

Connecting the Dots: How Focusing on Intentional Practice Can Strengthen Program Outcomes

CERI Conference 2025

Presented by:

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Presentation Summary

The presentation will include:

- 1) Introductions & Learning Objectives**
- 2) Summary of ASAS and STP work 2023-2025**
- 3) Interactive activity to help participants learn how to implement an outcomes-to-action project**

*Please feel free to ask questions throughout the presentation.

Introductions

- Who are we?
- Who is in the audience?
 - Are you: Administration? Program staff? Evaluation staff?
 - Do you drive systems change efforts?

Learning Objectives

- Participants will...
 - **Identify the connection** between strong processes and achieving program outcomes
 - **Evaluate capacity and possibilities** within their organizations to undertake a similar process or communicate the impact of the process if already existing

ASAS & STP Work

2023-2025



Summary of Work

- **Year 1:** Traditional Process and Outcomes Evaluation
- **Year 2:** Continuous Quality Improvement Project
- **Year 3:** Improvement Sustainability Project (In Progress)
- **Year 4:** Updated Evaluation (2026)

Initial Intention

The why:

- Is the program sustainable?
- Is the program replicable and scale-able?
- Does the program have clear, measurable process and outcome goals? (goals vs indicators)
- Is the program using data to inform decisions?

Rationale for Initial Project: Do our outcomes accurately reflect our activities?

Why Process Matters

While the desired outcome is important, the process itself, with its inherent steps and choices, shapes the eventual result.

Here's why process matters to outcomes:

- Consistency and repeatability
- Control and flexibility
- Learning and improvement
- Resource efficiency
- Motivation and engagement
- Ethical considerations

Initial Project: Process Evaluation

Process Evaluation Questions

- To what extent is the ASAS North Texas program being implemented as design?
- How has the COVID pandemic influenced program implementation?

Initial Project: Outcomes Evaluation

Outcome Evaluation Questions

- Did ASAS achieve their desired student outcomes according to the standard indicators?
- How do All-Star students compare to Dallas ISD students when looking at attendance, discipline, and performance?

Initial Project: Recommendations

- Finalize program outcomes
- Set program quality standards
- Determine non-negotiable program aspects
- Incorporate CQI work into school year staff training
- Improve communication and increase accountability

Bringing Everyone to the Table

- Focus groups, surveys, and other input from staff and kids (clients) power discussions
- Layering management staff expertise through explanation, details, and examples brings activities into focus
- Once staff sees how the dots are connected and the work is not just handed down, buy in begins

Year 1: CQI Project

- **Recommendation:** Finalize program outcomes
- **Step 1: Outcomes to Action Table**
 - Link expected outcomes back to specific interventions
 - Discuss why each intervention logically leads to the intended outcome
 - Update program Theory of Change
 - Contribute to development of new student pre-post survey at national level

