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Research Crosswalk for High-Quality Direct Technical Assistance

Final summary and research-to-practice crosswalk for LCAP review and embedded DTA support

Purpose

This memo organizes the cited research into four behaviors that lead to improved performance: Expectations & Support, Goal Setting, Use of Data, and Feedback on Performance, and ties each behavior to practical design features for High Quality Direct Technical Assistance with chronically underperforming LEAs.

The crosswalk is written for use in review of LCAPs and related plans, and for strengthening the design of embedded, capacity-building technical assistance.

Reference List is included below.

Prepared for consulting and technical assistance use.

Research-to-Practice Crosswalk

The table below identifies the strongest anchor reference for each DTA behavior, the core rationale that flows from the research, and the implications for high-quality DTA practice. Use the crosswalk as a design check: Feedback is essential.

DTA behavior	Primary research anchor	Why the research fits	Implications for DTA design
Expectations & Support	Elmore (recursive accountability / capacity)	Improvement requires expectations to be matched by support, expertise, and coherent conditions for practice improvement.	Clarify roles across LEA, COE/Geo, and CCEE; ensure the right people are on the team; align external supports; coach for transfer, not dependency.
Goal Setting	Locke & Latham (goal-setting theory)	Specific, challenging, shared goals focus effort, persistence, and action better than broad aspirations.	Use needs assessment to set a small number of improvement aims tied to LCAP, DA, and instructional priorities; build toward gradual release.
Use of Data	Carnegie + Bandura / collective efficacy	Improvement depends on understanding variation, measuring processes and outcomes, and building educator confidence through evidence of progress.	Use state data for the picture and local data for the story; examine student group variation; test root-cause hypotheses; build data routines teams can sustain.
Feedback on Performance	Carnegie PDSA + Fullan 2021	Continuous improvement requires disciplined inquiry, transparent evidence, collaborative learning, and internal accountability.	Coach leaders and implementation teams on short-cycle review, equity-focused reflection, adult practice shifts, and course correction.
Integration of All Four Behaviors / Continuous Improvement	Bryk et al. / Improvement science; Elmore; Fullan	Research suggests improvement is more likely when expectations, goals, evidence, and feedback are mutually reinforcing parts of a repeated learning process. Their interaction helps organizations make sense of progress, respond to challenges, and refine practice over time.	Align internal and external support around instructional quality and student group outcomes through a shared cycle of expectations, goal setting, data use, and feedback. Help teams integrate the four behaviors so DTA strengthens improvement practice and long-term capacity, not separate provider agendas or compliance.

Cross-cutting condition: Where the Three C's show up across all four behaviors

- **Expectations & Support:** *Collaboration* establishes the partnership stance, *Clarity* defines roles, responsibilities, and timelines, and *Courage* enables honest feedback and reciprocal accountability.
- **Goal Setting:** *Collaboration* builds shared ownership of the improvement aim, *Clarity* specifies the goal, measures, owners, and due dates, and *Courage* helps teams narrow priorities and confront misalignment.
- **Use of Data:** *Collaboration* creates joint inquiry around evidence, *Clarity* sharpens what the data show and what questions remain, and *Courage* is required to surface inequities, implementation gaps, and root causes.
- **Feedback on Performance:** *Collaboration* sustains reflection and support, *Clarity* identifies next actions and needed assistance, and *Courage* makes candid performance feedback possible without avoiding hard truths.

1. Expectations & Support

Primary anchor: Richard Elmore's reciprocal accountability framework, reinforced by Carnegie's emphasis on capability development and system conditions.

This body of work argues that performance expectations are only legitimate when the system simultaneously supplies the support, knowledge, structure, and relational conditions required for success. Expectations and Support are rooted in actions taken (behaviors), rather than simply discussing the theoretical. In DTA, that means technical assistance should not be a compliance overlay; it should be a reciprocal partnership, based upon actions, that develops local capacity while maintaining urgency about academic outcomes.

