The Nuts and Bolts of Leading MTSS:
The Administrator Lens

MTSS SUMMIT | SEPTEMBER 4-6, 2019
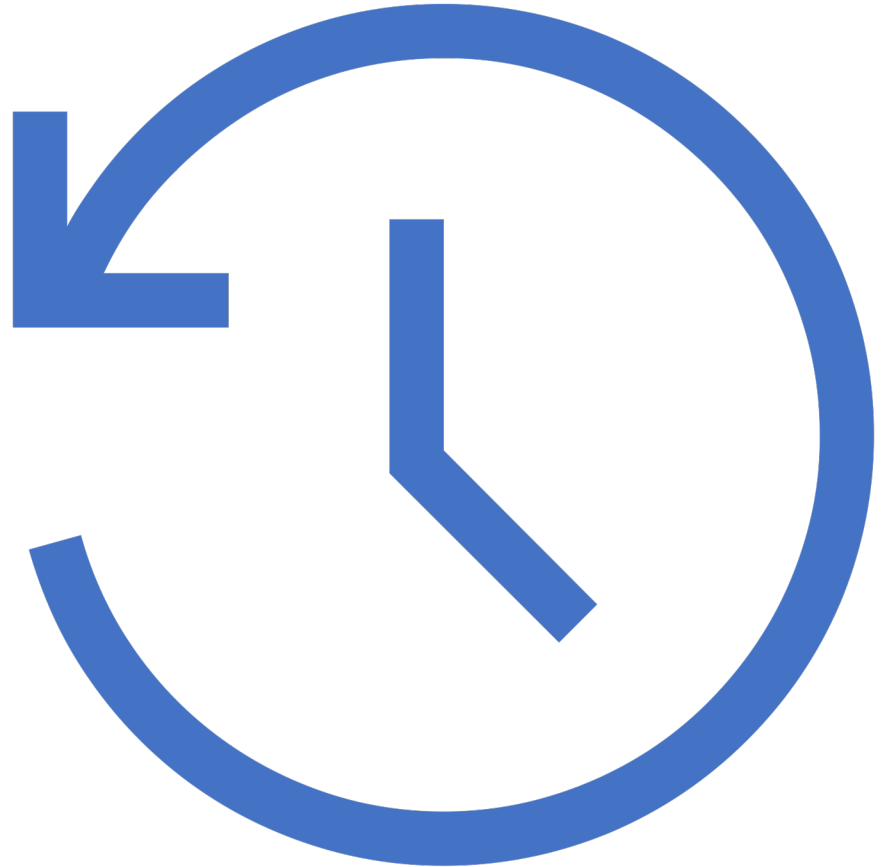
better together

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➢ Dig into implementation challenges from the administrator perspective

➢ Talk about the change process built around consensus, infrastructure and implementation

It's About
_____

LEADERSHIP

Fundamental Assumptions

There are no quick fixes. Dedication, hard work and checking your ego at the door....works!

There is a need for General, Special, and Gifted Education, but not as it currently exists.

Too much time has been spent admiring problems.

No student is worthless. Even the worst student is a good example of what's not working.

The best place to address diverse learning needs is in the instructional process.

Four Building Blocks that Support MTSS Implementation

Skills

Practices

Beliefs

Implementation

- Professional Learning impacts **Skills**

- **Skills** impact **Practice**

- Improved **Practice** improves **Implementation**

- Improved **Implementation** impacts student outcomes

- Better student outcomes shift **Beliefs**

- And, shifts in **Beliefs** impacts **Implementation** of MTSS

Reading Problems and Dropout

- A student who can't read on grade level by 3rd grade is 4xs less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who reads proficiently by that time.

- Add **poverty** to the mix, and a student is 13 times less likely to graduate on time.

Students who did not read proficiently at 3rd grade *constitute 88% of those who did not earn a diploma.*

Low reading skills in 3rd grade are a stronger predictor of dropping out of school than having spent at least one year in poverty.

