GUIDE 4 OF 5 · IPG PLANNING TOOLS

Evidence-Based Interventions

How to choose interventions from the IPG menu that act on your root causes, read the evidence behind them, and write the application section for each domain you selected.

Reading time: about 20 minutes. The examples use two made-up schools, Pleasantville Middle School and Riverview Alternative High School. Every number about them is invented.

Systems for Innovative Schools, LLC · Rockford, Michigan · October 2026

What this tool does

Your root cause analysis named the conditions behind your priority. This tool helps your team choose interventions from the IPG menu that change those conditions, and writes the four fields the application asks for in each domain: the EBI, its ESSA level of evidence, how it aligns to your needs assessment and root cause, and how it connects to your MI School Index targets.

It starts from the hand-off your root cause analysis saved. On the root cause Summary step, press **Choose interventions for this problem**. A new selection opens, linked to that analysis, with your school's facts, domains and root causes already in place.

Three ideas run through every step:

1. **Start from the cause.** The menu opens filtered to your confirmed root-cause codes, so the first rows you see are the ones that address your causes. Choose an intervention because it changes a condition you found, not because it is popular.
2. **Claim only what the evidence supports.** Each row lists the tier you can claim in your application and the outcome that tier covers. The tool only lets you claim a tier the menu lists.
3. **Say where the evidence stops.** When the studies did not include your grades or settings, the tool tells you so and asks you to state the gap in your text.

Running the meeting (90 minutes)

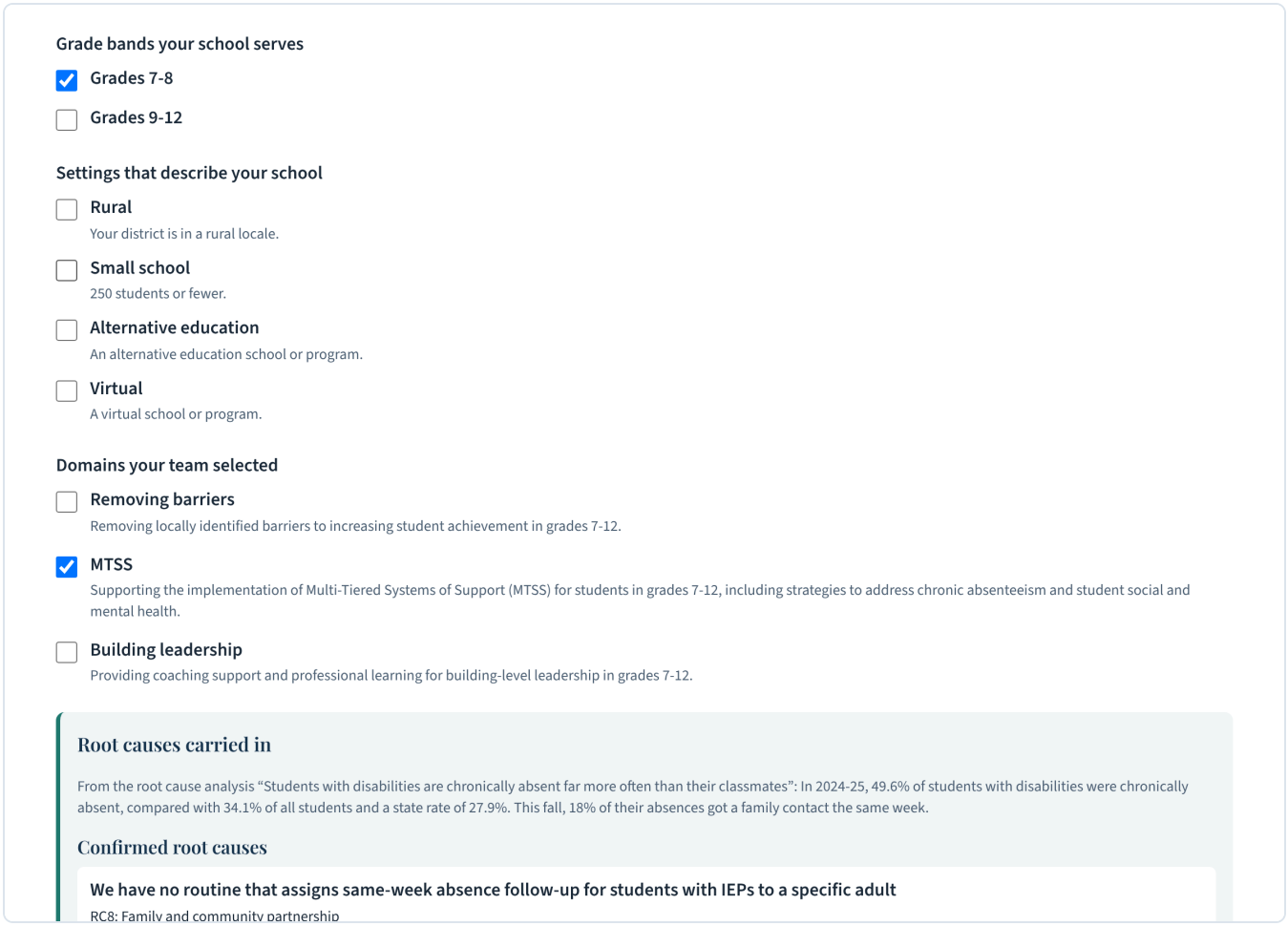
- 10 min: check the school facts, domains and root causes (step 1, done beforehand by the lead)
- 20 min: filter the menu and build a shortlist of two to four rows (step 2)
- 20 min: read the evidence for each shortlisted row together (step 3)
- 30 min: choose an intervention for each domain and write its response (step 4)
- 10 min: read the checks and agree who fixes what (steps 5 and 6)

