MODULE 4 HANDOUT

Starting from the need, not the program

Name the problem and its root cause before you choose an intervention. Then pick an EBI whose study moved an outcome your school is measured on.

Key ideas

- The same symptom can have different root causes, and each root cause points to different menu rows.
- The chain runs need, root cause, EBI, Index target. The rubric's 3-point level asks for all three connections: domain, needs assessment and root cause, and MI School Index target.
- The chronic absenteeism rate (IPG indicator) should go down. On-Track Attendance (Index) should go up.
- Mental health rows link to the Index only indirectly. Pair one with a row that has a direct Index target.

The shared root-cause categories

Code	Category
RC1	Student engagement and belonging
RC2	Attendance barriers (health, transportation, work, family responsibilities)
RC3	Course access, credit accumulation, and recovery
RC4	Early identification and response (no system to flag and act on risk)
RC5	Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention capacity
RC6	Mental health access and staffing
RC7	Behavior systems and discipline practices
RC8	Family and community partnership
RC9	Leadership capacity, stability, and team routines
RC10	Instructional quality and teacher collaboration
RC11	Time, schedule, and school structures
RC12	Relevance: postsecondary and career pathways

Your need statement

In [grade or student group], [measure] is [value] (source, year). The main root cause is [RC code and name], shown by [data]. We will move [Index target or IPG indicator] from [now] to [goal] by [year].

Part	Your team's entry
Grade or student group	
Measure and current value (source, year)	
Root-cause code and name	
Data that shows this root cause	
Index target or IPG indicator	

Part	Your team's entry
Goal, direction, and year	

Worked example (composite school)

Need: grade 9 chronic absenteeism is well above the other grades and starts in the first semester.

Root cause	Menu rows with a direct attendance link (Tier to claim)
RC2 Attendance barriers	BAR-07 School breakfast after the bell (Tier 1, K-12 pooled); ATT-06 School-based health centers (Tier 3); BAR-10 Community schools strategy (Tier 3); BAR-15 Paid summer youth employment (Tier 3)
RC4 Early identification and response	ATT-03 Personalized mailed absence notices (Tier 1, grades 1-12 pooled); ATT-02 Early warning and intervention system (Tier 2); ATT-01 BARR (Tier 3 for chronic absence; Tier 1 for grade 9 credits)

Where this fits in the toolkit

- T5 Root Cause Analysis Worksheet: confirm your root-cause code with data.
- T2 Domain Decision Guide: check which domain your need belongs to.
- T6 EBI Worksheet, Step 1: filter the menu by your root-cause code.

Sources: SYS IPG EBI Menu FINAL (Root-cause key, Read me, EBI Menu); IPG Rubric; MI School Index System Guide, p. 10.