



4B- Building Better Connections: Co-Developing a Family Engagement Measure With a School District

Presenters:

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- **Topic:** Equitable Supports
- **Keywords:** Social Relationships, Youth Voice, Tier 1



Learning Objectives

- Share a real-world example of a student and family engagement tool for classroom teachers.
- Identify lessons learned from developing and piloting a family engagement tool.
- Reflect on how this tool can help differentiate and intensify effective classroom management.
- Learn ideas for applying this approach to PBIS efforts.



Setting the Stage: Why Family Voice Matters

Policy	Key Expectation	Connection to Family Voice
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015)	Requires meaningful consultation with parents and community stakeholders in school improvement plans.	Encourages schools to integrate family perspectives in continuous improvement and equity plans.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004)	Mandates parent participation in IEP development and decision making.	Ensures parents are equal partners in identifying goals and supports for students with disabilities.
Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)	Emphasizes proactive, strengths-based, data-driven supports for all learners.	Family input is essential for defining meaningful, culturally responsive supports across Tiers 1-3.

Guiding Quote for this Work

“We believe that students and families know best what they need, and when schools take time to listen, they can create stronger, more connected learning environments.”

– Campbell & Powers, 2025
(Pragmatic Measures
Manuscript)

How do your schools currently gather family perspectives?

What methods or tools are used (surveys, focus groups, informal conversations)?

Whose voices are represented and whose might be missing?

How could a pragmatic, co-developed tool make those voices more visible?

The Challenge: Gaps in Traditional Family Engagement Measures

Where We Started

Many existing measures of family-school partnerships—such as the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) and the Parent-Teacher Involvement Questionnaire (PTIQ)—have advanced our understanding of home-school collaboration ...

but they don't tell the whole story

Challenge

What It Looks Like in Practice

Narrow Scope

Focuses mainly on communication frequency or parent participation – not the *quality or context* of relationships.

Cultural Mismatch

Items often reflect dominant cultural norms, ignoring language diversity and community perspectives.

Lack of Sustainability

Surveys are long, time-consuming, or require specialized scoring; teachers rarely use results beyond research studies.

Minimal Action Steps

Data aren't easily translated into practical classroom or PBIS actions.



The Challenge: Gaps in Traditional Family Engagement Measures (contd.)

🌱 Equity Implications

- Families from minoritized backgrounds may feel their voices are undervalued or misinterpreted.
- Educators lack actionable data to inform inclusive, strengths-based engagement strategies.
- Missed opportunity to align family input with MTSS/PBIS decision-making.

💬 Teacher Perspective

"We share students – this should be a community effort."

– Elementary teacher, pilot feedback (May 2025)

🔑 Why a New Approach Was Needed

We needed a measure that ...

- Captures both family and student voice.
- Reflects cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Provides actionable data to guide classroom and PBIS practices.
- Feels useful, not burdensome to teachers.

Introducing The VIBE Survey Suite



What Is the VIBE Survey Suite?



A pragmatic, culturally responsive, and family-informed suite of tools designed to strengthen collaboration between students, families, and educators—bridging family voice with school-based PBIS and MTSS frameworks.



Created through partnership among teachers, families, and PBIS district leaders.



Tested within diverse elementary settings to ensure acceptability, feasibility, and usefulness.



Provides actionable data to guide Tier 1-3 supports and family engagement efforts.



Definition: What Is a “Pragmatic Measure”?

A pragmatic measure is a tool that is both scientifically sound and practically useful in everyday school settings –concise, culturally relevant, and easy to administer and interpret.

Core features

Feasible: Fits within teachers’ daily routines without extra burden.

Culturally Responsive: Honors diverse student and family voices and languages.

Usable: Generates clear, actionable information for classroom and PBIS decision making.

Three Tools in the VIBE Suite

Tool	Purpose & Audience	How It Supports Connection
1. Parent Collaboration Survey	Gathers family insights on children’s routines, emotions, and cultural preferences for support.	Builds shared understanding between families and teachers for goal setting and classroom strategies.
2. Elementary Student Readiness Surveys (PreK-2, 3-5)	Captures student voice on belonging, readiness, and self-regulation through developmentally appropriate items (pictures for young learners, simple text for upper grades).	Empowers students to reflect on emotions and relationships, guiding early interventions.
3. Decision Tree Framework	Provides a structured guide for teachers to interpret survey data and select next steps for behavior or SEL support.	Translates data into tiered actions – from classroom adjustments to individualized plans.