> **FACILITATION**
>
> Read each row's grade and setting lines aloud before anyone argues for it. A strong tier earned in grades 1 to 12 pooled tells you less about a middle school than the tier alone suggests.

1 Your school and domains

The platform fills in what it knows: your school's name, the grade bands from its grade span, and whether it is an alternative school. Check each one and change anything that's wrong. Rural, small school (250 students or fewer) and virtual are yours to set. Later steps compare the evidence with these grades and settings.

The domain comes from the root cause analysis: an attendance problem selects MTSS, and a barriers problem selects Removing barriers. Check Leadership too if your team is applying for it. Step 4 builds one response for every domain you check.

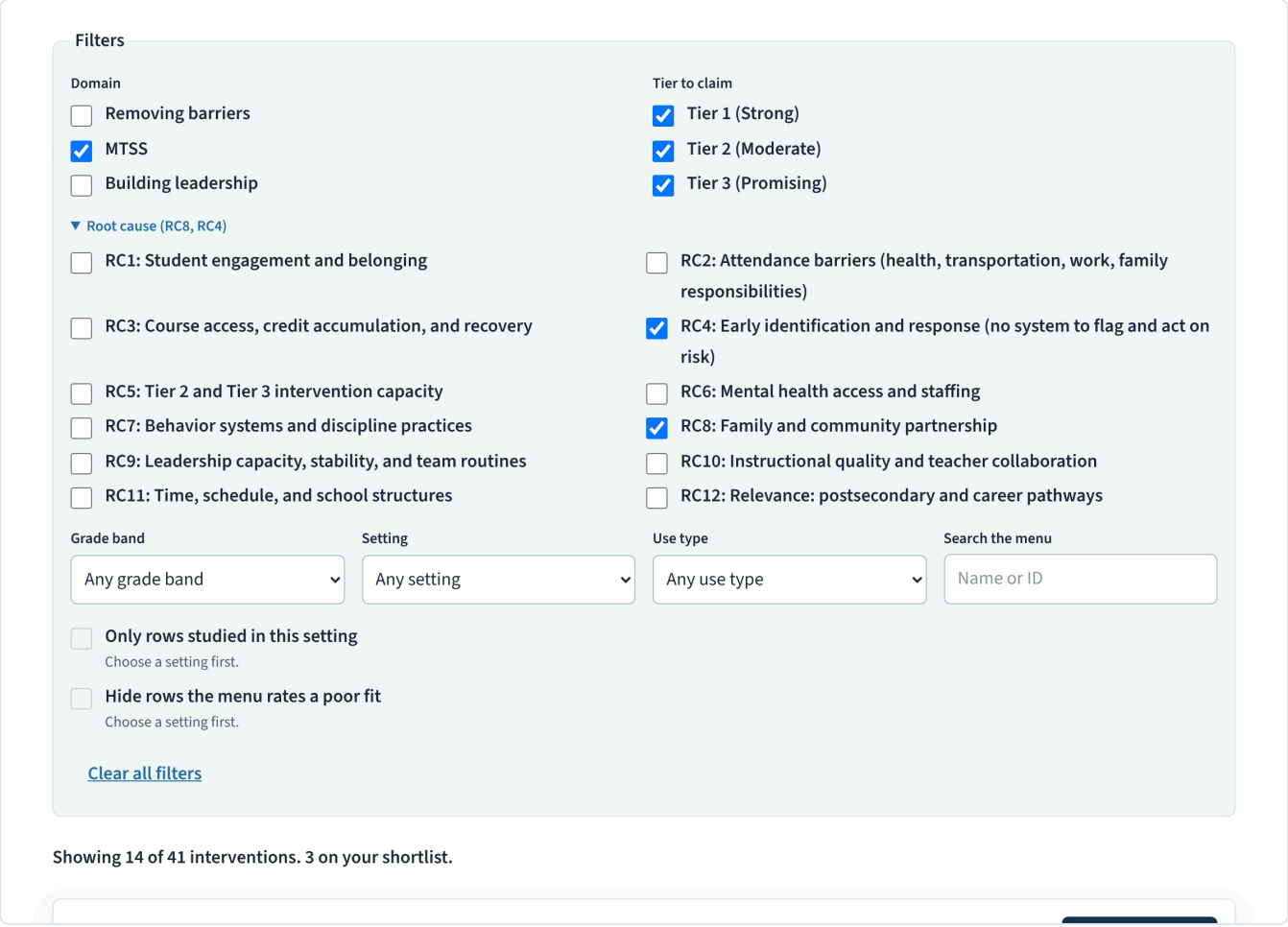


Step 1: Pleasantville's grade bands, settings and domain, carried in from its root cause analysis.

Below them are the root causes you carried in. Confirmed root causes show with their code, who controls them and their evidence. Causal theories you are still testing are listed separately and never set a filter. Conditions outside your control sit at the bottom.

2 Find interventions

The menu holds 41 interventions, each with the evidence behind it. It opens with your domain and confirmed root-cause codes set as filters. You can also filter by grade band, setting, tier to claim and use type, or search by name.



Step 2: the filters, and a row with its tier to claim, use type, root causes and grade match.

Setting filters are advisory. Every row shows how its evidence matches your grades and settings, so you see a gap before you choose. Pick a setting and two switches become available: only rows studied in that setting, and hide rows the menu rates a poor fit. Nothing is hidden until you turn one on.

