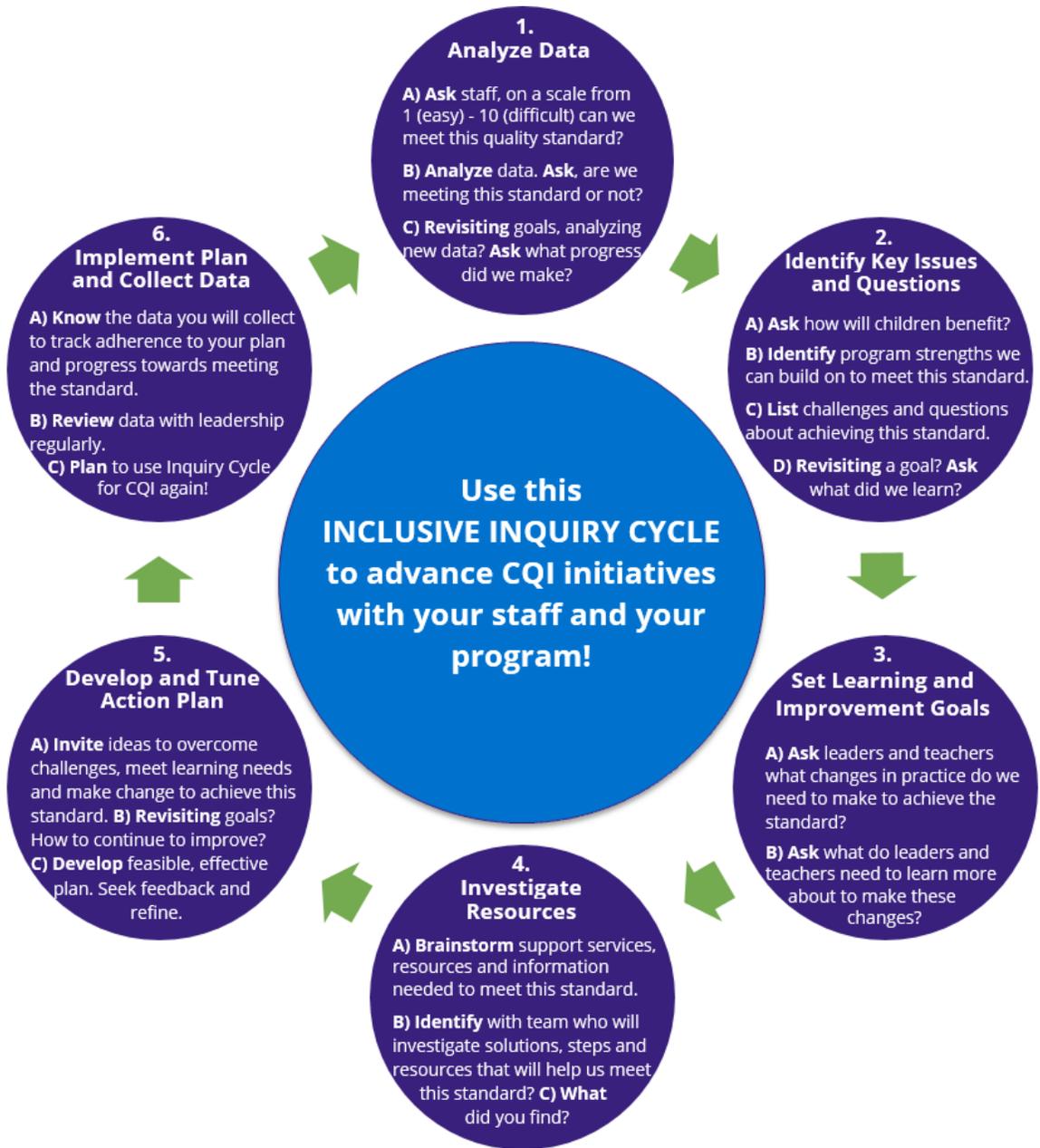




INCLUSIVE INQUIRY CYCLE

Self-Study and Planning Guide - Inclusion of Children with Special Needs





LEAD LEARN EXCEL

This Inclusive Inquiry Cycle Self-Study and Planning Guide is designed to help you collaborate with your staff and follow the steps of the Inclusive Inquiry Cycle as you plan for continuous quality improvement, specifically regarding achieving high quality inclusive classrooms for preschoolers. First, prepare for the Self-Study, by reviewing the definition of inclusion below, the related program standard(s) you are trying to achieve, and determine the key personnel who should be involved in the self-study and planning process. Then follow Parts 1 and 2 of this guide through the steps of the Inclusive Inquiry Cycle in order to better understand your program's status in meeting the identified high quality standard and to gain your staff's input and ideas on how to move forward in achieving this standard in your program.

Prepare for Self-Study

A) Review the definition of inclusion below:

Inclusion in early childhood programs refers to including children with disabilities in early childhood programs, together with their peers without disabilities; holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities, facilitated by individualized accommodations; and using evidence-based services and supports to foster their development (cognitive, language, communication, physical, behavioral, and social-emotional), friendships with peers, and sense of belonging. This applies to all young children with disabilities, from those with the mildest disabilities, to those with the most significant disabilities.

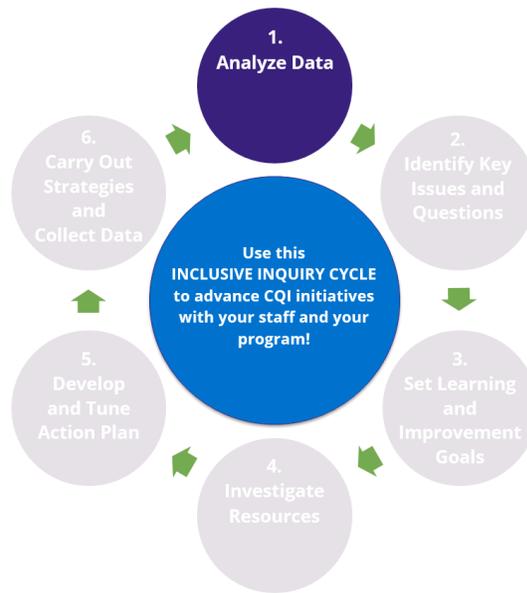
The vision of inclusion in early childhood programs and recommendations provided in the policy statement build on the principles and definition set forth in the joint position statement from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