Year 1: CQI Project

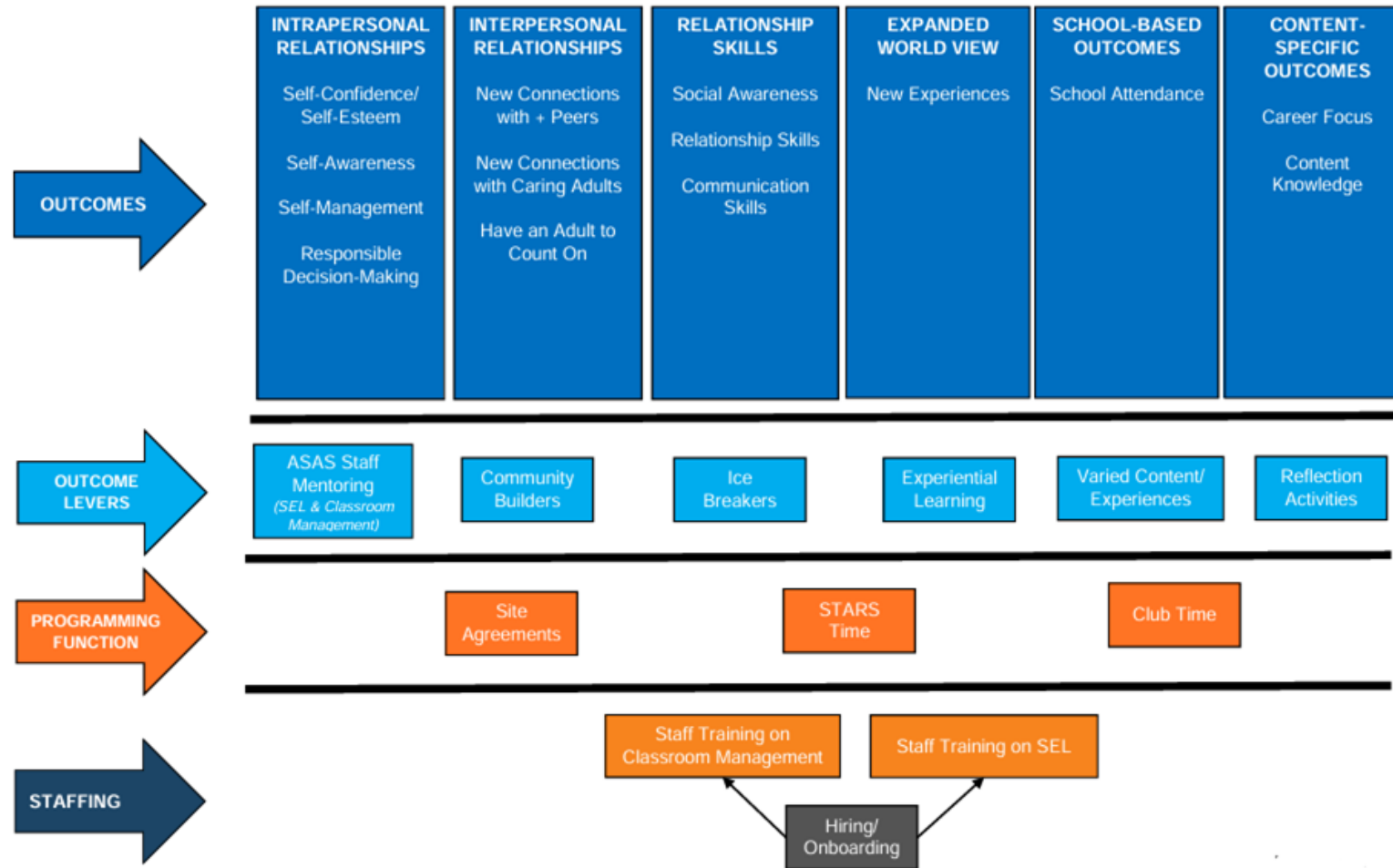
Outcome	Method	Why does this method work?
Intrapersonal development		
Self-confidence/ Self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff training on SEL and Classroom Management• Experiential Learning	Staff training on SEL and Classroom Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff has to feel comfortable and prepared to have conversations and handle certain situations with students• Staff has to maintain energy and attentiveness to deal with issues and reinforce positive behaviors Experiential Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The students are doing things for themselves, ability to try new things without fear of failure
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflection Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That is when we ask guided questions that brings the student back to how they felt about something and talking about how they regulated that emotion• Staff have to follow-up on what students say, they have to continue the discussion• Staff have to teach them to identify specific feelings• Naming feelings, thinking back on a moment and take themselves outside of the emotion

Year 1: CQI Project

Area	Outcome	Site Agreements	STARS Time/Club Time	ASAS Staff Mentoring	Community Builders	Ice Breakers	Varied Content/ Experiences	Experiential Learning	Reflection Activities
Intrapersonal Development	Self-confidence/Self-esteem	X		X			X	X	
	Self-awareness	X							X
	Self-management	X						X	X
	Responsible decision-making	X	X	X/X					
Interpersonal Relationships	New connections with positive peers	X	X		X	X			
	New connections with caring adults		X	X/X					
	Have an adult to count on			X/X					
Relationship Skills	Social Awareness	X			X	X	X		X
	Relationship skills	X	X	X/X	X	X			X
	Communication skills	X	X	X/X	X	X			X
Expanded world view	Exposure to new opportunities and interests						X		X

Blue=Staff training on SEL, Orange=Staff training on Classroom Management, Grey=Hiring/Onboarding

Year 1: CQI Project



Year 1: CQI Project

- **Recommendation:** Set program quality standards
- **Step 2: Defining Quality**
 - For each intervention, identify the standards and best practices needed to support the connection between activity and expected outcome
 - That is, how do we need to do the work to ensure that students change in the ways we expect?