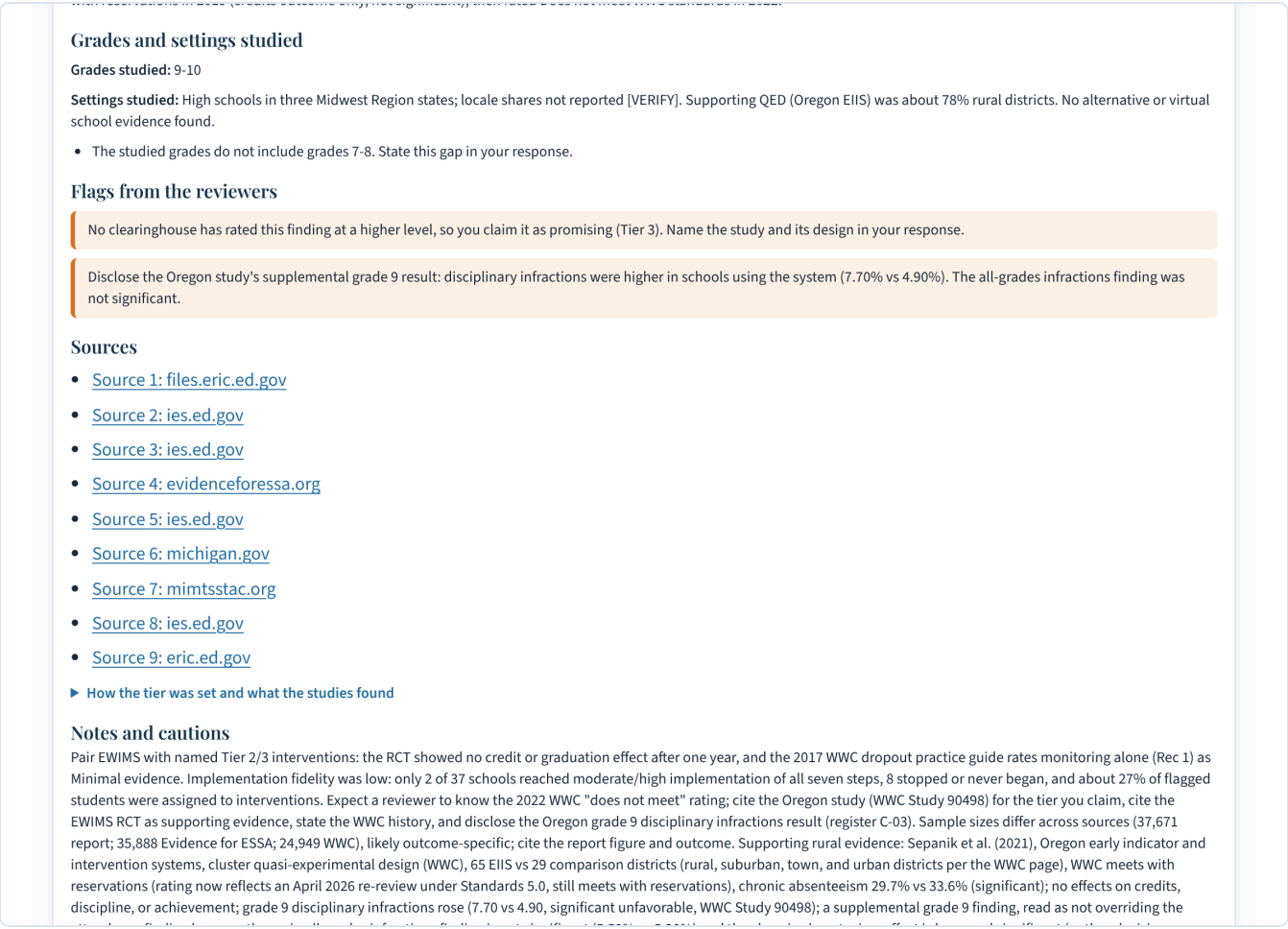
Add the rows worth a closer look to your shortlist. It saves as you go, and teammates see it within a few seconds.

> **PLEASANTVILLE**
>
> The team shortlisted three rows for its attendance problem: ATT-03, ATT-04, ATT-02. That is the personalized mailed absence notices, automated text alerts to families, and an early warning system.

3 Check the evidence

Each shortlisted row shows, in order:

- **Tier to claim in your application**, with the outcome it covers. This is the tier you state. Read the outcome closely: it says what the studies measured.
- **Tier under the statute**, for reference only. It can differ from the tier to claim.
- **Grades and settings studied**, with lines that compare them to your school.
- **Flags from the reviewers**, when a row has something to disclose. Step 5 repeats them once a row is in your plan.
- **Sources** with links to open before you submit, and the menu's notes and cautions.



Grades and settings studied

Grades studied: 9-10

Settings studied: High schools in three Midwest Region states; locale shares not reported [VERIFY]. Supporting QED (Oregon EIIS) was about 78% rural districts. No alternative or virtual school evidence found.

- The studied grades do not include grades 7-8. State this gap in your response.

