

Implementation of the Collaborative Action Process (CAP) 2006–2007: Infrastructure and Management

Elizabeth Cooper-Martin, Ph.D. and Rachel Hickson, M.A.¹

The Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) is conducting an evaluation of the Collaborative Action Process (CAP) with a focus on the extent to which schools are implementing CAP as designed. This brief, the second in a series of four, concerns implementation of CAP's infrastructure and management. The previous brief focuses on implementation of the CAP problem-solving process (Cooper-Martin & Hickson, 2007). The focus of the next brief is the effect of organizational factors on CAP's implementation. The focus of the final brief is the implementation of CAP professional development.

Background

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) developed CAP to provide an improved service delivery model and to impact overrepresentation of certain student groups in special education (Weast, 2005). CAP is a problem-solving framework that seeks to resolve student difficulties within general education through the application of evidence-based interventions and systematic monitoring of student progress. Student response to these interventions is the major determinant of the need for special education referral, evaluation, and service. CAP was designed to improve problem-solving processes. The existing process, the Educational Management Team (EMT), often was used too late for interventions to be successful. CAP can target academic or behavioral concerns with any individual student or group of students and is open to all teachers in a CAP school.

As of fall 2006, 61 schools were chosen to implement CAP. To do so, a school organizes teams by grade level or subject area with a coach for each team, creates a building-level team, and identifies a facilitator as the key CAP coordinator within the school. District-level CAP consultants support implementation in schools.

The evaluation uses a multi-method data collection strategy to address the following questions:

1. What is the current level of implementation in terms of agreement between recommended components and implemented components?
2. How consistent is the level of implementation across CAP teams or schools?

3. What challenges with implementation have staff experienced?
4. What improvements or best practices for implementation have staff suggested?

Summary of Methodology

A sample of 30 schools was selected for data collection activities (Appendix A). The school administrator responsible for CAP at each school, usually the principal, was interviewed in person at 29 schools. CAP facilitators from 28 schools (93% of the sample), 107 CAP coaches (66% of sampled coaches), and 403 teachers or other school-based staff (48% of sampled teachers and CAP team members) completed online surveys. Interview and survey items addressed the expectations on how to implement key staff members' roles and responsibilities and CAP team structures (Appendix B).

Summary of Findings

The first finding concerned the current level of implementation which was classified as full, partial, or low/none. The level of implementation of key roles and responsibilities was partial for two groups, administrators and facilitators, and was between partial and full for two other groups: CAP coaches and teachers/staff who had referred a CAP case. The level of implementation of team structures was between partial and full for building-level CAP teams and partial for grade-level CAP teams.

The second finding concerned consistency of implementation across schools or teams. Implementation of roles and responsibilities was not consistent for administrators, facilitators, or coaches but was moderately consistent for teachers/staff. Implementation of team structures was moderately consistent for both building- and grade-level teams.

Common challenges mentioned by school staff were finding time to fulfill their responsibilities, hold team meetings, and complete CAP documentation.

Key recommendations from the evaluation include the following: identify and share practices that allow CAP teams to meet weekly or biweekly, to include staff members who can suggest interventions, and to include all teachers of a student; reduce number and redundancy of forms; provide electronic copies of CAP data forms and integrate them with other MCPS databases; integrate CAP documentation into the articulation process; and communicate more clearly the data needs for CAP.

Detailed Methodology

Sample. As of September 2006, 61 schools had signed up to implement CAP—47 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and 4 high schools. A sample of these schools was selected for data collection. Initially, all high schools were included in the sample because there were only four. For elementary and middle schools, the statistical technique of cluster analysis was used to form five groups of similar schools based on the following building-level variables of particular relevance for CAP:

- Number of years implementing CAP
- Student enrollment, 2005–2006
- Combined percentage of African American and Hispanic students, 2005–2006
- Percentage of students receiving special education services, 2005–2006
- Suspension percentage, 2005–2006

Half of the schools in each of the groups formed by the cluster analysis were randomly chosen. Any schools with members serving on the CAP evaluation advisory group were excluded. The final sample of 30 schools included 22 elementary, 5 middle, and 3 high schools. (See list in Appendix A.)