Year 1: CQI Project

	Standards	Best Practices
Site Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site agreements should be<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Broken out by behavior levels◦ Include consequences◦ Easily accessible• SCs review the site agreement with students regularly, especially at the beginning of the year• All staff are responsible for implementing site agreements• When ASAS PMs go out to do site observations they need to be talking to PLs about the site agreement and also talk to the kids their awareness about it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for it and ask PLs and SCs about their awareness of the Site Agreement during observations• PLs also ensures students are adhering to the site agreement
STARS Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All staff are responsible for safety compliance• Snack time has a clear ending• Staff are engaged with students or actively observing for safety• Community Builders are used once a week• Every student is engaged (per the non-negotiable)• Students are talking to other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff use good group forming techniques• Staff create opportunities for positive interactions

Year 1: CQI Project

- **Recommendation:** Determine non-negotiable program aspects
- **Step 3: Program Non-Negotiables**
 - Identify which aspects of the program are non-negotiable
 - What should be the same regardless of staff, student, or site?

Year 1: CQI Project

The following are the non-negotiable aspects of programming that should be implemented across all sites.

Focus Area	Non-Negotiable
Staff-Student Ratio:	The non-negotiable is 1:26 (this is State law), they say 1:20, but the goal is 1:15. For documentation purposes, the sliding scale on that is some of our clubs that are sports. It's easier to guide and facilitate some kinds of clubs.
Attendance:	The non-negotiable is to take daily attendance for STARS time (snack time) and Club time. SCs must input the data into CitySpan by end-of-day Friday of each week. If a student is present, but not actually engaged in a club, then only count them present for STARS and not for Club.
Student Engagement:	All students will participate in STARS activities and club time (with some exceptions). That means all students will either be in the space where group activities are happening or enrolled in a club. Examples of exceptions would be a child whose parent wants them in the program but they cannot actively participate for one reason or another, or if a student is having a bad day and wants to (or needs to) skip an activity for that day.
Agenda/Schedule:	The non-negotiable of the schedule for the day is STARS time, Club time (Lancaster is an exception with a STEM focus), and dismissal. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snack must be offered on all programming days• Plan a Community Builder once a week (during STARS time)• After clubs there is a formalized dismissal procedure
Staff Engagement:	During programming, all staff must be appropriately engaging with students using positive interaction best practices.
Initiatives & Club Topics:	All clubs should align with an initiative. Each site must have at least one club per initiative. All sites ensure all initiatives are being delivered at some point during the year.
Club Curriculum:	Every club activity has an objective (intentionality).

Year 1: CQI Project

- **Recommendations:**

- Incorporate CQI work into school year staff training
- Improve communication and increase accountability

- **Step 4: Assumptions and Supporting Mechanisms**

- For each intervention, identify the assumptions that could support or hinder staff in the daily implementation of program activities
- Identify what leadership can do to support practice that aligns with standards and best practices