Flags from the reviewers

No clearinghouse has rated this finding at a higher level, so you claim it as promising (Tier 3). Name the study and its design in your response.

Disclose the Oregon study's supplemental grade 9 result: disciplinary infractions were higher in schools using the system (7.70% vs 4.90%). The all-grades infractions finding was not significant.

Sources

- Source 1: files.eric.ed.gov
- Source 2: ies.ed.gov
- Source 3: ies.ed.gov
- Source 4: evidenceforessa.org
- Source 5: ies.ed.gov
- Source 6: michigan.gov
- Source 7: mimtsstac.org
- Source 8: ies.ed.gov
- Source 9: eric.ed.gov

▶ How the tier was set and what the studies found

Notes and cautions

Pair EWIMS with named Tier 2/3 interventions: the RCT showed no credit or graduation effect after one year, and the 2017 WWC dropout practice guide rates monitoring alone (Rec 1) as Minimal evidence. Implementation fidelity was low: only 2 of 37 schools reached moderate/high implementation of all seven steps, 8 stopped or never began, and about 27% of flagged students were assigned to interventions. Expect a reviewer to know the 2022 WWC "does not meet" rating; cite the Oregon study (WWC Study 90498) for the tier you claim, cite the EWIMS RCT as supporting evidence, state the WWC history, and disclose the Oregon grade 9 disciplinary infractions result (register C-03). Sample sizes differ across sources (37,671 report; 35,888 Evidence for ESSA; 24,949 WWC), likely outcome-specific; cite the report figure and outcome. Supporting rural evidence: Sepanik et al. (2021), Oregon early indicator and intervention systems, cluster quasi-experimental design (WWC), 65 EIIS vs 29 comparison districts (rural, suburban, town, and urban districts per the WWC page), WWC meets with reservations (rating now reflects an April 2026 re-review under Standards 5.0, still meets with reservations), chronic absenteeism 29.7% vs 33.6% (significant); no effects on credits, discipline, or achievement; grade 9 disciplinary infractions rose (7.70 vs 4.90, significant unfavorable, WWC Study 90498); a supplemental grade 9 finding, read as not overriding the

Step 3: the early warning system was studied in grades 9 and 10, and the tool says so for a grades 7 and 8 school.

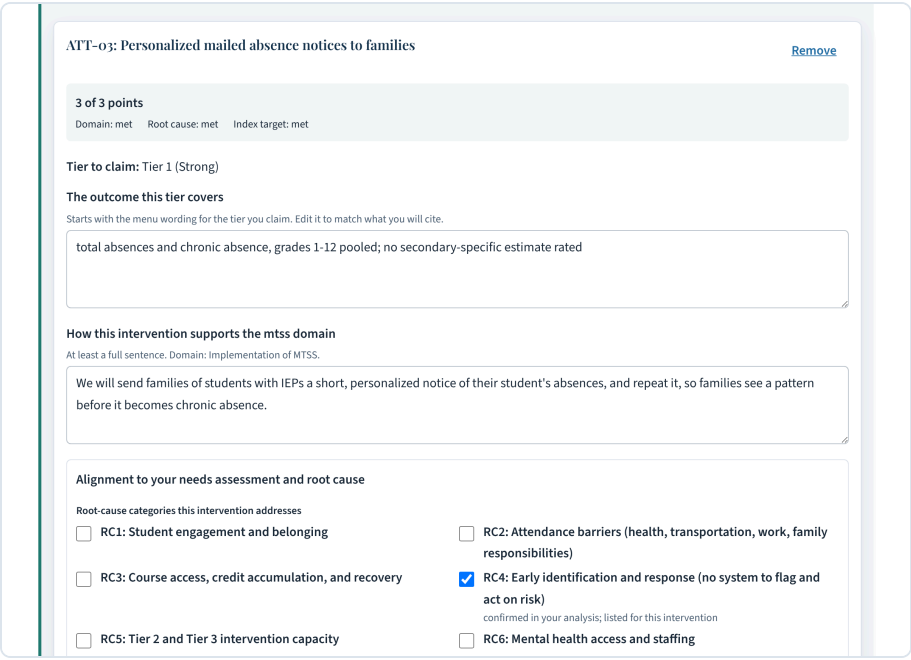
A STRONG TIER IS NOT A STRONG FIT

The mailed notices claim Tier 1 (Strong) for total absences and chronic absence, but the studies pooled grades 1 to 12 and rated no estimate for secondary grades. Carry that limit into your own text.