Implications for High-Quality DTA

- Define roles and relationships across LEA, COE/Geo, and CCEE so support is visible and practical.
- Use partnership routines to build trust through the work itself, then leverage that trust to address difficult issues of instructional quality as well as equity concerns.
- Match expectations for adult behavior and student outcomes with explicit support: coaching, facilitation, analytic help, and problem-solving approaches.
- Align internal and external supports around instructional quality and student group outcomes rather than around separate provider agendas.
- Treat team composition as a design decision: the right people must hold authority, expertise, and proximity to implementation.

Operationalization through the Three C's

The Three C's provide a practical partnership structure for Expectations & Support and also operate as a cross-cutting condition across Goal Setting, Use of Data, and Feedback on Performance. They clarify how LEA, COE/Geo, and CCEE work together in embedded DTA.

- **Collaboration -** the approach of working with others in new and creative relationships to accomplish stated goals.
- **Clarity -** making certain that we are being clear in our communication about who is going to do what, by when, and also seeking clarity in our questions as part of a collaborative relationship.
- **Courage -** to give and receive feedback even if it means saying and hearing hard things. The process of feedback supports clarity, which can bolster collaboration.

In this framework, the Three C's translate reciprocal accountability into day-to-day practice: *collaboration* organizes the partnership, *clarity* defines roles and next steps, and *courage* sustains honest feedback in service of improved outcomes for student groups.

- Three C's emphasis: this behavior shows the most direct expression of Collaboration, Clarity, and Courage through partnership design, role definition, and candid reciprocal feedback.

2. Goal Setting

Primary anchor: Locke and Latham's goal-setting theory, strengthened by Carnegie and district coherence literature.

Goal-setting theory shows that specific and challenging goals focus attention, increase persistence, and improve performance more effectively than broad intentions. Applied to DTA, this supports disciplined needs assessment, a small number of shared improvement pursuits , and explicit alignment across LCAP and other varied, required and required plans.

Implications for High-Quality DTA

- Start with diagnosis: needs assessment, existing DA work, and local assets should shape the work before action steps are selected.
- Convert broad aspirations into a few measurable priorities tied to instruction in mathematics and ELA and to identified student groups. This should drive the required actions necessary for growth.
- Align and integrate DTA areas of emphasis to LCAP, CIM, ELOP, EL master plan, and other active plans so the system does not chase competing priorities.
- Design goals so they support gradual release: the LEA should increasingly own the routines, evidence, and implementation decisions.
- Where DA is active, ensure DTA is not parallel work; the two should function as one integrated improvement agenda.

- Three C's emphasis: this behavior reflects *Collaboration* in co-owning the work , *Clarity* in naming the goal, measures, owners, and timelines, and *Courage* in reducing competing priorities and naming what must change.

3. Use of Data

Primary anchor: Carnegie improvement science, supplemented by Bandura and the collective efficacy literature.

Carnegie's improvement science framework treats variation, measurement, and disciplined inquiry as central to learning how to improve in context. Bandura's efficacy theory and the later collective efficacy literature help explain why teams are more likely to persist when data use leads to shared learning, credible progress, and greater belief in their joint capacity to improve student outcomes.

Implications for High-Quality DTA

- Use both lagging and leading indicators: statewide performance data shows the picture, while local assessments, observation, implementation evidence, and student work show the story.
- Study variation by school, grade span, classroom, and student group to identify where inequities and bright spots coexist.
- Use data protocols that move teams quickly from noticing patterns to testing root-cause explanations.
- Model the use of improvement tools together—aim statements, measures, fishbone analyses, change ideas, and short inquiry cycles—so the approach transfers beyond one issue.
- Build efficacy by helping teams see that disciplined changes in adult practice can produce observable progress for students.

- Three C's emphasis: this behavior reflects *Collaboration* in shared inquiry, *Clarity* in interpreting evidence and deciding what to test next, and *Courage* in examining inequities, adult practice, and root causes honestly and transparently.

4. Feedback on Performance

Primary anchor: Carnegie PDSA cycles and Michael Fullan's 2021 right drivers.