Promotes a co-developed culture of belonging where every voice informs practice.



Moves from data collection to data connection – helping teachers and families act together.



Supports school teams in embedding family engagement within PBIS/MTSS structures.

Why it Matters?

The Co-Development Process

🕒 Our Collaborative Journey

“We worked side-by-side with students, families, and school staff to ensure the measure truly reflected their realities.” Campbell & Powers (2025)

The VIBE Survey Suite emerged from a continuous partnership between district leaders, educators, families, and PBIS technical-assistance staff – each group shaping what authentic engagement should look and feel like.



Stepwise Development Timeline

Phase	Who Was Involved	What Happened	Outcome
1 District Leader Collaboration	PBIS TA Center + 8 district leaders	Identified gaps in existing family-engagement data tools and the need for a system-wide approach.	Agreed on co-creating a measure reflecting equity and belonging – not just compliance.
2 Teacher Feedback & Iteration	Classroom teachers, school admins	Reviewed draft items; simplified language; suggested goal-setting and belonging questions.	Ensured measures were feasible, brief, and developmentally appropriate.
3 Family Review & Refinement	Parents, guardians, community members	Offered cultural and linguistic revisions; clarified purpose and trust language.	Increased cultural responsiveness and relevance across diverse families.
4 Pilot in Classrooms	Students (PreK-5) & Teachers	Administered student + parent surveys; applied Decision Tree for next steps.	Confirmed usability, student friendliness, and alignment with PBIS data teams.

Core Principles of Co-Creation

1

Mutual respect: Every partner's voice carried equal weight in shaping items and procedures.

2

Iterative feedback loops: Each round of review informed revisions to ensure clarity and cultural fit.

3

Shared ownership: Data are used with teachers and families—not on them.

4

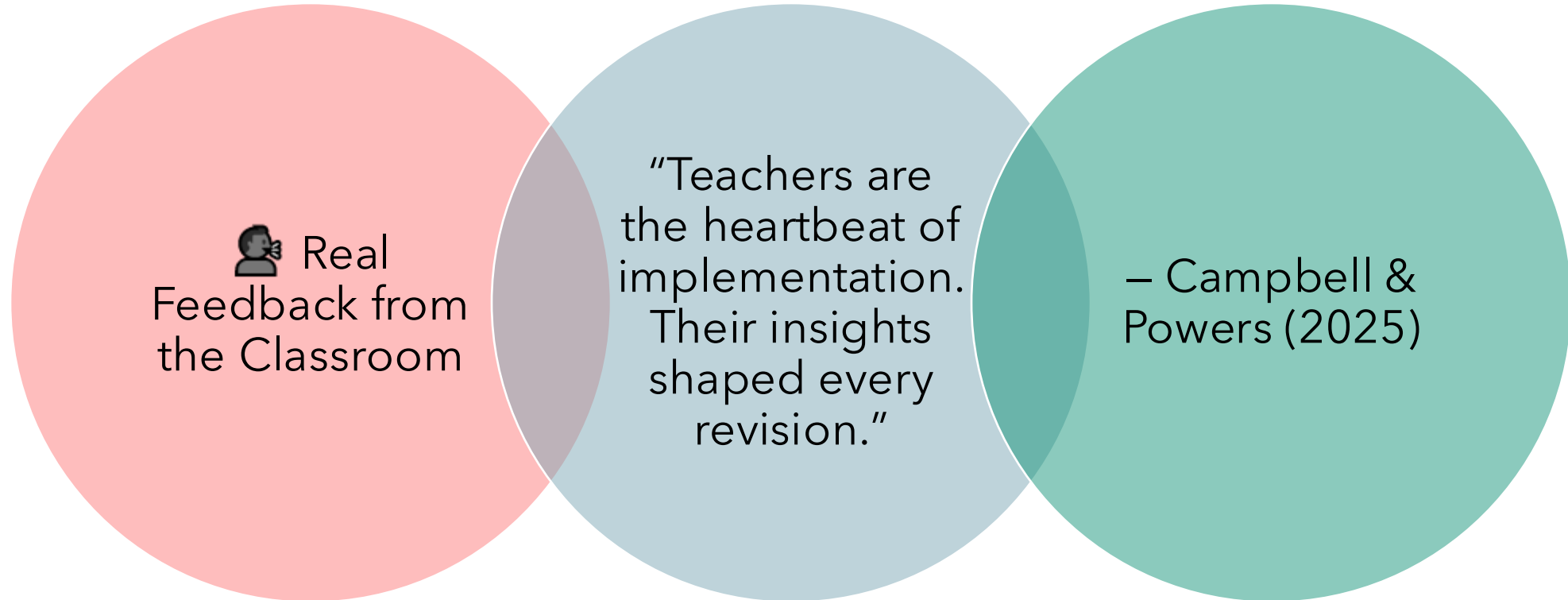
Integration with PBIS: Grounded within existing team structures to promote sustainability and equity.