4 Build your response

For each domain you selected, add an intervention from your shortlist and complete its card:

1. **Tier and outcome.** The tier starts at the row's own claim and the outcome at the menu's wording. Edit the outcome so it says exactly what you will cite.
2. **How it supports the domain**, in a sentence or two.
3. **Root cause.** A category is checked when it is a confirmed root cause and the menu lists it for this row. The local finding comes from that root cause's evidence; check that it has a number, a year and a source. Then finish the sentence: this intervention addresses the root cause by...
4. **MI School Index targets.** Check each target the intervention supports. A direct link the menu lists is filled in. For an indirect link, write the pathway and name a local measure you will track.



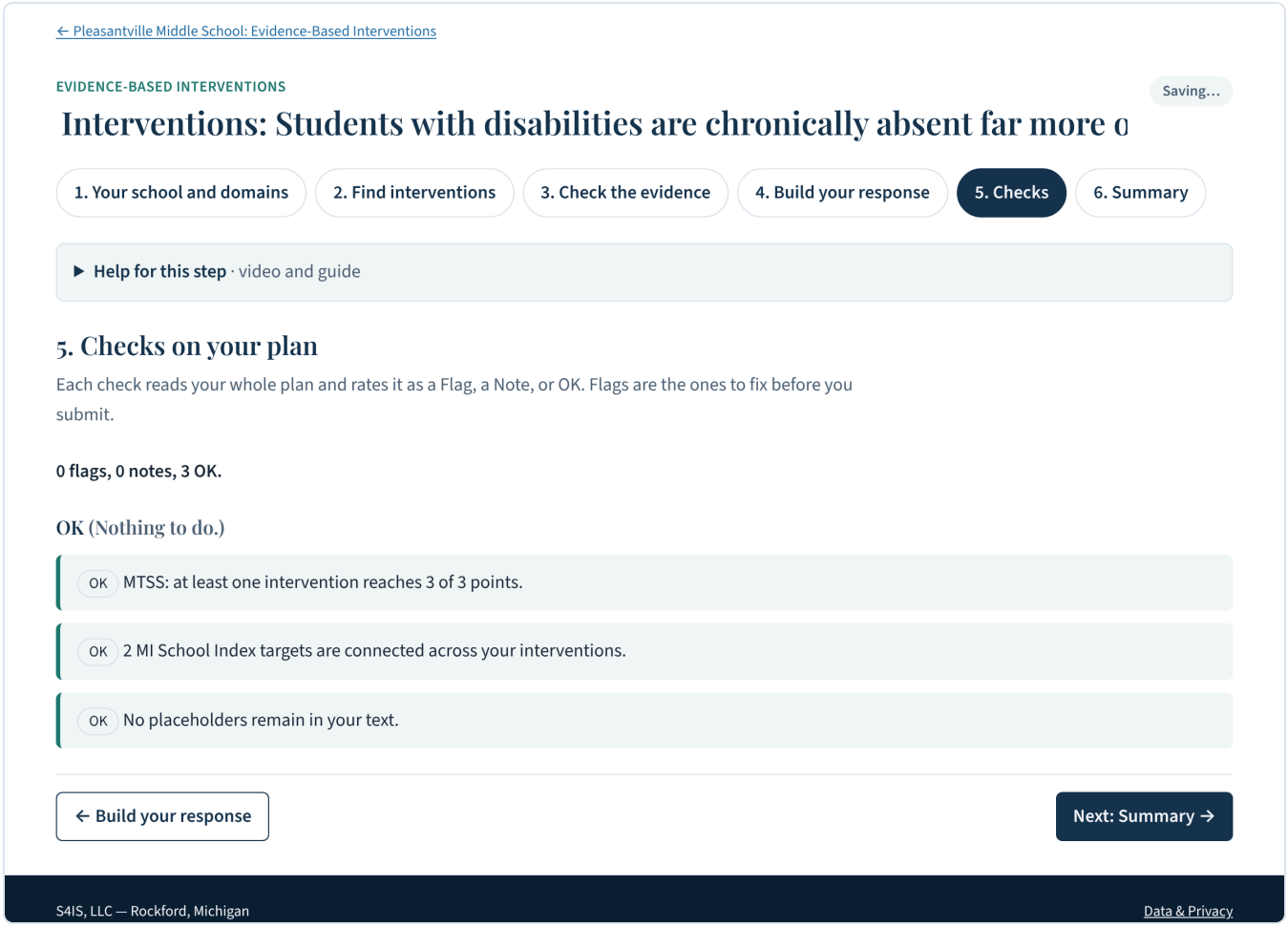
Step 4: Pleasantville's MTSS response, at 3 of 3 points.