Donald J. Hernandez: "Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation." Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011
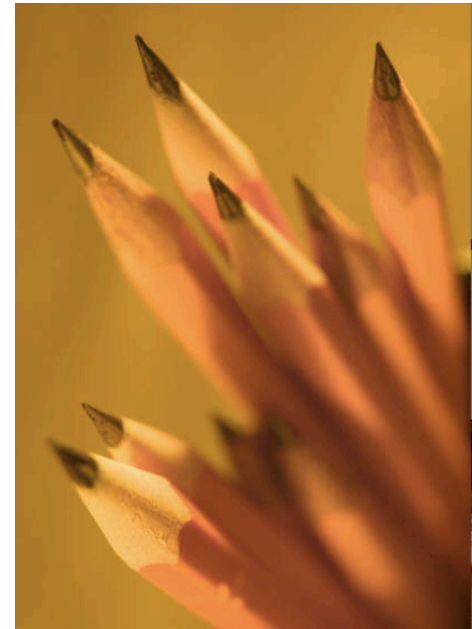
"A full 70 percent of U.S. middle and high school students require differentiated instruction, which is instruction targeted to their individual strengths and weaknesses."

Biancaraso and Snow (2004). *Reading Next – A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*. A Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York

The single greatest determinant of learning is not socioeconomic factors or funding levels.

It is instruction.

A bone-deep, institutional acknowledgement of this fact continues to elude us.

Schmoker, 2006

Two basic questions…

Are you happy with your data?

Is every classroom one you would put your own flesh and blood?

Responsibility for closing the achievement gap between disabled and non-disabled students must be shared by the general and special education offices.

General education plays a central role in providing high-quality supports and services for children; thus, placing accountability for closing this gap solely on special education is inappropriate.

Hehir el al, 2014

What Works in Systems Change?

o Communicate a clear and common vision

o Planned and pursued in a systematic manner over   time

o One size does *not* fit all

o Professional development is critical

o Outcome evaluation is critical

Why Have Past Efforts Failed?

- Failure to achieve **consensus**

- School culture is ignored

- Purpose unclear

- Lack of ongoing communication

- Unrealistic expectations of initial success

- Failure to measure and analyze progress

- Participants not involved in planning

- Participants lack skills and lack support for the implementation of new skills

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF NeMTSS and ALIGNMENT TO AQuESTT TENETS

Shared Leadership

Communication, Collaboration, and Partnerships

Evidence-Based Practices: Curriculum, Instruction, Intervention and Assessment

Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation

Layered Continuum of Supports

Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making

Critical Components of MTSS
The Change Model

Consensus

NeMTSS Indicators
- Shared Leadership
- Communication, Collaboration, Partnership
- Evidenced-Based Practices: Curr, Instr., Interv, Ass't
- Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation
- Layered Continuum of Supports
- Data-Based Problem Solving & Decision Making

