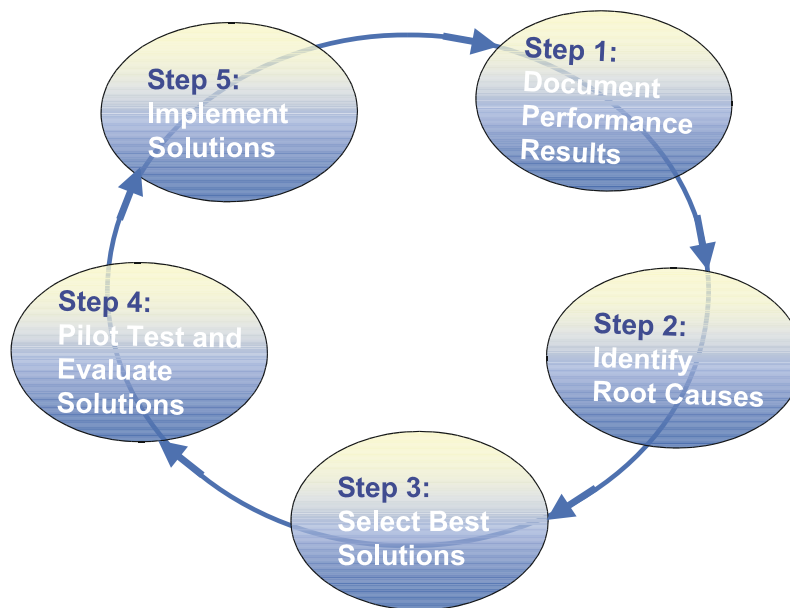


## The 5-Step Program Improvement Process



- Step 1: Document Performance Results. The first step in the process is to describe state and school/college performance on the core indicators by comparing performance levels between schools/colleges, student populations, and programs over time. This step uses summary statistics and basic graphs and charts to document performance and identify improvement priorities.
- Step 2: Identify Root Causes. The second step is to analyze performance data and use additional information and methods to determine the most important and most direct causes of performance gaps that can be addressed by improvement strategies and specific solutions. This step encourages states to use multiple methods to identify and evaluate potential causes and select a few critical root causes as the focus of improvement efforts.
- Step 3: Select Best Solutions. The third step is to identify and evaluate potential solutions to performance problems, including both improvement strategies and program models, by reviewing and evaluating the underlying logic of these solutions and the empirical evidence of their effectiveness in achieving performance results.
- Step 4: Pilot Test and Evaluate Solutions. The fourth step is to conduct pilot testing and evaluation of solutions. This step presents practical yet rigorous methods and tools for evaluating solutions before full implementation at the state or institutional levels.
- Step 5: Implement Solutions. The fifth step is to implement fully tested solutions based on implementation plans that measure the implementation of the solution and evaluate the success of the solution in reaching the expected performance results. This step also addresses how to use evaluation results to plan the next steps in state and local improvement efforts.