Data sources. To address the evaluation questions, two data sources were used. The first source was in-person interviews with the school administrator primarily responsible for CAP at each school in the sample. A semi-structured protocol was used; interviews lasted 45 to 60 minutes. A total of 29 interviews, including 25 principals and 4 assistant principals, were completed during April and May 2007.

The second data source was online surveys. Surveys were developed for each of three groups: CAP facilitators, CAP coaches, and teachers/staff. The latter was intended for all teachers plus all other school-based staff on a CAP team. Links to the surveys were provided via e-mail to each CAP facilitator, who distributed the links to other staff within the school. Multiple reminders were sent via e-mail to facilitators whose school response rates were below 50%. All surveys were completed during May and June 2007.

Interview and survey items addressed the expectations for schools on how to implement CAP's infrastructure and management, as described in *CAP school action planning: How to build infrastructure and sustainability* (MCPS, 2005). (See Appendix B, based on this reference, for a list of key roles and responsibilities of personnel involved with CAP.) To enhance validity of the items, program staff and the CAP evaluation advisory group reviewed the interview protocol and surveys.

All respondents answered items related to their own roles and responsibilities and to those of other staff members as follows: school administrators about facilitators, facilitators about the administrator and coaches at their school, coaches about their team members and administrator, and team members about their coach.

Data interpretation. For responsibilities related to attending meetings, respondents reported the number of meetings attended. These numbers were divided by the total number of such meetings to create percentages. The percentages were used to identify levels of implementation as follows:

- Full: attendance at 85% or more of all meetings
- Partial: attendance at 50–84% of all meetings
- Low/none: attendance at less than 50% of all meetings

On some items, respondents rated their level of involvement. These responses were used to identify levels of implementation as follows:

- Full: very involved
- Partial: somewhat involved
- Low/none: minimally or not at all involved

To identify the typical level of implementation, the median value was used because the data were ordinal. The median is the level at which half of the values are more than that level and half of the values are less than that level.

Detailed Findings

This section covers implementation of roles and responsibilities for four groups of personnel: school administrators, CAP facilitators, CAP coaches, and teachers/staff. Next, this section addresses implementation of team structures for two types of CAP teams: building-level and grade-level.

During data collection, it was learned that one school had not implemented CAP. Therefore, the findings in this brief are based on 29 schools.

School Administrators

The school administrators' roles and responsibilities for CAP were categorized into the following three groups: vision/leadership, implementation support, and optional activities. Findings are reported by school because one administrator was interviewed from each school.

Vision and leadership. Administrators were expected to provide the vision and action plan for implementing CAP. Based on administrators' descriptions of their efforts in these areas, less than half (44.8%) fully implemented each of these responsibilities (Table 1). The median level of implementation for each of these responsibilities was partial.

Table 1
Administrators' Reports on Level of Implementation of Vision and Leadership Responsibilities (N=29)

Responsibility	Full %	Partial %	Low/none %
Provide vision for CAP	44.8	34.5	20.7
Provide action plan for CAP	44.8	24.1	31.0
Integrate CAP and school improvement efforts	27.6	55.2	17.2
Lead staff in data discussions ¹	28.0	24.0	48.0

¹N=25.

Administrators were charged with integrating CAP and school improvement efforts; the majority reported partial implementation (Table 1). The median level of implementation was partial, which meant that the administrator described the integration, but it was not documented in the school's improvement plan (SIP). Full implementation required such documentation.

An additional leadership role for administrators was to lead staff in discussions about data obtained through CAP. Monthly discussions represented full implementation while discussions less frequently than every quarter represented low implementation. Almost half of the administrators had a low level of implementation (Table 1). The median level of implementation for this role represented partial implementation.

For the role of integrating CAP and SIP, almost all responses were at one of two levels of implementation, indicating moderate consistency across schools. For the other three roles, at least 20% of schools were at each level of implementation, indicating that implementation was not consistent across schools.

CAP facilitators' reports on three of the vision and leadership responsibilities of administrators were similar to the administrators' reports (Table 2). At about half of the schools, facilitators agreed that their

administrator had been effective in developing a vision for CAP (58.6%) and a CAP action plan (51.7%). At less than half of the schools, facilitators agreed that their administrator frequently led discussions about data from CAP (41.4%).

