

Leader Strategies

Implementing an Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support (I-MTSS)

RECOMMENDATION 1

Establish and sustain an integrated school leadership team.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Use integrated data to drive instruction and intervention across tiers.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Build staff capacity for integrated practices through professional learning and coaching.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Embed integrated practices into Tier 1 instruction and progress monitoring.

Leadership Area	Level of Evidence
Collaboration	 Moderate

RECOMMENDATION 1

Establish and sustain an integrated school leadership team.

Successful implementation of an Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support (I-MTSS) hinges on bold, visionary leadership that organizes and aligns schoolwide systems to support every learner. Unlike traditional models that operate academic and behavioral support systems in silos, I-MTSS calls for school leaders to integrate these systems into a cohesive framework. The foundation of this work is a strong, representative leadership team that sets a clear vision, coordinates practices across tiers, and uses data to continuously improve outcomes.

The principal leads by building an integrated team that includes general and special educators, academic and behavior specialists, instructional coaches, and key support staff. This team ensures that instructional and intervention practices are consistent and responsive to student needs. The team monitors implementation, analyzes data, allocates resources, and supports educators in delivering aligned supports that meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students.

Since the development of the I-MTSS framework, research and implementation experiences have emphasized that sustained change requires a systems-level approach grounded in equity, efficiency, and inclusion. Integrated leadership teams empower schools to meet complex student needs, eliminate redundancies, and focus collective energy on delivering high-quality, coordinated support. In doing so, school leaders lay the groundwork for durable transformation where every student, especially those with or at risk for disabilities, benefits from a unified and effective support system.

Strategies

1. Create an integrated leadership team to drive I-MTSS.

Form a team that includes general and special education staff, behavior specialists, instructional coaches, and community partners. Ensure the team leads the alignment of data systems, intervention protocols, and professional development. This team should meet regularly to guide implementation and ensure equity across supports.

Establishing an integrated leadership team is one of the most essential and strategic moves a school leader can make to support high-quality I-MTSS implementation. In many schools, leadership responsibilities are fragmented, with separate teams overseeing academic instruction, behavior support, special education, and intervention services.

This fragmentation often leads to duplicated efforts, inconsistent messaging, and missed opportunities to coordinate supports. By creating a single, cohesive team charged with guiding all aspects of I-MTSS, school leaders can begin to dismantle silos and replace them with a shared structure grounded in collaboration, responsiveness, and effectiveness.

An I-MTSS team should be intentionally constructed to represent the full range of expertise and roles within the school. This includes general and special education teachers, interventionists, behavior specialists, instructional coaches, and relevant support staff. In some cases, schools may also include family representatives or community partners to ensure the team's work reflects the broader context of students' lives. The principal serves as the convener and facilitator, but responsibility for implementation is distributed among team members. This shared ownership is critical to long-term sustainability and to building a culture where integration is the norm rather than the exception.

Once established, the team must be empowered to lead, not just to meet. Clarify that the team is not advisory. Instead, it has decision-making responsibilities and is charged with setting priorities, reviewing data, aligning practices, supporting staff, and ensuring the school addresses the needs of all students through coordinated Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports. Too often, leadership teams are created in name only, meeting irregularly and with unclear purpose. An effective I-MTSS team should maintain a regular meeting schedule with structured agendas and protocols, and use implementation tools (such as the Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric [IMFR]) to guide their work.

Importantly, forming an integrated leadership team is not about creating something new from scratch, but about unifying and refining what already exists. In many schools, teams focused on PBIS, MTSS, RtI, or special education already operate independently. The principal's leadership lies in recognizing the redundancy of these efforts and bringing them together with a common vision and direction. This realignment requires thoughtful planning, clear communication, and often some degree of cultural change, especially when staff are accustomed to working in isolation. However, once integration begins to take hold, schools often find they can use their time, talent, and data more effectively.

Example

At Lincoln Middle School, Principal Tanya Ellis noticed that her staff held separate meetings for PBIS, special education, and academic intervention, each using different data systems and working from different goals. Staff were frustrated by unclear roles and duplicated efforts, and students were receiving disconnected supports. In response, Principal Ellis proposed forming a single I-MTSS team that would assume responsibility for all schoolwide supports. She invited representatives from each of the existing groups to serve on the team, along with the school counselor, instructional coach, and a family liaison.