B) Next, identify the key personnel and stakeholders who should be part of the process to achieve this high quality standard regarding inclusion. Are they directly involved in these challenges, and/or will they be affected by any decisions? Consider administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, related services personnel, and social workers. Do not forget to include family members and community partners! Please list members below:



Part 1 – The Inclusive Inquiry Cycle: Self-Study Guide

To conduct the self-study, meet with the key personnel and stakeholders identified above, ask them the following questions, record their thoughts, ideas, and reflections as well as your own.



1. Analyze Data

- A) **Read** or describe the high quality inclusion definition to staff and **ask** them, on a scale from 1 – 10 where 1 is super easy and 10 is near impossible, how easy or difficult do we think it will be to make improvements on this quality standard? Please describe everyone’s initial thoughts:

- B) **Analyze** our data. **Ask** what evidence we have regarding our program’s status in meeting this quality standard regarding inclusion? What is the district’s current Education Environment (EE) Data? What other information sources do you have about inclusion? Please explain what you and your staff know about your organization meeting this standard or not:

- C) **Revisiting** high quality inclusion and analyzing new data following some improvement efforts? Please describe the progress that was made:



2. Identify Key Issues and Questions

- A) **Ask** how will children benefit from our program achieving high quality inclusion? Refer to the definition of inclusion on page 2. What are some additional benefits should we achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Please explain any additional benefits:

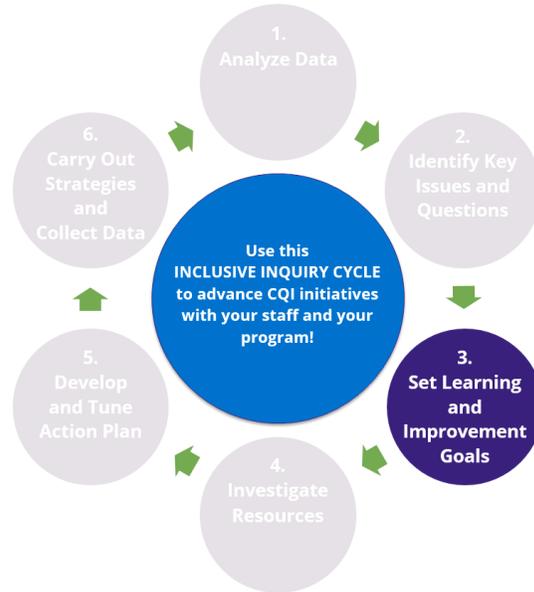
- B) **Ask** what program strengths can we build on to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Please **identify** your programmatic strengths:

- C) **Ask** what challenges do we foresee or what questions do we have about achieving high quality inclusive classrooms? Please list challenges and/or questions:

- D) **Revisiting** high quality inclusion and analyzing new data following some improvement efforts? **Ask** what did we learn? Please describe what people learned:



3. Set Learning and Improvement Goals

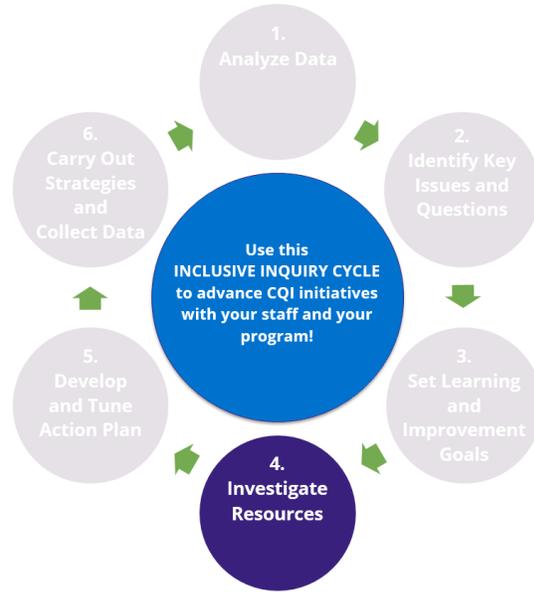


- A) **Ask** what are specific changes in practice that teachers will need to make in order for our program to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Refer to the Inclusive Classroom Profile for Quality Indicators (Completing a self-assessment using this tool would be beneficial). Please provide staff reflections as well as your own:

- B) **Ask** what do teachers need to learn more about in order to make these changes and achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Please provide staff reflections as well as your own:

- C) What are specific changes in practice that leaders will need to make for our program to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Refer to the Illinois Inclusion Guidelines. Please provide staff reflections as well as your own:

- D) **Ask** what do leaders need to learn more about in order to make these changes and achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Please provide staff reflections as well as your own:

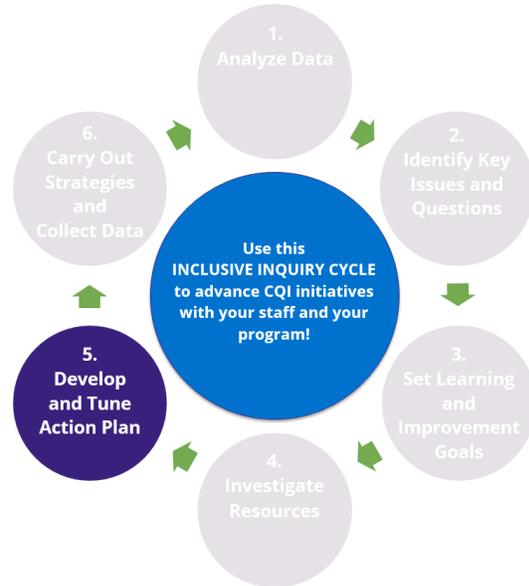


4. Investigate Resources

- A) **Refer** to the Early Choices Livebinder for Inclusion supports <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1658940> and note supports that will be especially helpful to your organization.