Disciplined feedback is not the same as compliance monitoring. Carnegie's PDSA approach supports rapid learning through plan-do-study-act cycles, while Fullan argues that whole-system success depends on capacity building, internal accountability, collaboration, and coherence rather than fragmented pressure. Together, these sources support feedback routines that are transparent, humane, equity-focused, and improvement-oriented to drive better outcomes for students.

Implications for High-Quality DTA

- Coach superintendents, Cabinet members, and implementation teams through recurring evidence reviews and course correction.
- Make invisible issues visible by naming ongoing performance patterns in need of interruption, student group inequities, inconsistent adult practice, and weak data use directly and respectfully.
- Use short-cycle improvement review to systematize school and district efforts so people know what matters, what is changing, and what support is available. This must be stated clearly and without equivocation.
- Expect transparency about progress and failure; normalize acceptable failure when teams are testing meaningful change and learning from results. Speak to this candidly and repeatedly.
- Build internal accountability by tying feedback to shared goals, visible evidence, and agreed next actions. These conversations must be normalized.

- Three C's emphasis: this behavior reflects *Collaboration* in collective reflection, *Clarity* in next steps and support commitments, and *Courage* in giving and receiving direct feedback about implementation and results.

Implementation Lens: Four Quadrants of School Transformation

How "Willing and Able" can be used in DTA

The Four Quadrant Transforming Schools is based on Muhammad (2009) and Muhammad & Cruz (2019) and depicts the practical reality to help DTA Leads diagnose whether a school or district is primarily constrained by will, skill, or both.

Its emphasis on capacity, confidence, connections, and cognition can strengthen planning for differentiated support, especially when deciding whether coaching should focus first on clarity, relational trust, instructional capability, or internal accountability.

Used carefully, the quadrant lens complements the more established evidence-based practices in this memo. Note, the Intensive Assistance Model (IAM) is providing more empirical evidence on the implications of this quadrant playing out in CA school districts.

Final Summary

The most defensible research architecture for the DTA framework is to anchor Expectations & Support in Elmore, Goal Setting in Locke and Latham, Use of Data in Carnegie improvement science strengthened by Bandura and collective efficacy research, and Feedback on Performance in Carnegie PDSA cycles paired with Fullan's right drivers.

Across the uploaded Carnegie materials, the recurring themes are coherence, radical alignment, disciplined inquiry, measurement, capacity building, and organizational infrastructure. Those themes strongly support a DTA model that

is embedded, partnership-based, and focused on adult practice and student results rather than disconnected compliance activity.

For LCAP review, the practical test is whether the plan names a small number of aligned goals, identifies the student group and instructional problem precisely, uses both outcome and process measures, aligns support partners to a common theory of action, and establishes short feedback cycles that make course correction normal rather than exceptional.

For DTA execution, the practical test is whether technical assistance is helping the LEA build its own capability to diagnose, prioritize, act, study, and adjust. High-quality DTA should leave behind stronger routines, clearer roles, tighter instructional coherence, and greater internal efficacy—not merely a set of completed meetings or added services. The Three C's strengthen this execution model by making partnership expectations explicit: teams work collaboratively, communicate with precision, and use courageous feedback to confront equity and implementation issues directly. Across all four behaviors, the Three C's act as an implementation check: collaboration should be visible in joint work, clarity should be visible in roles, measures, and next actions, and courage should be visible in the feedback and equity conversations that improvement requires.

References Incorporated

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control. New York: W. H. Freeman.

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Fullan, M. (2021). The Right Drivers for Whole System Success.

Goddard, R. D., Hoy, W. K., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2000). Collective Teacher Efficacy: Its Meaning, Measure, and Impact on Student Achievement.

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). New Directions in Goal-Setting Theory.

Park, S., Hironaka, S., Carver, P., & Nordstrum, L. (2013). Continuous Improvement in Education. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Transforming Schools / Four Quadrant slide deck uploaded with this request; used as an implementation lens alongside Muhammad (2009) and Muhammad & Cruz (2019).

Three C's working definitions provided by the user and incorporated here as a cross-cutting implementation condition across all four behaviors.