In their first meeting, the team mapped out all existing data points and identified key areas of overlap. They adopted a shared data dashboard and scheduled biweekly meetings using a structured agenda. Within two months, the team had revised the school's Tier 2 process, eliminating unnecessary referrals and streamlining student support plans. Staff who had once worked in isolation began collaborating to develop more integrated supports.

Over time, the I-MTSS team became the go-to structure for making decisions about student needs, intervention allocation, and professional learning. Principal Ellis regularly joined the meetings to reinforce the team's importance and celebrate its successes. What started as a logistical change ultimately transformed the school's approach to supporting students.

2. Integrate academic and behavioral data systems.

Leaders should ensure their teams use one integrated system for reviewing student progress across academics and behavior. In most schools, data are collected across numerous systems (academic screeners, behavior tracking tools, intervention logs, attendance reports) but rarely are these data brought together in ways that support cohesive decision-making. The result is fragmented insight into student needs and a missed opportunity to respond with aligned, effective support. I-MTSS requires a fundamental shift in how school leaders think about data. It is not enough to gather information; leaders must create conditions in which data systems are designed to talk to each other, and where the people interpreting them do so with shared intent and purpose.

Leadership plays a critical role in designing and facilitating this integration. The principal must ensure that data sources are compatible and accessible to those who need them. This may involve collaborating with district technology teams to unify platforms, streamlining how data are entered, or adopting tools that bring multiple indicators into a single view. It also requires rethinking meeting structures. Integrated data systems only matter if the information is regularly and meaningfully reviewed. School leaders must organize meeting protocols that include multiple data sources, support interpretation through guiding questions, and build routines that link data to instructional action.

Just as important is developing staff capacity to navigate this more holistic data landscape. Most educators are comfortable looking at reading scores or behavior reports individually, but fewer are trained to interpret the intersection of these data or to draw conclusions that lead to integrated supports. Principals must ensure that professional learning includes not just technical training, but also collaborative inquiry into how student experiences are shaped by intersecting needs. These conversations can surface root causes, deepen empathy, and build a stronger foundation for equity-driven problem solving.

Example

At Riverside High School, Principal Danielle Moore recognized that her student support teams were struggling to respond quickly and effectively to student needs. The academic intervention team met monthly to review grades and assessment scores, while the PBIS team reviewed office discipline referrals on a different schedule using separate forms and dashboards. Each team was doing meaningful work, but they rarely coordinated and their recommendations often conflicted.

After reviewing findings from the Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric, Principal Moore worked with her data coach to design a unified student data dashboard that included reading and math screeners, attendance, discipline referrals, and teacher concerns in one platform. She restructured support team meetings so that all relevant staff (interventionists, counselors, deans, and teachers) could review the same data at the same time. The team also developed new protocols for identifying students whose needs crossed domains, prioritizing students receiving both academic and behavioral flags.

Within a semester, the team noticed faster referral decisions, fewer duplicated interventions, and greater confidence among teachers in the process. The integrated system allowed the school to track trends in real time and adjust Tier 1 practices accordingly. For example, after noticing that ninth-grade students receiving behavior referrals were also underperforming in Algebra I, the team piloted an integrated support block that included academic tutoring and self-monitoring strategies. Principal Moore's leadership in aligning the data systems not only improved efficiency, but transformed how her staff understood and responded to student needs.

Potential Roadblocks



Our academic and behavior teams operate separately.

Suggested Approach. Begin by merging team membership. Use joint data meetings to build shared understanding and set common goals. Create cross-disciplinary coaching teams or assign a liaison to ensure alignment between instructional and behavioral supports.

Many schools approach academic and behavioral supports through separate systems of leadership, planning, and implementation. These parallel structures may have emerged out of necessity, with different funding streams, staffing models, or district mandates guiding the development of PBIS, RTI, or SEL efforts. However, in an I-MTSS framework, this separation becomes a barrier to coherence. When teams operate in silos, students experience fragmented supports, decision-making becomes inconsistent, and opportunities for integrated planning are lost.

To overcome this challenge, school leaders must act decisively to unify these teams under a single, integrated leadership structure. This begins with a thoughtful review of existing team memberships, meeting purposes, and decision-making processes. The goal is not to eliminate expertise, but to bring it together. Principals can initiate this process by forming a representative I-MTSS leadership team, as outlined in Recommendation 1, Strategy 1, that includes academic and behavioral voices at the table. Merging meeting structures and calendars ensures that team members analyze shared data and collaborate around student needs holistically rather than separately.