- B) **Brainstorm** with your team what additional support services, resources, and information the organization will need to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms. Please describe brainstorming outcomes:

- C) **Identify** with your team who will investigate solutions, steps and resources from the field, research, literature or other sources that will help the organization meet this high quality standard regarding inclusion. Please describe who was identified and why:



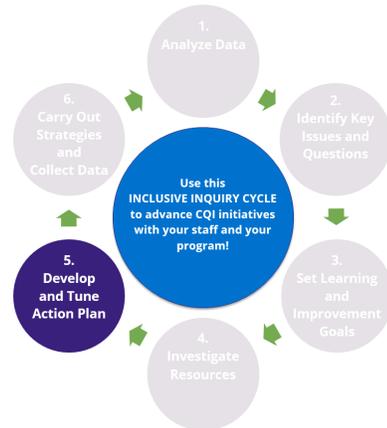
5. Develop and Tune Action Plan

- A) **Invite** ideas to identify how our program can overcome challenges, meet the learning needs, and make change to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms. Please list ideas below:
- B) **Revisiting** high quality inclusion following some improvement efforts? **Ask** your team what do we need to do to sustain the improvements we made? Please describe outcomes below:



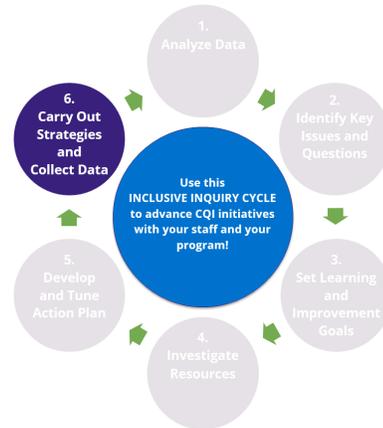
Part 2 – The Inclusive Inquiry Cycle: Planning Guide

This Planning Guide is designed to help you and your team move through the final steps of the Inclusive Inquiry Cycle with the goal of developing a solid plan for achieving your improvement goal, determining how this plan will be monitored and supported, implementing the plan, collecting data, and then beginning the cycle of continuous improvement over again.



5. Develop and Tune Action Plan

- A) **Ask** yourself and your leadership team, given what we know now following the Self-Study and the investigation of resources, what solutions, steps, and resources would be feasible and effective for achieving high quality inclusive classrooms in our organization? Please determine a tentative plan that includes the personnel that should be involved, their roles and tasks, the resources that will be mobilized to support the plan and success, and the timeline for implementation and describe below:
- B) **Explain** your organization’s tentative plan to your staff and **ask** for their feedback.
- **Ask** what obstacles might we face in implementing this plan and in achieving high quality inclusive classrooms? Please describe potential obstacles:
 - **Invite** staff for ideas as to how the plan might be adjusted or bolstered to address any concerns or deal with anticipated obstacles. Please describe these ideas below:
- C) Following staff feedback, **describe or update** your plan below, including the personnel involved, their roles and tasks, the resources that will be mobilized to support the plan and success, the timeline for implementation, and any other details:



6. Implement Plan and Collect Data

- A) **Ask** yourself and your leadership team, how will we know our plan to create high quality inclusion is being followed? Please list the data you will collect to track adherence to the plan:
- B) **Ask** yourself and your leadership team, how will we know our plan is working in helping us to achieve high quality inclusive classrooms? Please list the data you will collect to track progress:
- C) **Ask** yourself and your leadership team, how will we monitor and support the plan and progress in meeting the goal?
- **Ask** who on the leadership team will meet to review the data, problem solve and support continuous improvement? Please list leadership team members:
 - **Ask** when and how often will the leadership team will meet? Please describe:
 - **Ask** when will the staff meet to review the data and to begin the Inclusive Inquiry Cycle for continuous improvement again? Please describe:

Implement the plan, collect data, and begin the cycle again!