The meter on the card shows points toward the three-point level: the domain, the root cause and the Index target. Below the card, the four template fields are composed as you type, under the template's own names. Edit any of them directly; **Rebuild from my choices** discards your edits and composes them again. Anything in square brackets is a fact only your team can supply.

> **PLEASANTVILLE'S ROOT CAUSE SENTENCE**
>
> This intervention addresses the root cause by sending every family of a student with an IEP repeated, personalized absence notices, and giving each case manager the list of students whose notices went out so same-week follow-up has an owner.

5 Checks

The checks read your whole selection and rate each one as a Flag, a Note or OK. Flags are what to fix before you submit; notes are worth a look. Each one links to the step where you fix it.

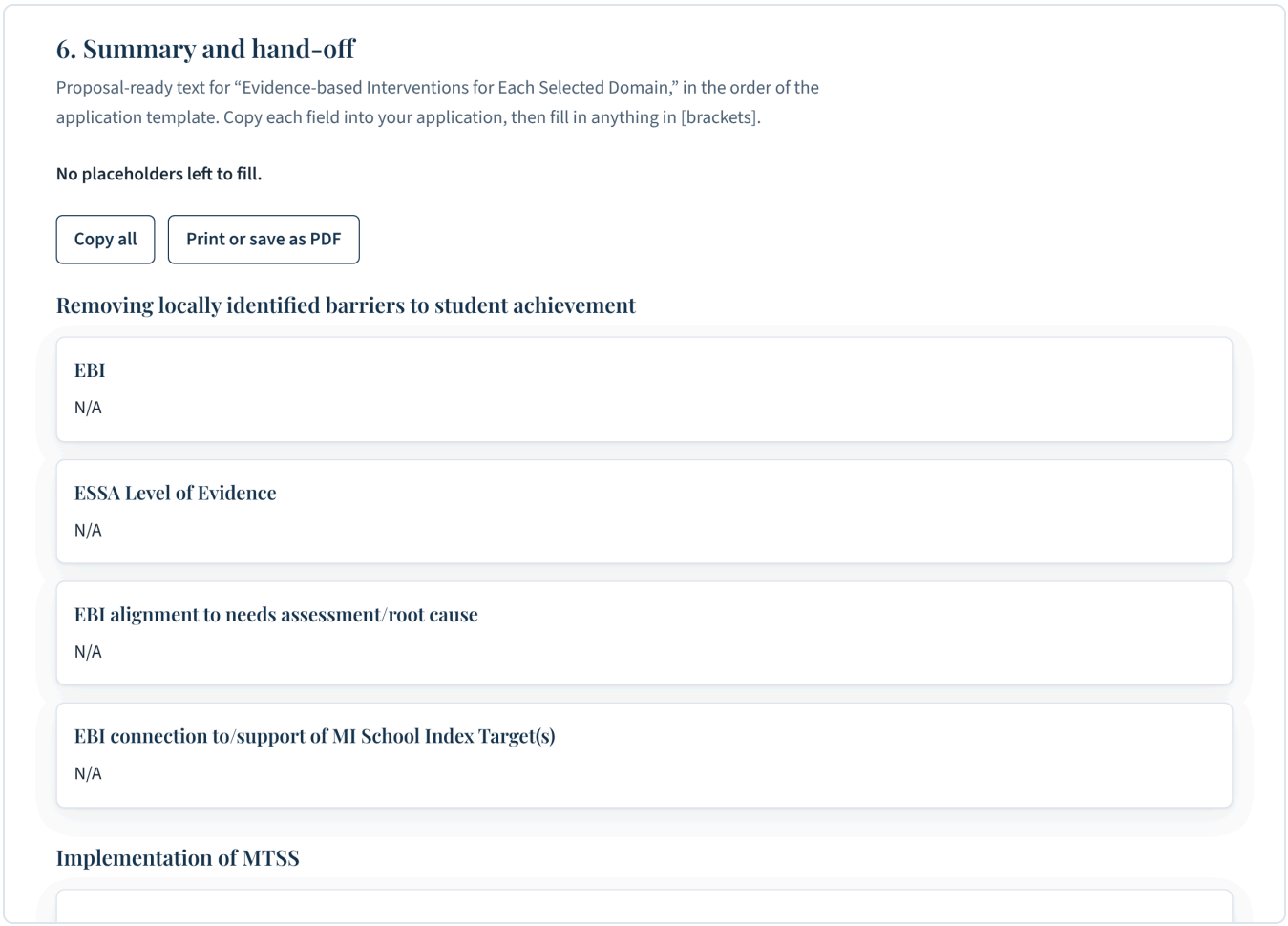


Step 5: the checks on Pleasantville's selection.

WHAT THE TOOL CHECKS	WHAT YOU SEE
Each selected domain has a chosen intervention	A flag for a domain with none
Each domain reaches 3 of 3 points	A note naming what is missing
More than one Index target is connected	A note when only one is
A grade or setting limit applies	A flag if your text drops its line
A row rests on a design-based tier, a study outside the United States, or a detail the menu could not confirm	A note
Every choice is a mental health intervention, or none links directly to an Index target	A flag, with rows to pair with

6 Summary and hand-off

The summary gives the four template fields for each domain in the order of the application template. Domains you didn't select show N/A. The count at the top is the placeholders still to fill. Copy everything, copy one field at a time, or print a clean copy with your school's name and the date.