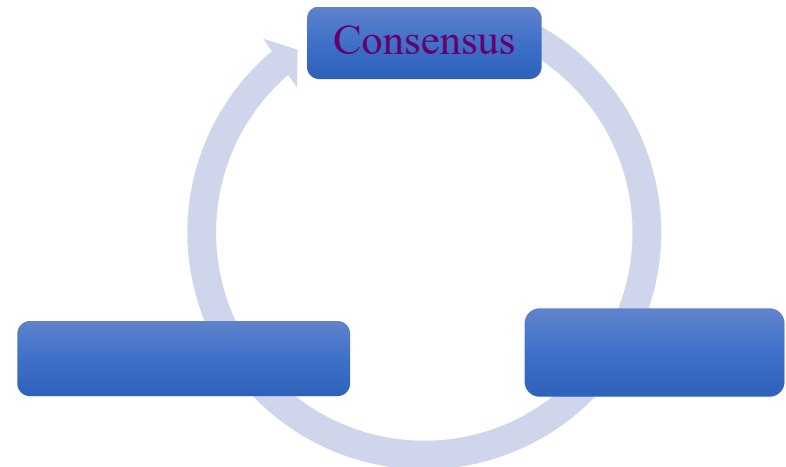**Implementation**

Infrastructure
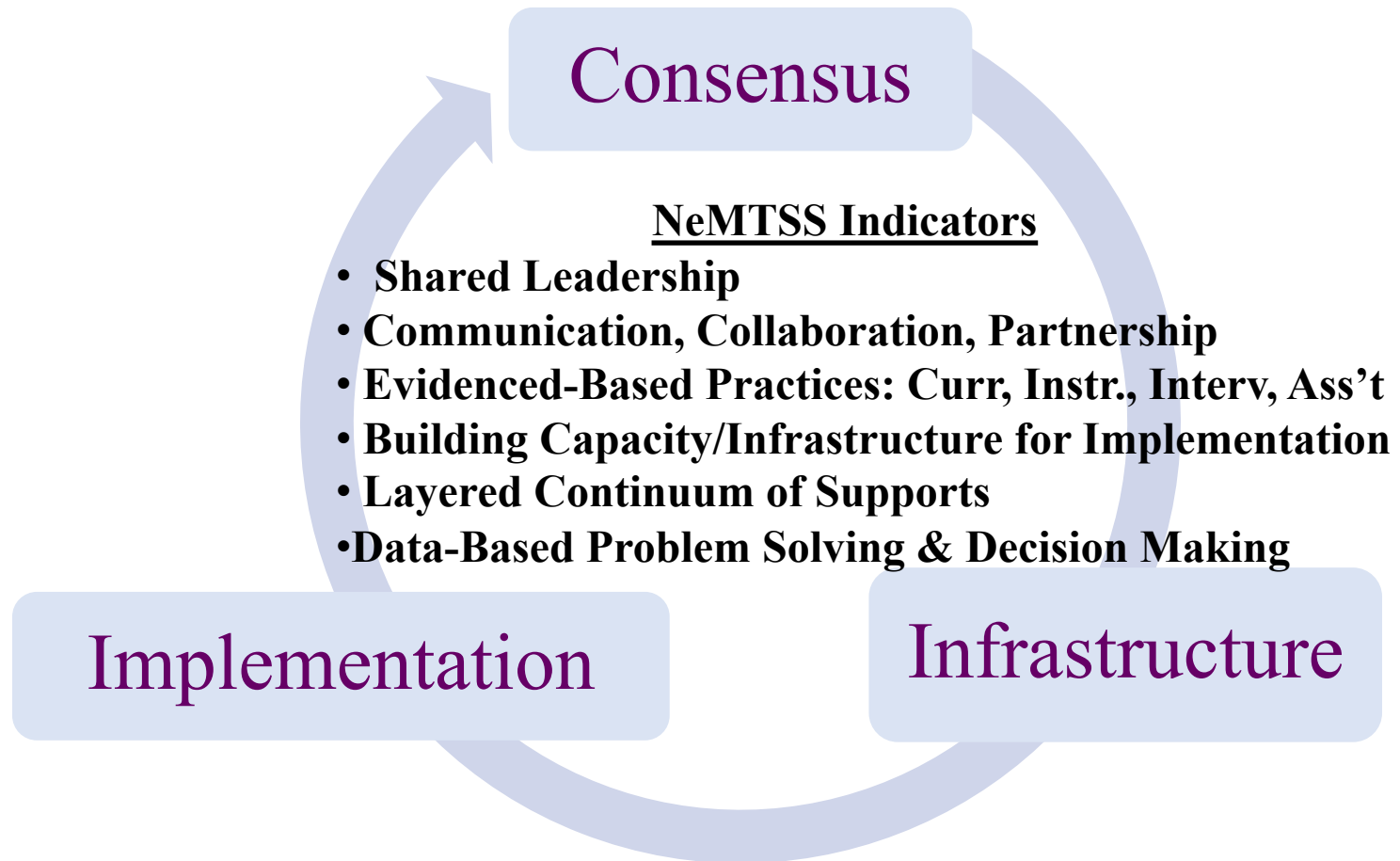
Reaching Consensus...

Educators will embrace change when two conditions exist:

- They understand the **need** for change

- They perceive that they either have the **skills** or the **support** to implement change
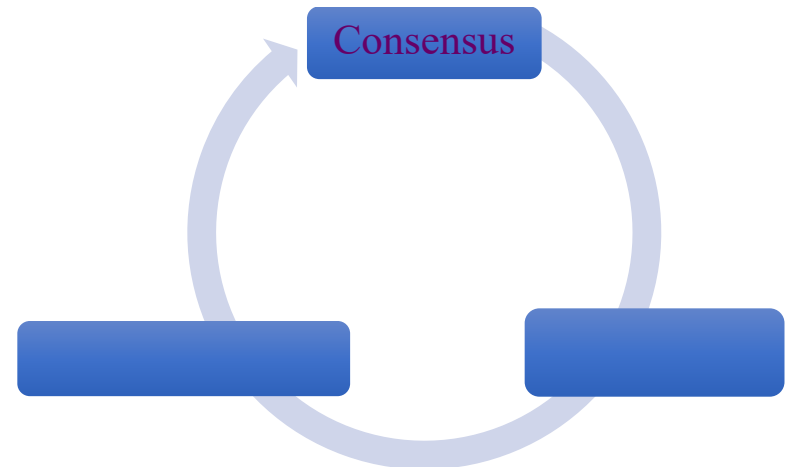
(Joyce and Showers)

Consensus

Consensus

The Goal of Consensus:
- ➤ Common language, common understanding
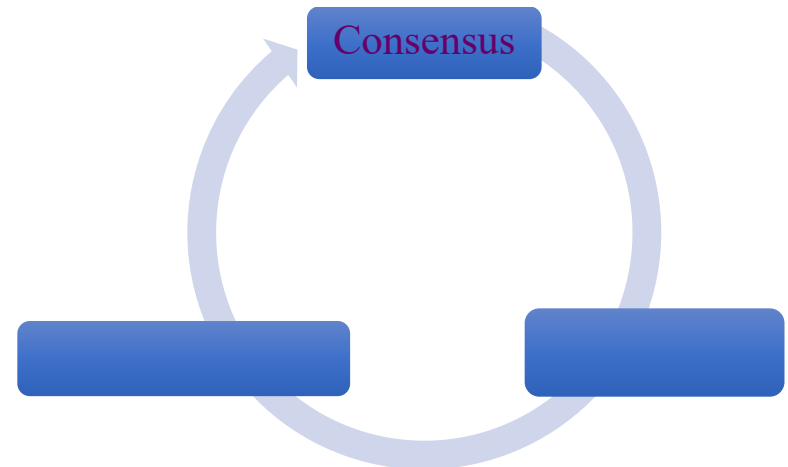- ➤ Commitment to a shared vision

NeMTSS Components:
- Leadership

Consensus

Consensus

✓ Beliefs are explored, unpacked, and ultimately uniformly shared

✓ Vision is agreed upon

✓ Implementation requirements understood from the Boardroom to the Classroom

Consensus

School Level Consensus

- MTSS is a general education effort

  - **"It's about every Ed."**

- Belief Survey is administered and unpacked

- Student engagement is a primary priority

- Year 1 is Tier 1

- All problem-solving considers academic & behavior together

- Data based decision making is the way of work- across multiple measures

- Parents are engaged in the continuous improvement & instruction/intervention process

District Level Consensus

- Beliefs examined – What do we belief students are capable of? What about the impact of instruction and supports?

- Committed to an MTSS Way of Work
  - Not an initiative. It is the work.
  - Common Language, Common Understanding
  - On-going PD and TA to District Leadership Offices

- Accountable Officer(s) for Implementation Integrity, Support, and Evaluation

- Data based Decision Making -- Regular Status and Wellness Checks Publicly Shared
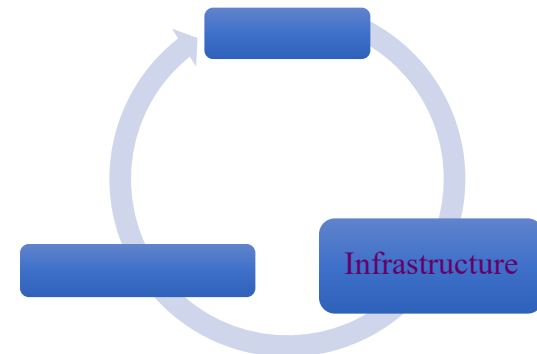
Infrastructure Development

The Goal of Infrastructure Development:

➢ Provide the tools, skills and structures to do the work

NeMTSS Components:
- **Evidenced-Based Practices: Curr, Instr, Interv, Assess't**
- **Data-Based Problem Solving & Decision Making**
- **Bldg Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation**
- **Shared Leadership**