Table 2
Facilitators' Reports on Vision and Leadership Responsibilities of Administrators (N=29)

	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Strongly disagree & Disagree %
My school administrator has... been effective in developing the vision for implementing CAP.	58.6	24.1	13.8
been effective in the creation of an action plan for implementing CAP.	51.7	24.1	20.7
frequently led discussions about data obtained through CAP.	41.4	17.2	37.9

Implementation support. Administrators were expected to provide appropriate time and structure to implement CAP. Each administrator described his/her role in the implementation of CAP. Based on this description, the interviewer coded the administrator's helpfulness in providing time and support for CAP as very, somewhat, or not helpful as follows:

- Very helpful: 8 administrators (27.6%)
- Somewhat helpful: 13 administrators (44.8%)
- Not helpful: 8 administrators (27.6%)

The median level of implementation for this role was somewhat helpful, which was considered partial implementation. The level of implementation was not consistent across schools; at least 20% of respondents were in each category.

With respect to specific roles in providing support, more than two thirds of the administrators (69.0%) directed CAP teams to use their common planning time to meet. Over half of administrators did not provide release time to CAP team members (55.2%). Because the majority of respondents were in the same category, the level of implementation was considered consistent across schools for these two roles.

Optional activities. Attendance by administrators at building-level CAP meetings or districtwide, coaching support meetings was optional (Table 3). More than half of the administrators reported full implementation for attendance at building-level meetings (55.2%). But only one fifth of the administrators (20.7%) reported full implementation for attendance at support meetings.

Table 3
Administrators' Reports on Attendance at Optional Meetings (N=29)

Meeting	Full	Partial	Low/none
Building-level CAP	55.2	17.2	27.6
Coaching support	20.7	13.8	65.5

CAP Facilitators

Most CAP facilitators surveyed (89.7%) were not classroom based; this group included building leaders such as assistant principals and staff development teachers. The majority of facilitators' roles and responsibilities were related to training and support; fewer were related to leadership. Findings are reported by school because each school was supposed to have one facilitator. For the 11 schools with two facilitators, it was assumed that they shared roles and responsibilities and so the highest level of implementation reported by either facilitator was used.

Training and support. To provide training and support, facilitators were expected to attend districtwide, coaching support meetings. Six meetings were held in 2006–2007. Based on survey responses, the level of implementation for meeting attendance was partial for about one third of the facilitators (34.5%) and low for another third (37.9%) (Table 4). The median level of implementation of this role was partial.

Table 4
Facilitators' Reports on Levels of Implementation of Training/Support Responsibilities by School (N=29)

Responsibility	Full %	Partial %	Low/none %
Attend coaching support meetings	27.6	34.5	37.9
Share content of coaching support meetings	41.4	34.5	24.1
Provide training	41.4	27.6	31.0

In addition to attending coaching support meetings, facilitators were expected to disseminate information from these meetings. Given that the meetings were supposed to be monthly, the levels of implementation for this role were defined as follows:

- Full: monthly
- Partial: less than every month
- Low/none: never

Based on survey responses, implementation was full at less than half of the schools (41.4%) (Table 4). The median level of implementation for sharing content was partial.

Facilitators were expected to provide training with assistance from the CAP consultant. Levels of implementation for this responsibility were defined as follows:

- Full: at least monthly
- Partial: less than every month, but at least quarterly
- Low/none: less frequently than every quarter

Based on survey responses, implementation was full at less than half of the schools (41.4%) (Table 4). The median level of implementation for providing training was partial.

For the three responsibilities related to training and support, at least 20% of schools were at each level of implementation, indicating that implementation was not consistent across schools for these roles (Table 4).

Facilitators' training responsibilities included identifying training needs. Based on reports by school administrators, the median level of implementation for this responsibility was full. At 18 schools (62.1%), school administrators reported that their facilitators were very involved in identifying training needs. Only four administrators (13.8%) reported that their facilitator was uninvolved in this responsibility.

In addition to offering training, facilitators were expected to provide ongoing CAP support to their coaches. Based on facilitators' reports, the median level of implementation for this role was partial (Table 5).

Table 5
Facilitators' and Coaches' Reports on Facilitator's Level of Involvement in Supporting Coaches

Level of involvement	Schools (N=29)	
	Facilitators %	Coaches ¹ %
Very	48.3	34.5
Somewhat	41.4	62.1
Minimally	3.4	0.0
Not at all	6.9	3.4

¹Rating is based on the majority of responses at each school.