As integration takes hold, it is equally important to build relationships and shared understanding across disciplines. Co-facilitated meetings, cross-training, and shared goal setting can help foster a sense of collective ownership. This work may require cultural shifts as much as technical ones. Staff accustomed to working independently may need time and support to adopt new norms of collaboration. Principals can model these expectations by reinforcing the vision of I-MTSS, consistently referring to the leadership team's work in schoolwide communications, and celebrating examples of integrated problem-solving.



Staff aren't sure what I-MTSS is or how it differs from what we already do.

Suggested Approach. Use staff meetings and professional learning time to introduce the I-MTSS framework and its benefits. Highlight how it streamlines rather than adds work.

One of the most common sources of resistance to I-MTSS implementation is not opposition to the concept, but confusion about what it means in practice. Teachers and staff may believe they are already “doing MTSS” because they participate in data meetings, provide small-group instruction, or follow behavior expectations.

Without a clear articulation of what distinguishes I-MTSS (the intentional integration of academic and behavioral supports into a single, cohesive system), staff may view implementation as redundant or unnecessary.

To address this, school leaders must take an active role in establishing shared language and understanding. The principal should use staff meetings and professional learning sessions to introduce the I-MTSS framework, explain its rationale, and describe how it differs from traditional models. This introduction should include not only definitions, but concrete examples from within the school, such as integrated lesson planning, combined data reviews, or co-led coaching cycles. Using visual tools, planning templates, or short classroom walkthrough videos can help translate abstract ideas into recognizable classroom practice.

In addition, school leaders should create structured opportunities for staff to engage with the framework through collaborative inquiry. Asking teachers to reflect on where integration is already happening and where it could be improved fosters ownership and helps uncover misconceptions. Recommendation 3, Strategy 1 emphasizes the importance of job-embedded learning. By weaving I-MTSS into the existing routines of planning and collaboration, leaders can make the work feel manageable and relevant. Over time, as clarity increases and small wins accumulate, skepticism gives way to commitment.

Leadership Area	Level of Evidence
Instruction	 Strong

RECOMMENDATION 2

Use integrated data to drive instruction and intervention across tiers.

I-MTSS implementation depends on leadership that ensures academic and behavioral data are used together to make timely decisions. School leaders must align data routines to guide problem-solving, intervention, and resource allocation across the full continuum of student need.

Effective implementation of I-MTSS requires that school leaders move beyond traditional data routines focused solely on compliance or single domains (e.g., just reading or behavior). Instead, they must build and lead systems where academic, behavioral, and social-emotional data are routinely integrated and used as the foundation for collaborative decision-making. In an I-MTSS framework, data are collected, but also transformed into action. This demands that principals and leadership teams develop a coherent, schoolwide approach to using data to meet the needs of the whole child.

At the heart of this work is the recognition that students do not experience academic challenges separately from behavioral or emotional ones, and yet, schools too often respond as if these are disconnected issues. I-MTSS promotes a more complete picture of student need by organizing data across domains and tiers. This includes using universal screening tools, progress monitoring, and diagnostic data in ways that align across the full continuum of supports, from Tier 1 preventive practices to individualized Tier 3 interventions. Principals must ensure these data are accessible, timely, and disaggregated to expose patterns of inequity and direct resources where they are most needed.

To make this vision a reality, school leaders must establish structures for integrated data use that are both strategic and sustainable. This includes setting regular meeting cycles for data review, ensuring team members have clear roles, and providing protocols that guide analysis, problem identification, and intervention planning. Importantly, principals must also attend to capacity-building, ensuring that staff have the knowledge and support to interpret and act on data confidently.

Strategies

1. Establish an integrated data system and schedule for team-based review.

Leaders should streamline existing academic and behavioral data systems into a unified dashboard or regular meeting structure. Use consistent indicators (e.g., grades, screening results, ODRs, attendance) to identify students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

Establishing a consistent data review schedule begins with clarifying when, how, and by whom data will be analyzed. School leaders must define a cadence that is frequent enough to identify trends early, but manageable within the flow of the school year. For most schools, this includes monthly or biweekly team meetings focused on examining multiple indicators at once: universal screeners, progress monitoring data, office discipline referrals, attendance records, and teacher observations. These meetings must follow clear protocols and decision rules, enabling staff to move from data to action within a single session.