Infrastructure

Infrastructure Development

- ✓ Practices, Policies, & Regulations

- ✓ Professional Learning & Technical Assistance

- ✓ Effective Teaching and Learning Framework

- ✓ Standards Aligned Curriculum

- ✓ Data-based Intervention systems

- ✓ Decision-making criteria established

- ✓ Data Systems and Management

- ✓ Technology support

- ✓ Master Schedules
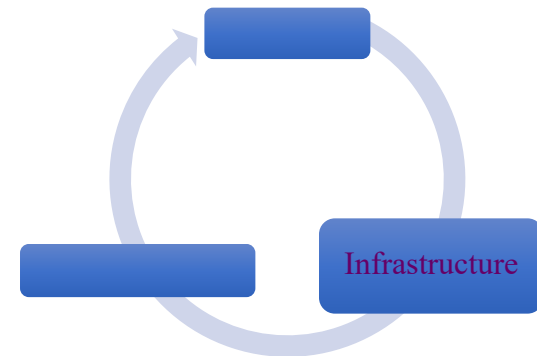
Infrastructure

School Level Infrastructure

- A school-based team is responsible for monitoring student performance to determine overall "health" of the school environment

- Lesson study (Tier Integration /Planning) is the focus for effective instruction

- Master schedules are built based on student needs

- Early Warning Systems are in place to ensure a focus on prevention

District Level Infrastructure

- **District-based Leadership Team**
  - Board Policy, Policy Scrub for alignment
  - Data Management Systems & Platforms that are aligned
  - PD Plan for Implementation & Technical Assistance Support
  - Return on Investment data digs
  - Implementation monitoring, fidelity and evaluation

- **Integration of District Organizational Units (Every Ed)**
  - Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment
  - Special Education
  - Remedial Education
  - Gifted
  - English Learners (EL)
  - Student Supports

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVING THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF ALL STUDENTS

The philosophy of the School Committee concerning academic, behavioral and social emotional achievement is based on the premise that students have diverse capabilities, interests and individual patterns of growth and learning. Hence, the School Committee endorses a multi-tiered system of support for instruction and intervention to provide opportunities for all students for post-secondary education and/or successful employment within our global society.

A multi-tiered system of support provides the structure and incorporates a problem-solving process within which all schooling practices of the Mashpee Public Schools fit to ensure that instruction, academic, and behavioral/social emotional needs of all students are a high priority, including English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, and Academically and Intellectually Gifted students.

The multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is an evidence-based framework that uses a problem solving approach in which all schooling practices of the Mashpee Public Schools fit to systematically guide the development of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction, intervention and support in the areas of academics, behavior, social-emotional, and attendance that is matched to student need and guided by student outcome data.
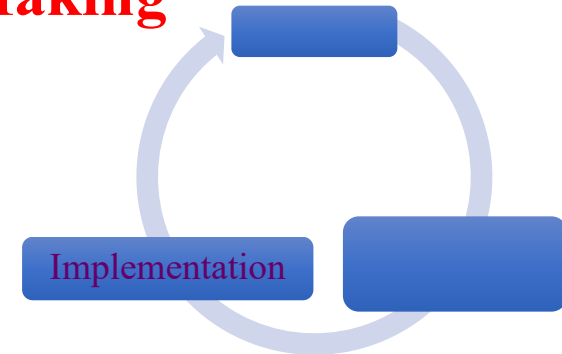
Implementation

The Goal of Implementation:

➢   Provide a safe space, the time, resources and leadership to implement MTSS with fidelity.

NeMTSS Components:
- **Leadership**
- **Layered Continuum of Supports**
- **Evidenced-Based Practices: Curr, Instr, Interv, Assess't**
- **Data-Based Problem Solving & Decision Making**

Implementation

Implementation

- District Leadership and School Leadership Teams build capacity within and among staff, receive on-going PD and technical assistance

- Engaged and informed Leadership at School & District Levels

- On-going Evaluation / Health and Wellness Checks at School and District Levels
  - Early Warning Systems
  - Progress Monitoring
  - Summative data
  - Evaluation
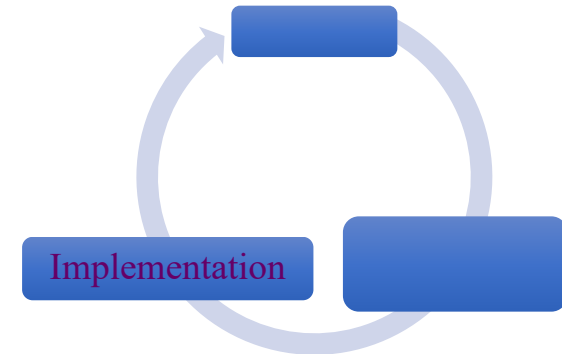
Implementation

School Level Implementation

- All problem-solving considers academic and behavior together.