Coaches also reported on the facilitators' involvement in supporting them, but were less positive than the facilitators. At about half of the schools (48.3%), facilitators reported being very involved in supporting coaches. But coaches at only one third of the schools (34.5%) reported that their facilitator was very involved in supporting them (Table 5).

Leadership. Facilitators' leadership responsibilities included leading building-level CAP meetings. Facilitators reported on the number of building-level meetings they led. Analysis indicated the level of implementation was full at the majority of schools as follows:

- Full: 18 schools (62.1%)
- Partial: 5 schools (17.2%)
- Low: 6 schools (20.7%)

The median level of implementation of this responsibility was full. Implementation was consistent across schools.

Facilitators also were expected to collect data about CAP cases and share information with school administrators about trends or needs to inform school improvement efforts. Based on facilitators' reports, implementation was full (i.e., very involved) at less than half of the schools for each of these responsibilities (Table 6). The median level of implementation was partial (i.e., somewhat involved) for both responsibilities.

For collecting data, the level of implementation was moderately consistent across schools; 89.7% of schools were in one of two categories (Table 6). For sharing trends, at least 20% of schools were at each level of implementation, indicating that implementation was not consistent across schools for this role (Table 6).

Table 6
Reports by Facilitators and School Administrators on Facilitator's Level of Involvement in Collecting Data and in Sharing Trends with Administrators

Level of involvement	Schools (N=29)			
	Collecting data		Sharing trends	
	Facilitator %	SA %	Facilitator %	SA %
Very	48.3	41.4	42.9	31.0
Somewhat	41.4	20.7	32.1	24.1
Minimally	3.4	3.4	21.4	6.9
Not at all	6.9	27.6	3.6	20.7
Don't know	0.0	6.9	0.0	17.2

Note. SA=School administrator.

School administrators also reported on facilitators' involvement with collecting data and sharing trends. Administrators' responses indicated lower levels of involvement than the facilitators' own reports (Table 6).

CAP Coaches

Two thirds of the coaches (67.3%) who responded were non-classroom based. Roles and responsibilities for coaches were categorized into these two groups: leadership and supporting their CAP team. Findings are reported across all 107 coaches who responded.

Leadership. Coaches had two leadership roles: facilitating the meetings of their CAP team and serving on the CAP building-level team. Survey findings on attendance at these meetings revealed that more than half of the coaches fully implemented both the former (58.9%) and the latter role (53.7%) (Table 7). The median level of implementation was full for each of these roles.

Table 7
Coaches' Reports on Their Level of Attendance at Meetings (N=107)

Role	Full	Partial	Low/none ¹
Facilitator at CAP team meetings	58.9	21.5	14.0
Attendee at CAP building-level meetings	53.7	19.6	22.4

¹Includes no response.

Implementation was moderately consistent for the facilitator role; the level of implementation was in one of two categories for 86% of the coaches (Table 7). Implementation was not consistent for attendance at building-level meetings; the level of implementation in each of the three categories was at least 20% (Table 7).

Facilitators also reported on coaches' responsibilities. At 82.1% of schools, facilitators reported that all or most coaches attended at least 90% of CAP team meetings. This response suggests a higher level of implementation than the information from the coaches; as seen in Table 7, only 58.9% of coaches reported full implementation.

Facilitators at 85.7% of schools agreed that all or most coaches regularly attended building-level meetings. This information was similar to the coaches' reports; as seen in Table 7, a combined total of 73.3% of coaches reported full or partial implementation of this role.

Team support. Coaches reported on responsibilities related to helping their CAP team. For helping to focus on problem-solving steps, half of the coaches were at full implementation. For this responsibility, the median level of implementation was full (Table 8). Consistency of implementation across teams was considered moderate; more than 80% of responses were in one of two levels of implementation.

Table 8
Coaches' Reports on Their Level of Involvement with Team Support Responsibilities (N=107)

How involved have you been in helping your grade level CAP team ...	Very %	Some-what %	Minimally or not at all ¹ %
to focus on problem solving steps?	50.5	31.8	17.7
to prioritize problems?	40.2	33.6	26.2
to monitor interventions?	26.2	44.9	28.9
with data collection?	31.8	42.1	26.1
to do folder reviews?	27.1	23.4	49.5

¹Includes no response.