Group Discussion Prompt

- What are some ways you've co-created tools or strategies with families in your own context?
 - How did you ensure their input shaped the final product?
 - What challenges or breakthroughs emerged in that process?



Teacher Voices from the Pilot



Teacher Voices from the Pilot



1. Valuable and Practical

"This survey is something we actually use. It helps us know students faster and talk with families more meaningfully."

Reported strong buy-in and plan to re-administer next year.

Recommended the survey to grade-level colleagues and PBIS team leads.

2. Clear Structure & Student-Friendly Language

"My second graders could answer on their own – the pictures really helped!"

Teachers praised readability and developmental design for PreK-5.

Found visual supports especially effective for multilingual learners.

3. Need for Routine & Family Scripts

"We'd love a set time each year – and maybe a short script for talking about results with families."

Requested inclusion of sample talking points and guidance for sharing results with caregivers.

Suggested adding survey administration windows to the annual PBIS calendar.



Teacher Voices from the Pilot

4. Content Suggestions

"Could we add a question about self-control or self-management? That's a big focus for us."

Proposed item: "I feel confident using calming or restorative strategies when I'm upset."

Reflected desire for tighter connection between SEL instruction and family engagement.

5. Connecting Student & Parent Data

"It'd be great to line up what parents say with what kids say – that's powerful for our team meetings."

Teachers saw value in cross-referencing responses to identify classroom or grade-level trends.

Requested simple alignment chart or dashboard within the Decision Tree tool.

Emerging Themes

Teachers view the VIBE tools as actionable and sustainable, not "one-more-thing."

Desire for routine integration, family dialogue supports and linked data visualization.

Feedback directly informed refinements in the 2025-2026 version of the suite.



Their feedback moved us from a good idea to a usable, scalable tool and it set the stage for district-wide implementation.”

Reflection Prompt

"How do you collect and respond to teacher feedback when piloting new engagement tools or interventions?"

(2-minute table share before next slide.)



Administration and Timing

It's not about giving a survey – it's about starting a conversation."
– Elementary teacher, pilot feedback (May 2025)

 Purposeful Implementation:

"The VIBE Survey Suite is designed to align naturally with the school year rhythm, supporting trust-building and informed teaching rather than testing or evaluation.

When & How to Administer?

Phase	Timing	Who Completes	Purpose & Rationale
[1] Parent Collaboration Survey	Weeks 1-2 of school year (or included in start-of-year packet)	Parents / guardians	Gathers background on routines, emotional triggers, preferred supports, and family hopes. • Introduces the tool as part of the school's partnership commitment. • Sets a welcoming, collaborative tone before any behavioral concerns arise.
[2] Student Readiness Survey	Weeks 4-6 after students settle in	Students (PreK-5) during morning meeting or advisory	Captures student perceptions once relationships have formed. • Avoids first-week bias and allows students to respond with trust. • Provides data for Tier 1 and Tier 2 planning in October PBIS meetings.
[3] Review & Debrief	Within 1 week of survey completion	Teachers (+ optional PBIS team member)	Review data for patterns of strengths and needs. • Hold brief student check-ins to clarify responses. • Share key takeaways with families via conference or newsletter.