Year 1: CQI Project

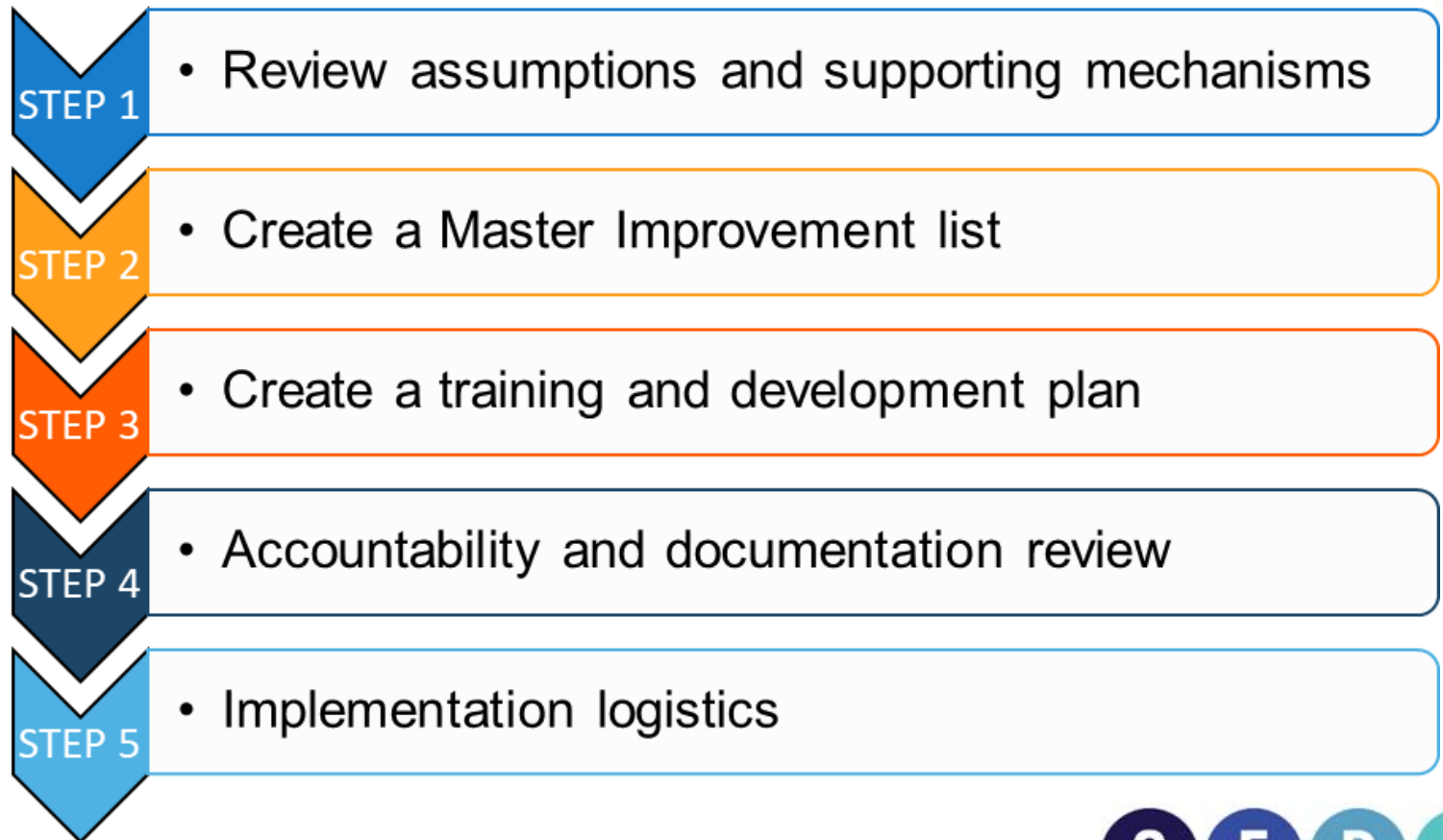
	Assumptions	Support Mechanisms
Site Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That every site has one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCs should facilitate site Agreement creation during the first week or two Every day, staff should be reviewing the site agreement with students, especially at the beginning of the year Staff are consistently applying the site agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior expectations – staff should have a meeting to talk about what behavior is acceptable Then the kids come up with their rules and consequences Sites are creating good quality site agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we go out to do Site Observations, we need to be talking to PLs about the Site Agreement When we go out to do Site Observations, we need to be talking to students about their awareness of the Site Agreement Adding Site Agreement behavior levels and consequences to the Parent Info Packet Making sure they are making parent contacts (include both good stuff and bad stuff)
STARS Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are assuming that the students who are there are engaged, positive, relaxed – their real selves come out during this time so it is the best time to correct behavior It is less formal...don't really shine a light on one student. It's big groups and you are hoping the activities you lead will pull out positive interactions Assuming that activities and readiness are consistently happening throughout the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMs model the behavior when they go out to do observations ASAS provides training on best practices

Program Staff are Bought In

- The process created is from their work and their words
- Program managers used the year to develop connection to evaluation and the process
- Connection to direct service staff and kids is clearly at the forefront
- The theoretical work begins to show change in the daily tasks within their roles

Year 2: Improvement Sustainability

Goal: Create a plan to ensure that changes are stable over time with a focus on staff onboarding and training, continuous professional development, and accountability



Program Staff Take Ownership

- After two years of collaborative design, program management staff are now comfortable in making suggestions, driving the conversations, and reporting back transparently
- The work is now seen as “theirs” and a vital piece to continuous quality improvement work
- Language used in the evaluation meetings becomes commonplace and is comfortably introduced into program meetings and culture by program staff leaders

Year 3: Updated Evaluation

- **Goal:**

- Reevaluate the program to look for changes in program process and outcome findings from initial year.
- Gather feedback on staff experiences with program changes.
- Look for opportunities to support continued alignment between leadership and field staff

Transition to Continuous Quality Improvement

- Simply stated – the updated evaluation is now seen as a tool for improvement versus a rating or performance review

Activity

Exploring “outcomes-to-action” work as it would apply to your organization or program



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Q&A

What questions do you have for us?





The End

Thank you so much for your time!



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