For the remaining four responsibilities, less than half of the coaches reported full implementation (Table 8). The median level of implementation was partial for each of these four responsibilities. Note that the lowest levels of full implementation were for the three

responsibilities that occur outside of meetings: monitor interventions, data collection, and folder reviews.

At least 20% of coaches reported each level of implementation for each of the five team support responsibilities, indicating that implementation was not consistent across teams (Table 8).

Information from the facilitators on three of the team support responsibilities confirmed the coaches' reports. Facilitators indicated that all or most coaches in their school helped their teams as follows:

- To focus on problem-solving steps 75.9%
- To collect data 65.5%
- To monitor interventions 62.1%

For each of these roles, at least 70% of coaches reported full or partial implementation (Table 8).

Teachers and staff also reported on coaches' level of involvement with team support (Table 9). Compared with coaches' reports, staff members more frequently indicated that coaches were very involved for each of the team support responsibilities. For example, with respect to focus on problem-solving steps, 58.2% of staff reported that their coach was very involved (Table 9) only 50.5% of coaches said they were very involved (Table 8).

Table 9
Reports by Teachers/Staff on Coaches' Level of Involvement with Team Support (N=342)

How involved was the CAP team coach in helping the team...	Very %	Some-what %	Minimally or not at all %
to focus on problem-solving steps?	58.2	29.2	12.6
to prioritize problems?	53.2	30.4	16.4
to monitor interventions?	39.2	38.3	22.6
with data collection?	42.1	34.5	23.4
to do folder reviews?	40.9	33.3	25.7

Note. Includes only respondents who attended a team meeting.

Teachers and Staff

Background. Among the 403 respondents to the teacher/staff survey, a large majority were classroom based (88.6%).

More than half of teachers/staff (58.7%) had attended at least nine CAP meetings (Table 10). About three quarters (72.7%) of teachers/staff had referred at least one case to a CAP team (Table 10). However, when asked about their team members, only half of coaches (49.5%) reported that "all" or "most" members had referred cases to the CAP team during the school year.

Table 10
Reports by Teachers/Staff on CAP Meetings Attended and Cases Referred to a CAP Team (N=403)

Number	CAP meetings attended	CAP cases referred
	%	%
None ¹	8.1	27.3
1-4	12.9	55.3
5-8	20.3	12.4
9-12	17.6	3.2
13-16	9.4	0.2
More than 16	31.7	1.5

¹Includes no response.

Roles and responsibilities. Staff members who referred a CAP case had several responsibilities. Based on survey responses, implementation was full for the majority of teachers/staff on three responsibilities: collecting data, carrying out interventions, and monitoring and evaluating interventions (Table 11). For each of these responsibilities, the median level of implementation was full. Implementation was moderately consistent across staff for each of these roles because almost all respondents were in one of two levels of implementation.

For two responsibilities, reviewing student folders and completing CAP forms, the level of implementation was full for about 40% of teachers/staff (Table 11). For each of these responsibilities, the median level of implementation was partial. Implementation was not consistent across staff; at least 20% of respondents were in each level of implementation for both responsibilities.

Table 11
Reports by Teachers/Staff on Their Level of Involvement with CAP Responsibilities (N=296)

During this school year, how involved have you been in...	Very %	Some-what %	Minimally or not at all ¹ %
collecting data for your CAP cases?	53.2	34.5	12.2
reviewing student folders for your CAP cases?	38.6	37.5	23.9
completing CAP forms for your CAP cases?	39.6	34.8	25.6
carrying out interventions for your CAP cases?	66.2	24.6	9.2
monitoring and evaluating interventions for your CAP cases?	55.6	32.1	12.3

Note. Includes only respondents who had referred at least one case.

¹Includes no response.

Coaches also reported on teacher/staff responsibilities. The proportion of coaches reporting that "all" or "most" of their team members performed these responsibilities for their cases was as follows:

- Collected data 49.5%
- Reviewed student folders 38.3%
- Completed CAP forms 44.9%
- Carried out interventions 57.0%
- Monitored and evaluated interventions 51.4%

The responses from coaches (listed above) were similar to the reports by teachers/staff of being very involved (Table 11). For example, 53.2% of teachers/staff reported that they were very involved in collecting data and 49.5% of coaches indicated that all or most of their team members collected data for their cases.

