "cluster calls" or "affinity group calls" by topic area or role (e.g., teacher, supervisor, caregiver, etc.) where faculty are responsible for planning, facilitation and coaching.

- Dedicated time (roughly four hours per month) to provide input to the project staff where faculty may be asked to review materials, prepare for facilitation of plenaries or breakout sessions at the Learning Sessions, review the extranet, or coach teams on applying the BSC methodology in the implementation of testing changes related to promoting social and emotional learning practices.
- Overall, the faculty member time commitment ranges from 6-12 hours/month. The months with a Learning Session will be on the higher end of this range, and the other months will be in the lower or middle of this range typically.
- Faculty members will be compensated for their work, and we will develop an agreement with each faculty member that identifies the project's hourly faculty rate and invoicing procedures.

Appendix I: Selection Questionnaire/Application

Cover Sheet

About the Center					
Center Name					
Center Type (select one):	☐ Stand alone center	☐ Agency with multiple centers		☐ Head Start ☐ Early Head Start	
Age group served (select all that apply)	☐ Infant	☐ Toddler		☐ Pre-school/Kindergarten	
Center Address					
City		State		Zip	
Center Director			Title		
About Proposed BSC Leadership					
Senior Leader			Title		
Organization		Phone		Email	
Key Contact (for communication between BSC Staff and team members			Title		
Organization		Phone		Email	

Please adhere to the following guidelines when preparing and submitting your questionnaire:

- Answer each question sequentially
- Adhere to the maximum number of pages allotted for each part as stated below.
- No additional materials should be submitted with this questionnaire

Part 1. Center Description & Proposed BSC Team Composition

Center Overview
Please tell us about your center, briefly describing your organizational structure and your approach to early education and care? Please include the number of classrooms by age group and any special programs offered at your center.
Please tell us about the children, families and community that your center serves. Please include demographics of the children you serve: • Total number of children: • Age: # Infant, # toddler, # preschool • Race/Ethnicity: • Language: • Sex: • Disability: • Income:
Please tell us about the staff at your center, including numbers of staff by role (infant/toddler teachers, preschool teachers, administration, mental health, parent engagement, support staff, etc.) Please include the demographics of your teaching and support staff (race/ethnicity, sex, age, education level, and language).

Senior Leader
Who is the proposed Senior Leader of your BSC Core Team? (It is strongly recommended that Senior Leader be the Agency/Center Director, CEO, or another very high-level agency leader.) Please include name, title, and a brief description of this leader's demonstrated commitment to the goals of this BSC. Also describe the role and responsibilities of the proposed Senior Leader in terms of center's organizational chart.

Team Leader
Who is the proposed Team Leader of your BSC Core Team? (The team leader is a manager from the early education and care center who will oversee and coordinate the activities of the team and actively guide the work of the Core Team. This person must have easy access to the Senior Leader. Depending on your center's structure, this person may be a director, lead teacher, educational coordinator or assistant director.) Please include the name, title, and a brief description of this person's demonstrated commitment to the goals of this BSC. Also describe the management / reporting relationship between the proposed Team Leader and the proposed Senior Leader. Please also address this person's role, skills, and experience with social and emotional learning.

Core Team Members
Describe the remaining membership of the proposed BSC Core Team (other than the Senior Leader and Team Leader). Be as specific as possible regarding actual names, current positions, length of time in current positions, experience/expertise related to working with children and families with a focus on social and emotional learning and development, and what unique strengths they bring to the team.
Describe how your center will ensure that the members of the BSC Core Team have the resources and time they need to do the work described as requirements to participate in this BSC. Please be as specific as possible.

Part 2. Center Experience and Readiness

(Do not exceed three printed pages for all of Part 2.)

Center Strengths
Name up to four key strengths that your center has that position you well to participate in this BSC and promote children's social and emotional learning.

Social and Emotional Learning Experience and Capacity
What training and support has your staff received about promoting social and emotional learning, addressing challenging behaviors, and cultural responsiveness?
What data do you collect and use to understand your center's work and progress in terms of support the social and emotional learning of children?

Partnering with Families
Describe how your center currently engages families (mothers, fathers, and other caregivers) as authentic partners to promote healthy social and emotional learning and development. Be specific about how you provide them with information about their children, how you engage them in your daily interactions and involvement with their children, how you provide them with necessary supports or resources, and how you include them in discussions and decisions about their children in ways that are meaningful to them. What specific professional development has your staff received about family partnership?

Support for Staff and Organizational Culture Changes
Describe a time when your center has worked to improve the quality of your center. What was most helpful in supporting staff to make changes to their practices and classrooms? How did leadership support and engage the staff? How have you engaged children/families when you are making changes?

Part 3. Center and Staff Commitment and Capacity

(Do not exceed five printed pages for all of Part 3.)

Center Goals and Rationale for Participation
What does your center hope to achieve by participating in this BSC? Please include goals related to improvements for your staff, for your children and families, and for the center overall. How do the goals for this BSC align with other current programs, projects, or priorities for your center?

Staff Professional Development
Describe how your center currently provides professional development to staff, including who provides training, time allocated to professional development, your new staff orientation, etc.). How is the professional development of staff supported and reinforced through supervision, coaching and follow-up trainings?

Data Collection and Use
How does your center use data? How do teachers use data to inform their teaching? How is data used to make policy and administrative decisions? Please also identify the types of data that you currently track to review the outcomes for children and families you serve. Data can be qualitative such as observations of classrooms or quantitative such as enrollment or assessment data.

Barriers, Challenges, and Opportunities
Name up to four key barriers and challenges you anticipate for your center in participating in this BSC and promoting children's social and emotional learning. For each barrier or challenge, please describe ideas you have to try to address, or reduce it.

Part 4. Additional Information

If the Key Contact listed on the cover sheet is not the author of this application, please provide the following information:

Name of primary author of this application (primary person completing application)

Author's title and affiliation

Author's telephone number

Author's e mail address

Names of other individuals who contributed to the completion of this application