

Common Principles of Effective Practice (CPEP) and Implementation:
A Framework for Integrating Initiatives and Sustaining Evidence-based Practices

Evidence-based Practices

What are evidence-based practices and why are they important?

The use of evidence-based educational practices is increasingly recognized as one critically important key to increasing the achievement of youth across the nation. It has been identified as one of the eight *common principles of effective practice* that the Minnesota Department of Education recognizes as integral component of a systemic framework needed to support and sustain educational innovations. An evidence-based practice is an intervention or component of instruction that has been studied and found to make a positive difference in student outcomes. Experimental controlled research studies that utilized random participant selection are the gold standard in identifying whether an educational practice is evidence-based. However, evidence-based practice is a phrase that encompasses both rigorously researched practices and practices *informed* by research. Rigorously researched practices should be used whenever available (see decision tree on the following page). Adoptions of evidence-based practices in education are important because of their demonstrated track record for positively impacting performance or achievement. Schools that systematically select and implement evidence-based practices are more effective in reaching established goals.

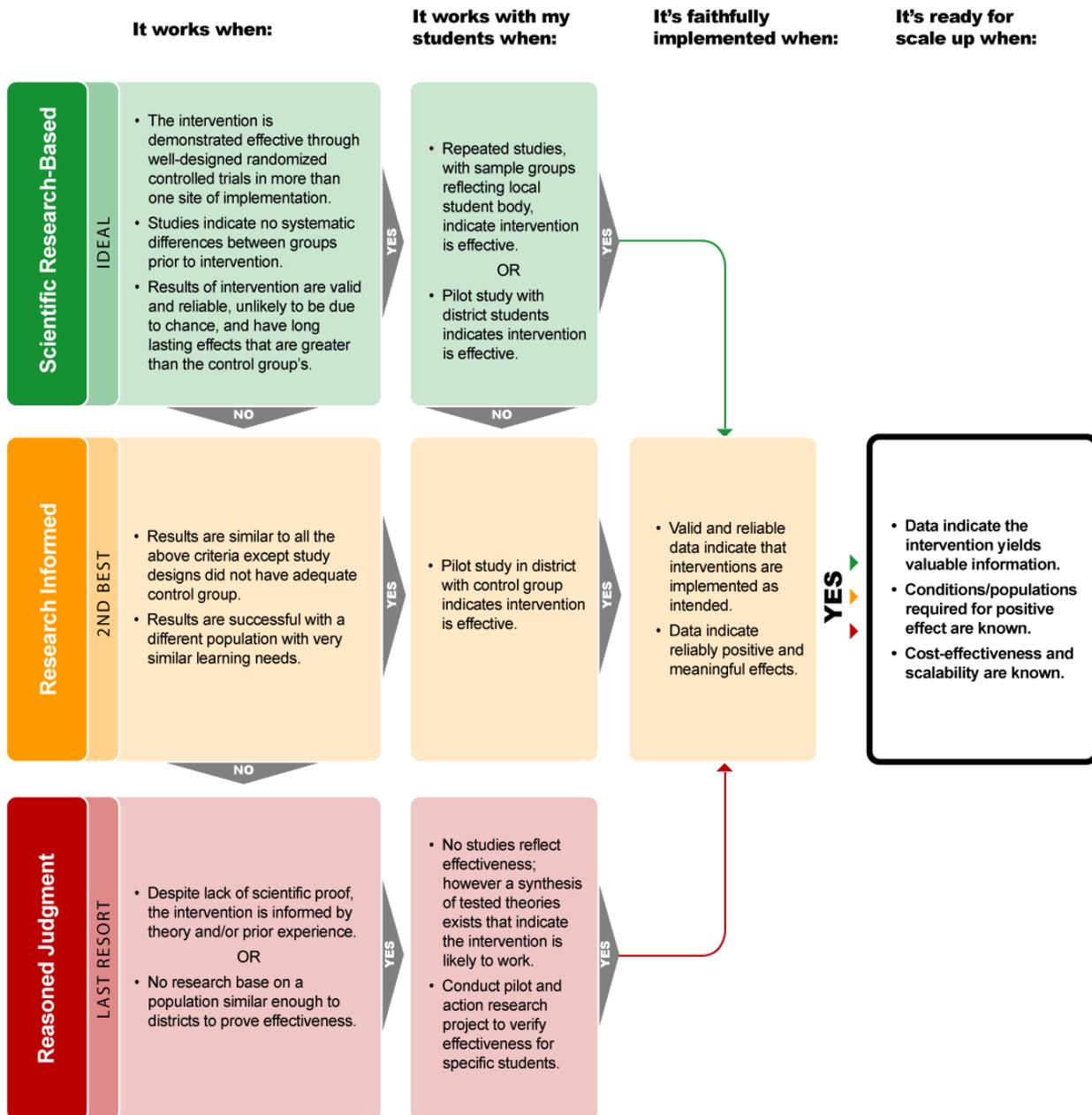
How important is it to consider implementation when using evidence-based practices?

Implementation of an evidence-based practice is just as important as the practice itself. Unless evidence-based practices are implemented as they were designed, users cannot expect to repeat the outcomes obtained in research.

What are the key elements of evidence-based practices?

- Have evidence to suggest the practice works with groups of students similar to students you intend to work with. The evidence of effectiveness has been found repeatedly in different environments and locations with large numbers of students.
- The research studies examining the practice collected accurate data and linked findings directly to the outcome the practice claims to affect.
- The practice results in strong outcomes that are considered significant. Strength of evidence is often reported as an effect size. An effect size puts a value to the amount of change between two groups. However, the size of the group under study can make interpreting effect size challenging. One way to interpret the size of difference indicated by an effect size is to consider the improvement in percentile scores that would take place if a program with a given effect size is implemented. For example, an effect size of 0.30 (considered “strong”) would increase percentile scores from 50 to 62. For more information about effect size and rating evidence of effectiveness, visit Best Evidence Encyclopedia and review “About the BEE” (<http://www.bestevidence.org/aboutbee.htm>).

The body of research-based practices continues to develop. In the event that scientific research-based interventions or instructional practices are lacking, or peer-reviewed research is not available, the following decision tree may be helpful.



Adapted from *Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Sciences National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2003.

For more information on evidence-based practices

Best Evidence Encyclopedia: <http://www.bestevidence.org>

Center on Instruction: <http://www.centeroninstruction.org>

Institute for Educational Sciences What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

Lauer, P. (2006). *An Educational Research Primer: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.