CAP Team Structures

For both building-level and grade-level teams, three team structures were examined: number of teams, number of meetings, and data collection methods. All teams were expected to meet at least twice per month, for a total of 16 meetings by the time of the survey in May 2007.

All CAP teams were expected to use a CAP binder and CAP forms to collect and maintain data on individual and group cases. The levels of implementation for data collection method were defined as follows:

- Full: Use of both CAP binder and CAP data forms
- Partial: Use of CAP binder or CAP data forms
- Low/none: Use of method other than CAP binder or data forms, including none

Building-level teams. Each school was expected to have a building-level CAP team. Based on administrators' reports, all 29 schools (100%) had such a team. Implementation was full and consistent across schools.

Facilitators reported on the number of meetings of the building-level team. Implementation was low for almost 45% of teams (Table 12). The median level of implementation was partial. Almost all schools had one of two levels of implementation, indicating moderate consistency across schools.

Table 12
Facilitators' Reports on Building-level Teams (N=29)

Level of implementation	Frequency of meetings %	Data collection method %
Full	41.4	58.6
Partial	13.8	31.0
Low ¹	44.8	10.3

¹Includes no response.

Facilitators also reported on data collection methods. More than half of all building-level teams (58.6%) fully implemented the data collection method (Table 12). The median level of implementation was full.

Almost all schools had full or partial implementation, indicating moderate consistency across schools.

Grade-level teams. At the majority of schools (58.6%), facilitators reported that, as expected, all grades (in elementary schools) and subject teams (in secondary schools) had active CAP teams as follows:

- All 58.6%
- Most 24.1%
- Some 10.3%
- Few 3.4%
- No answer 3.4%

In the one school with "few" active teams, CAP was intended for only one grade. Of the three schools with "some" active teams, two were secondary schools. With respect to the expected number of grade-level teams, the median level of implementation was full and consistent across schools.

CAP coaches reported on the number of meetings of their grade-level team. For four in ten teams (40.2%), implementation was full (Table 13). The median level of implementation was partial. Because each level of implementation included at least 20% of the teams, implementation of frequency of grade-level team meetings was judged as not consistent across teams.

Coaches also reported on data collection methods for their teams. At least half of all grade-level teams (50.5%) fully implemented the data documentation method (Table 13). Because almost all teams had full or partial implementation, consistency was judged as moderate across teams for data collection method.

Table 13
Coaches' Reports on Grade-level Teams (N=107)

Level	Frequency of meetings %	Data collection method %
Full	40.2	50.5
Partial	21.5	35.5
Low ¹	38.3	14.0

¹Includes no response.

Challenges to Implementation

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The most common topic for comments about staff members' roles and responsibilities was the request for release time to support CAP. Staff viewed CAP as an unfunded mandate, with the lack of funding for school-based staff creating challenges to implementing CAP responsibilities. A typical comment (from a principal) follows "CAP does not come with support. Teachers complain that CAP lacks needed resources." Lack of resources may become a long-term barrier to team formation and full implementation. Several principals

had trouble recruiting enough coaches; as one principal put it, “It’s extra work but no extra money.”

Grade-level Teams

Challenges with grade-level teams were reported by staff members in secondary schools. For instance, a block schedule made it more difficult to schedule team meetings. Administrators at high schools noted that a team structure was not in place beyond Grade 9, which would affect their ability to implement CAP. School administrators said MCPS high schools have been encouraged to work in course-alike teams to support achievement on the High School Assessments (HSA).

Data Collection and Documentation

School personnel involved with CAP identified several challenges associated with data collection and documentation: time demands, problems with the forms, appropriate data for CAP, and specific challenges.

Respondents viewed the time demand associated with completing CAP documentation as the major challenge. Both the number of forms and the requirement for data collection were problems. As one principal said, “Teachers question how frequently to collect data and how much documentation is required. When is enough, enough?” Teachers were concerned about supporting multiple students when they have limited time to take any one student through CAP. As one teacher said, “...because the process is overly focused on collecting data and filling out an abundance of paperwork, we don’t get to discuss many students in the course of a year.” A final concern was that children’s needs for special education screening could be needlessly delayed while teachers struggle to document issues.