Key Implementation Tips



✓ Provide a Clear Rationale

- Begin with a simple script explaining *why* students and families are completing the survey and how responses will be used to help them succeed.
- Frame as “learning about how we can support you better,” not assessment.

✓ Support Student Comprehension

- For PreK–2: Read items aloud; use visual supports and model choices.
- For grades 3–5: Clarify how to select *one* answer per item (some students chose two during the pilot).
- Provide practice item to check understanding before starting.

✓ Schedule Protected Time

- Use morning meeting or SEL block so students feel calm and focused.
- Keep surveys short (10–12 minutes for families, 5–7 for students).
- Build routine into school calendar each fall, and mid-year as needed.

✓ Plan for Follow-Up

- Allow time for teacher reflection and team discussion after survey completion.
- Follow up with students and families whose responses indicate concerns or high stress points.
- Use Decision Tree to guide next steps (Tier 1–3 supports).

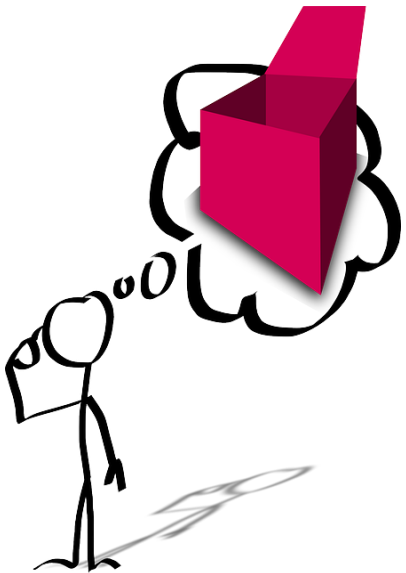
🗨️ **Practical Example**

"After reading my class's results, I met with three students who rated 'low' on belonging. We brainstormed ways to make our morning meeting feel more welcoming."

– 2nd Grade Teacher, Pilot Participant

🗨️ **Discussion Prompt**

What routines or structures already exist in your school that could support implementation of a tool like this?



The Decision Tree Resource



🌳 Turning Data Into Action

“The Decision Tree helps teachers translate survey results into next steps that are timely, culturally responsive, and doable within the school day.”

– Campbell & Powers (2025)

- The Decision Tree is the practical link between VIBE Survey data and daily classroom actions.
- It supports teachers in moving from information → intervention, ensuring data doesn't sit unused.

🔄 The Decision Tree Flow

Visual Concept (Animated or Static Diagram)

kotlin

Observation	→	Root Cause	→	Response	→	Strategy
What you see in behavior, emotion, or engagement data)		Why it's happening (context, triggers, patterns)		What level of support is needed?		What you do right now (specific classroom or Tier 2/3 practices)

How it Works in Practice?



Step	Teacher Action	Example
1. Observation	Review student or class survey data for low-rated items (e.g., belonging, readiness).	Several students report “I don’t feel calm when I start the day.”
2. Root Cause	Use Decision Tree prompts to explore possible causes (environmental, relational, instructional).	Morning transitions are noisy and rushed; students lack structure.
3. Response Level	Identify whether need fits Tier 1 (classwide) , Tier 2 (targeted) , or Tier 3 (individualized) .	Tier 1: revise routine; Tier 2: add Check-In/Check-Out support.
4. Strategy Selection	Choose specific strategies from linked toolkit (e.g., restorative circle, calm-corner routine).	Implement “Ready-to-Learn” stations and morning greeting ritual.

Key Features



Culturally Responsive

Lens: Considers student background, communication style, and family feedback before deciding “why.”



Feasible Actions: Provides short, low-cost strategies teachers can do immediately.



Tier Alignment: Connects with PBIS tiers – Tier 1 preventive, Tier 2 targeted, Tier 3 intensive.



Collaborative

Reflection: Encourages teachers to share findings with PBIS teams and families to ensure transparency and continuity.

