

Planning for 2023-2024

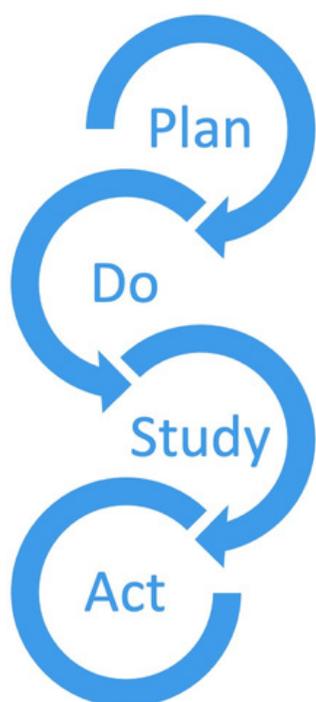


Climate Connection is a monthly publication
of the NYS Center for School Safety.

As we wrap up the Holiday Season, many of us will lean into the New Year with a resolution...a goal we wish to accomplish, a change we commit to making or a new habit we hope to develop. In education, September is typically viewed as the beginning of a "new year" but now is a perfect time to begin planning for the 2023-2024 academic year.

In this month's edition, we focus on how schools can begin to plan **Professional Development** activities, **School Climate** initiatives and engage in **Safety Planning** for the upcoming school year through the lens of continuous improvement. Across all settings, such as healthcare, education and industry, the continuous improvement process is important to promote the quality of products, the effectiveness of services, and the efficiency of systems. In education, this includes academic outcomes, family engagement, social emotional learning, safety, and staff retention.

A common strategy used by education leaders to promote meaningful change, and improve teaching and other school practices is the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle. This iterative process provides a roadmap to quickly gain information that can support the improvement process. The PDSA Cycle is characterized by a clearly defined problem, observable actions intended to promote change and support improvement, and the collection of data. The PDSA Cycle recognizes that sometimes we do not get the outcomes we expect but this, too, is a part of the learning process that can ultimately lead to improvement. With each cycle, new information is learned to inform the improvement process.



The first step is **Plan**. It begins by clearly identifying the problem, and selecting a strategy or tool to achieve the intended change. During the this step, we also ask: How will we measure success?

Implementation occurs during the **Do** step. In addition, process data and outcome data are collected.

During the **Study** step, data is reviewed to better understand how well the "plan" was implemented and what outcomes were or were not achieved.

Finally, the **Act** step incorporates all that was learned in the prior steps to better define the problem, to modify the strategy, and to make changes to the implementation process that support continuous improvement.

To learn more about the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle as a tool for continuous improvement, read [A Primer for Continuous Improvement in Schools and Districts](#) (2017) published by the Education Development Center.



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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the Learning Policy Institute, the most effective professional development for teachers includes:

- 1) a focus on specific, relevant content
 - 2) embedded active learning strategies
 - 3) opportunities for collaboration and sharing
 - 4) modeling to support learning
 - 5) coaching to addresses specific needs
 - 6) use of feedback to change practice
 - 7) adequate time to learn, implement and reflect
- Check out their full review of the research titled, [Effective Teacher Professional Development](#).



The Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle can help improve the effectiveness of Professional Development. Use data from previous professional learning and the resource above to identify opportunities to change the way professional learning is delivered.

CLIMATE INITIATIVES

The PDSA Cycle is a great tool for improving current climate initiatives. Begin by identifying all the programs and strategies that support student engagement, safety and wellness, such as SEL curriculum and activities, restorative practices, trauma-informed approaches, wellness spaces, family engagement, internships, service projects and bullying prevention programs, just to name a few. Not sure where to start? Focus on the programs included in your District-Wide School Safety Plan or visit the [School Climate webpage](#) at the NYS Center for School Safety.

Next, conduct a brief assessment of their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Choose an initiative to focus on for the remainder of the school year. With success, you can select another initiative to work on in the Fall.



SAFETY PLANNING

Best practice for School Safety Planning is for District-Wide School Safety Teams and Building Level Emergency Response Teams to meet regularly. Schedule a meeting to:

- 1) Reflect on team members - who is missing? Is there someone new we should include?
- 2) Conduct self-assessments of both the [District-Wide School Safety Plan](#) and the [Building Level Emergency Response Plan](#). Visit these links and find other school safety plan resources at the [NYS Center for School Safety](#).
- 3) Review the safety plans. Are they being implemented effectively? Is there room for improvement? If the team identifies a problem, use the PDSA Cycle to implement a change, collect and review data to determine if the desired outcome has occurred. Engaging in this process now allows teams to make adjustments and use new information to develop more effective plans in the coming year.