Another major challenge concerned the CAP forms which were not available electronically and were not integrated with other MCPS databases. This was the “number one outcry at every meeting,” according to one principal. Another administrator said, “There are too many different data vehicles that don’t interact well. IMS [Instructional Management System] and student data monitoring for AYP [Adequate Yearly Progress] are in competition with CAP.”

Several comments indicated confusion about what type of data to use for CAP cases. For example, an administrator said there is a need to focus on “what data provide more predictive information” about what will work for students in CAP. Two facilitators suggested that data already collected in schools could be used for CAP.

School personnel surveyed also mentioned very specific documentation challenges such as recording

specific behaviors that demanded the teacher’s attention during class (e.g., number of eye contacts) and collecting data for students who were not seen on a daily basis due to block scheduling.

Suggestions for Improvement

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Several suggestions from school administrators focused on providing support to allow CAP meetings and duties to take place as follows:

- “Teachers need release time or money to work on CAP tasks. Some teachers have no CAP students, [but] some have seven!”
- “Allow sub time for articulating CAP students to other schools and for connecting CAP to Baldrige.”
- “Sub money or stipends [are needed] to attend training during the school year.”

Several comments on best practices referred to the support and participation of key staff members, including the school psychologist and the district-level CAP consultant. Other school staff stated that an effective CAP coach was essential and must move the team through the process. Coaches and teachers/staff felt their school administrators must make CAP a priority or a mandatory procedure and set aside time for meetings weekly or biweekly.

Grade-level Teams

Middle school administrators wanted ideas about structures that make it easier to schedule CAP meetings. Coaches and teachers/staff wanted attendance by staff who can provide services or interventions to students and by all teachers for that student.

Data Collection and Documentation

School personnel offered suggestions for improvement of data collection methods and documentation. One principal said “we need to learn how to drill into the data for more precise information of the needs of the student”. A teacher suggested that CAP schools need “an MCPS database similar to the PRIM [Pre-intervention Manual] book—something that has specific suggestions for goals, etc., that relate specifically to the MCPS curriculum.”

Several respondents asked for CAP records that can flow between grades and schools, to provide staff members with information on what happened in previous years.

Conclusion

This brief focused on implementation of CAP's infrastructure and management. The first evaluation question addressed the current level of implementation, in terms of agreement between proposed and implemented components. Table 14 summarizes the level of implementation for each infrastructure and management topic, based on the median level of implementation for the majority of indicators (i.e., responsibilities for each group of personnel and structures for each team). A category of partial-full was included for a topic with about half of the indicators at full and about half at partial.

Table 14
Summary of Level of Implementation

CAP infrastructure and management topic	Level of implementation		
	Full	Partial-Full	Partial
Administrator responsibilities			X
CAP facilitator responsibilities			X
CAP coach responsibilities		X	
Teacher/staff responsibilities		X	
Building-level teams		X	
Grade-level teams		X	

The second evaluation question focused on the consistency of the level of implementation across CAP teams or schools. The level of implementation of roles and responsibilities was not consistent across schools for administrators and facilitators and not consistent across teams for coaches. There was moderate consistency across teachers and other team members in the implementation of their responsibilities. Implementation of team structures was moderately consistent across schools for both building-level and grade-level teams.

The third evaluation question focused on the implementation challenges for school staff. Common challenges mentioned by staff members were finding time to fulfill their responsibilities, hold team meetings, and complete CAP documentation.

The final question addressed school staff suggestions for improvements or best practices for implementation. Best practices focused on the support of key personnel. The most common suggestions for improvement were release time and changes to the documentation requirements.

Strengths and Limitations of Methodology

In interpreting the results, it is important to understand the methodology's strengths and limitations. Self-reporting by teachers, coaches, or others can be

affected by perceptions that it is in their professional interest to appear as engaged as possible with CAP.

At the same time, the use of staff members with different roles in the process to report on implementation is a strength of the methodology. Convergence between informants increases the reliability of the results, which is the case in this study.

It is possible that the respondents to the teacher/staff survey had more CAP experience than the average teacher. This possibility is supported by the fact that coaches reported a lower rate of referrals of CAP cases by teachers than the rate reported by teachers themselves, suggesting that respondents were more likely to be staff members who had referred a case to CAP. Further, while DSA instructed facilitators to ask all teachers and all CAP team members in the building to complete the survey, variation among schools was possible. For instance, one facilitator sent instructions asking only those "involved with CAP" to complete the survey.