Example Application

Student survey shows low self-control confidence (“I get upset when teased”).

→ **Root Cause:** Lack of coping routine during transitions.

→ **Response:** Tier 2 — brief daily check-in with teacher.

→ **Strategy:** Practice “pause and breathe” cue before recess.

→ **Family Connection:** Share the plan via Parent Collaboration Survey follow-up.



[illegible]

Linking Surveys to PBIS Framework

✖ From Data to Decisions

“Pragmatic measures capture critical data without overwhelming educators, allowing schools to provide the right support at the right time.”

– Campbell & Powers (2025)

The VIBE Survey Suite fits naturally within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and PBIS model, giving schools practical, family-informed data for equitable decision-making.



PBIS / MTSS Alignment

Tier	Who It Serves	How VIBE Data Are Used	Example Actions
Tier 1 - Universal	All students and families	Identify classwide trends in belonging, readiness, and self-management.	• Morning check-ins • Classroom expectation re-teach • Family newsletter sharing survey themes
Tier 2 - Targeted	Students showing early concerns or inconsistent responses	Use Decision Tree to pinpoint common triggers or relational barriers.	• CICO (Teacher + Family) • Small-group SEL sessions • Mentor pairings
Tier 3 - Intensive	Individual students with chronic needs or high stress scores	Combine survey data + family feedback to build individualized support plan.	• Collaborative FBA meeting • Home-school communication plan • Wraparound team support

- 1 VIBE Surveys – collect perceptions from students and families.
- 2 Decision Tree – guides teachers to interpret data and choose responses.
- 3 PBIS Team – reviews patterns across tiers to ensure supports match need.
- 4 Family Partnership – families informed and involved at each tier.



How the Pieces Work Together?

Vignette Example – From Survey to Support

Student Profile: Jordan (Grade 3)

Survey Result: Low confidence in self-regulation (“When I get upset, it’s hard to calm down.”)

Teacher Action: Uses Decision Tree → identifies transition stress as root cause.

Response: Tier 2 support – adds daily Check-In/Check-Out with family communication log.

Outcome: Jordan reports feeling “more ready to learn,” and teacher notes fewer morning outbursts within three weeks.

Key Takeaways

Tiered Fit: VIBE tools streamline how PBIS teams triage supports using authentic voice data.

Efficiency: Feasible within existing PBIS meetings and data reviews.

Equity Impact: Centers student and family perspectives in behavioral decision making – not just office referrals.

Small Group Discussion

Collaborative Reflection Activity

“When we design with families—not for them—we create tools that live beyond research.”
— Campbell & Powers (2025)

1 How might this tool enhance your PBIS team’s decision-making?

What data gaps could it fill?

How could it complement other tools you already use (SWIS, behavior screeners, climate surveys)?

How might family or student voice shift how your team prioritizes supports?

2 What adaptations would you need for your own setting?

Grade-band or population differences (e.g., early childhood vs. secondary).

Cultural or linguistic considerations for families.

Scheduling, training, or data-sharing logistics.

Group Output Options

Option A

Paper Handout

Use provided worksheet with prompts for *Benefits / Adaptations / Next Steps*.

Submit to session facilitators or upload photo of notes before leaving.

Option B

Digital Jamboard Link

Scan the QR code or visit the Jamboard link. Each frame = one group's notes.

Notes will be compiled and shared after the session.

★ Lessons Learned from the Pilot
“Follow-up conversations with students and families make data meaningful.”
— Elementary Teacher, Pilot Feedback (2025)