Step 6: the summary, with copy and print buttons. A domain you didn't select shows N/A.

- The ESSA level states the tier you claim, such as Strong, Moderate or Promising. It is never the tier under the statute.
- The tool lists evidence, not providers. Your district chooses any partner through its own objective selection process.
- **Save the hand-off** once every selected domain has a chosen intervention. The Plan Builder starts from it, and you can update it any time.

> **VIDEOS FOR THIS GUIDE**
>
> Evidence-Based Interventions 1 to 6 on the Start Here page show every step with Pleasantville Middle School's attendance priority.

IF YOUR TEAM GETS STUCK

Where to get help

The tools are free for every eligible school, and most teams can work through them on their own with this guide and the short videos. If you'd like another set of eyes, here is what's available.

1. Office hours

Four sessions, all Eastern time: Friday, November 13, noon to 1:30 p.m.; Friday, November 20, noon to 1:30 p.m.; Tuesday, November 24, noon to 1:30 p.m.; and Monday, November 30, 9 to 10 a.m. The first 30 minutes answer questions sent in ahead of time; the rest is open for questions live. Anything that needs more research or analysis is answered in the first half hour of the next session. Sign up on the Start Here page for the sessions you plan to join, or ask for the recordings, and send your questions on the same form.

2. Videos and guides

Every video and guide, step by step, is on the Start Here page. Inside each tool, "Help for this step" shows the video and guide pages for the step you're on.

3. One-on-one conversations

Office hours are the place to bring your questions. Booking links for individual conversations may be set up after the first office hours, depending on availability and need.

The office hours sign-up is on the Start Here page: tools.systemsforinnovativeschools.com/start