- Strong leadership exists at all levels

- The school (Principal) is held accountable for high quality implementation of MTSS

District Level Implementation

- District Leadership Team receive on-going PD and technical assistance to build capacity within and among staff

- Engaged and informed Leadership at District Level

- Reviews data – academic and behavior

- Problem solves barriers that exist to the implementation of MTSS at both the district and school levels

- Reviews school-based progress on MTSS implementation (SAM)

Way of Work for DLT

- Regularly meet (monthly) to

  - Conduct status checks on the work of the SBLTs

  - Review of progress monitoring of implementations data

  - Develop a functional data management platform (if one doesn't exit)

  - Wellness checks on each schools targeted MTSS efforts

  - Walk classrooms (Learning walks NOT gotcha walks)

  - Support SBLT Professional Development and Technical Assistance

How to Build Capacity and Consensus SBLT Training on…

- Systems Change – The Compelling 'Why'
- Multi-tiered system of supports for Instruction & Intervention (Got Tiers?)
- Data analysis and ROI of current practice (Got Data?)
- 4-Step Problem Solving Process
- Belief Survey – Align't of practice & beliefs
- SAM – Self Ass't of MTSS to evaluate implementation
- Lots of opportunities to practice
- Typically 4-5 days of learning together works best (or protected time that is consistently used)

Tools

Developed by Florida Problem Solving and RtI Project

- Beliefs Survey
- Perception of Practices Survey
- Perception of Skills
- Self Assessment of MTSS (SAM):

  - www.floridarti.usf.edu
  - Technical Manual

Challenges? What Challenges?

- MTSS is about special education (Aka - Lipstick on a pig)

- Lack of common language common understanding

- Do we really believe all students can learn?

- Lack of alignment between beliefs and practices

- ASAP build out Tier 2 and Tier 3 – "we have **so** many kids that need it!"

- Proficient at admiring problems and providing opinions

Challenges? What Challenges?

- Lack of data based problem solving

- Lack of data systems, decision rules, protocols & rhythm for analysis

- Too many resources – uncoordinated

- Too few resources – not targeted

- School Leadership Teams do not exist

- School Leadership Teams are not empowered to do the work

- Lack of teaching and learning framework

Challenges? What Challenges?

- Lack of a systematic & evidenced based approach to intensifying instruction (Tiered system of support)

- Lack of lesson study/planning design

- PLTs/PLCs are an expensive yet an unimpactful structure

- Master schedules do not reflect the needs of students

- Good at throwing stuff at the wall – did it stick?

- "Initiative fatigue"

Classic Reactions to Change

- Malicious Compliance

- This too shall pass.

- There is not enough time to do this.

- Who thought of this anyway?

- Where will the staff come from to do this?

- How many years until retirement?

- We've been doing 'this' for a long time.

Your Turn…

Take a few minutes to individually jot down a few of your biggest challenges in implementing MTSS.

Elbow or table share

Let's identify a few that seem to be prevalent and discuss

Effective change agents neither embrace nor ignore mandates.

They use them as catalysts to reexamine what they are doing.

Fullan, 1993

Some Closing Considerations…

- Change our lexicon for Tier 1 from General Education to Universal Education

- Eliminate the term "intervention." It is pejorative and sets the expectation that the service will "fix" students.

- Let's keep it simple and talk about intensifying instruction.

Some Closing Considerations…

- Be sure to conduct walkthroughs at all tiers to "see" the degree to which Tier 2, 3 and Specially Designed instruction (SDI) are integrated with Tier 1.

- Support Tier 2, 3 and SDI providers to observe their students performing in Tier 1 & modify their instruction based on those observations of student performance.

- Systems work is harder, has less control, is messy and frustrating. These are not reasons to stay in our comfort zone.

We can, whenever we choose,

teach all children.

Richard Riley

Former U.S. Secretary of Education