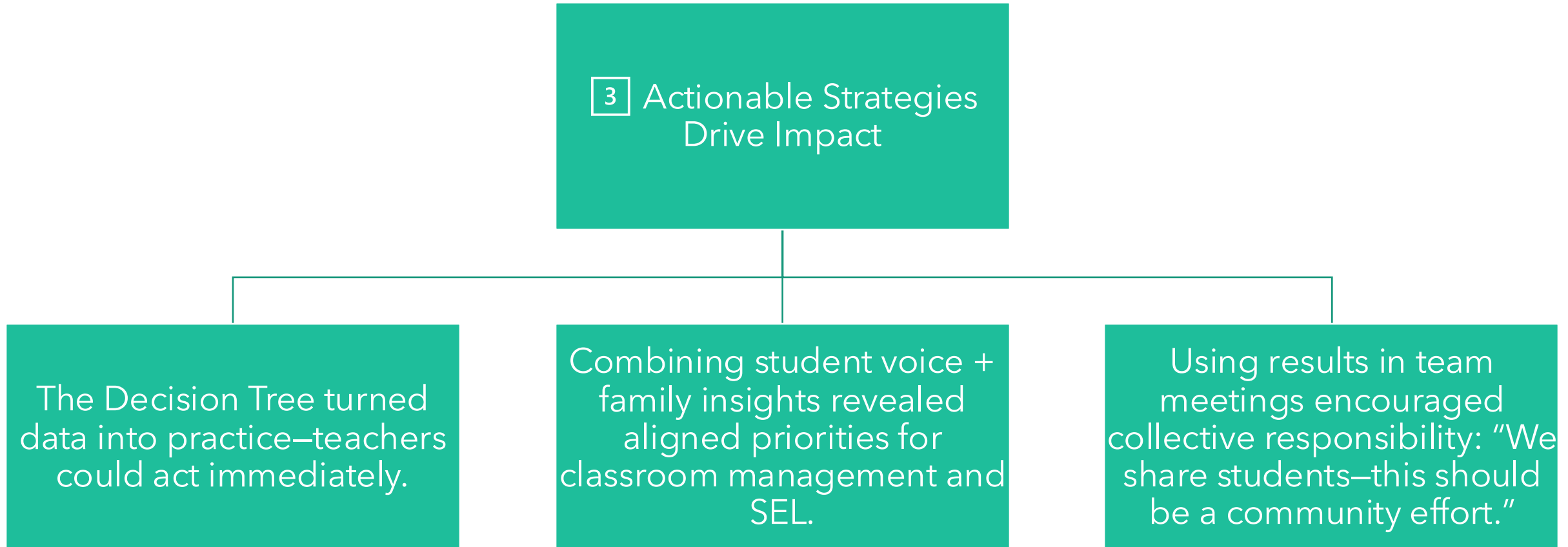
1 Communication is the Connector

- Teachers valued the opportunity to talk about results with families and students rather than just viewing scores.
- The survey acted as a conversation starter, improving trust and empathy across differences.
- Families felt heard when schools closed the loop: “Here’s what we learned, and here’s what we’re doing next.”

2 Systematic Processes Build Consistency

- Implementation was most successful when schools embedded survey use into PBIS calendars (e.g., October & March data days).
- Routine administration created comparability across grades and made results actionable for teams.
- Teachers requested shared training and administration scripts to standardize how tools were introduced.

★ Lessons Learned from the Pilot
“Follow-up conversations with students and families make data meaningful.”
— Elementary Teacher, Pilot Feedback (2025)





Future Directions

Focus Area	Next Step	Purpose / Expected Outcome
Large-Scale Validation	Implement VIBE Suite across multiple districts	Establish reliability & validity; assess generalizability across diverse contexts.
Expert Review & Refinement	Solicit input from family-engagement scholars, PBIS leaders, and cultural responsiveness experts	Strengthen content validity and ensure alignment with national frameworks.
Integration Training	Develop online and in-person modules for teachers and PBIS teams	Increase fidelity of use and sustainability across school years.
Equity and Scalability Research	Examine differential effects for diverse student groups and settings	Advance culturally responsive practice and inform statewide PBIS initiatives.

Reflection Prompt

What supports would your school need to sustain a tool like this over multiple years?

Reflection & Application

"Reflection turns data into wisdom."

– Campbell & Powers (2025)

Prompt 1:

Think of one way you could strengthen family or student voice in your PBIS or classroom practice.

- What would that look like next week?

- Who else would you involve?

Prompt 2:

What is one system or structure you could create to make this work sustainable in your building?

- Example - adding a "Family Feedback" section to monthly PBIS meetings or IEP reviews.

Thank you and Resources

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If you would like to receive the resources discussed
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There is also space to request consultation



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