Recommendations

Evaluation findings indicate the following recommendations:

- Identify and share practices that allow CAP teams to meet weekly or biweekly, to include staff members who can suggest interventions, and to include all teachers of a student.
- Provide ideas to middle school administrators about structures or schedules that make it easier to hold CAP meetings.
- Develop or clarify processes to build CAP teams in Grades 10–12, where a lack of grade-level teams is seen as a barrier.
- Explore reasons for less than full implementation of administrator and facilitator responsibilities. Determine whether these staff members are unaware of the requirements, or is there some barrier to completing them?
- Consider having coaching support meetings during the school day to encourage attendance, because most CAP facilitators and coaches are nonclassroom based staff.
- Reduce the number of CAP forms and eliminate redundancy among forms.
- Provide electronic copies of CAP data forms and integrate them with other MCPS databases used for student data monitoring, including OASIS, IMS, and special education records. This is a critical need for schools.
- Forms to be used for CAP documentation should be reviewed and redesigned as needed to match the steps recommended by the rubric used for this evaluation (see also Cooper-Martin & Hickson, 2007), or to conform to the steps discussed in

Maryland's Response To Intervention Framework (MSDE 2007).

- Integrate CAP documentation into the articulation process across grades and school buildings.
- Clearly communicate guidelines on the type of data and number of data points needed for CAP.

Next Step

Two additional briefs are planned to report on further analysis of the data collected for the CAP evaluation. The focus of the next brief is the analysis of factors (e.g., district support, administrator support, attitudes towards CAP) that may explain variations in the level of implementation. The focus of the final brief is the implementation of the CAP professional development component, which includes training and support. The final brief will build on the needs for training indicated by findings of the prior briefs, including this one.

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**Implementation of the Collaborative Action Process (CAP) 2006–2007:
Infrastructure and Management**

Appendixes

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Appendix A

Sample Schools for CAP Evaluation 2006–2007

A. Mario Loiederman Middle School
Bel Pre Elementary School
Benjamin Banneker Middle School
Burnt Mills Elementary School
Cashell Elementary School
Diamond Elementary School
Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School
Forest Oak Middle School
Gaithersburg High School
Germantown Elementary School
Goshen Elementary School
Harmony Hills Elementary School
Lakewood Elementary School
Laytonsville Elementary School
Col. Zadok Magruder High School
Maryvale Elementary School
Spark M. Matsunaga Elementary School
Meadow Hall Elementary School
Oakland Terrace Elementary School
Poolesville Elementary School
Redland Middle School
Judith A. Resnik Elementary School
Rosemont Elementary School
Shady Grove Middle School
Strathmore Elementary School
Strawberry Knoll Elementary School
Takoma Park Elementary School
Weller Road Elementary School
Wheaton High School
Woodlin Elementary School

Appendix B

Selected Recommended Components for Implementation of CAP Infrastructure and Management

Roles and responsibilities of key staff members

School administrators

- Provide the vision and action plan
- Provide appropriate time and structure to implement
- Lead staff in discussions about data obtained through CAP
- May assist in facilitating building CAP meetings
- May attend coaching support meetings

CAP facilitators

- Provide ongoing support to coaches
- May coach a team
- Co-lead building CAP meetings
- Collect data
- Meet with administration about trends/needs

CAP coaches

- Help to facilitate grade level team meetings
- Help team focus on problem-solving steps and data collection
- Help teachers with folder reviews
- Help teammates problem solve and monitor interventions
- Serve on building CAP team
- Prioritize students and group them according to needs
- Hold meetings at least twice monthly

Teacher/staff (CAP team members)

- Participate in grade level CAP meetings
- Gather data on students
- Review student folders
- Problem solve with team members
- Carry out interventions
- Monitor and evaluate interventions

Team structures

- Number of teams:
 - one building level per school
 - one team per grade level in elementary schools
 - one team per subject area in secondary schools
- Meets at least twice per month
- Uses CAP binder and CAP data forms to collect information

Note. Source: *CAP school action planning: How to build infrastructure and sustainability* (MCPS, 2005)