Integrated data review meetings differ from traditional data meetings in two critical ways. First, they bring together staff from multiple roles (academic specialists, behavior coaches, counselors, and classroom teachers) to examine data collaboratively. This interdisciplinary approach allows the team to see connections between academic and behavioral indicators that might otherwise go unnoticed. Second, the meetings are designed to result in decisions, not just discussion. School leaders must ensure that each meeting produces a set of action steps: identifying students for intervention, adjusting Tier 1 practices, or assigning follow-up for progress checks.

Principals must allocate dedicated time for these meetings, ensure that the right people are present, and provide access to data in a user-friendly format. It also requires that staff are trained to engage in collaborative data inquiry, applying root cause analysis and equity-focused questioning to avoid surface-level assumptions. The principal's role is to make these meetings a predictable and valued part of the school's improvement infrastructure, not an optional or compliance-driven task.

Example

At Willow Ridge Elementary, Principal Mia Tran noticed that student concerns were being addressed inconsistently across grade levels. While some teachers routinely referred students to the intervention team based on screening data, others waited until behavior escalated or grades dropped significantly. In response, Principal Tran partnered with her I-MTSS team to develop a data review calendar aligned to each universal screening period. They established a monthly "student support cycle" in which grade-level teams met with interventionists and counselors to review academic and behavioral indicators using a shared template.

Each meeting followed a structured protocol that guided the team through identifying patterns, prioritizing students, and matching them to appropriate supports. Teams were also asked to reflect on whether their Tier 1 instruction was meeting the needs of all students, prompting adjustments in lesson planning or classroom management as needed. Principal Tran ensured that the meetings included time for staff to ask questions, raise concerns, and celebrate progress. She also modeled data-informed leadership by attending the meetings, reinforcing norms, and lifting up examples of effective practice.

By midyear, staff reported feeling more confident in the support process and better able to identify students in need of help. The school saw a decrease in reactive discipline referrals and an increase in timely academic interventions. What had once been a fragmented and informal approach became a coordinated system grounded in collaboration and equity. Principal Tran's leadership in establishing the data review schedule helped her staff turn insight into action systematically and consistently.

2. Use data protocols to inform intervention decisions.

Facilitate regular team meetings where educators apply structured protocols (e.g., data teaming cycles, root cause analysis) to monitor progress and ensure interventions are matched to need. Disaggregate data by race, gender, and program participation to monitor equity.

Collecting data does not automatically lead to better decisions. Without the right protocols in place, even high-quality data can reinforce existing biases or fail to drive meaningful change. In an integrated MTSS framework, school leaders must go beyond organizing data to ensure that teams engage with it in structured, intentional ways that prioritize meeting student needs. Data protocols provide the structure needed to help educators ask better questions, challenge assumptions, and respond to the needs of all students, not just those who are most visible or vocal.

A well-designed protocol acts as both a process and a safeguard. It ensures that teams do not jump to conclusions or base decisions on isolated data points. Instead, staff are guided through a series of questions that help them interpret patterns, consider systemic factors, and select appropriate interventions. These protocols often begin by having teams disaggregate data by race, language status, disability, or socioeconomic status. From there, teams examine whether particular groups are over- or under-represented in referrals, interventions, or disciplinary actions, and whether the supports provided are producing equitable outcomes.

School leaders are responsible for ensuring that these protocols are used consistently and with fidelity. This begins with training by making sure that all team members understand the purpose of the protocol and how to apply it during data reviews. It also includes modeling. When principals facilitate or participate in data discussions, they set the tone for how the protocol is used. They can prompt deeper inquiry, redirect deficit-based thinking, and keep the focus on systems — not just individual students.

Example

At Eastwood Intermediate School, Principal Shaun Rivera had growing concerns about disproportionality in the school's Tier 2 referrals. English learners and students receiving special education services were being referred for behavior supports at significantly higher rates than their peers, while access to academic interventions remained uneven across grade levels. Rather than relying on anecdotal explanations, Principal Rivera introduced a data inquiry protocol during the next I-MTSS leadership team meeting.

The protocol guided the team to first disaggregate screening and referral data by demographic groups. They discovered that multilingual learners were often referred for Tier 2 behavior support based on vague teacher concerns such as “withdrawal” or “non-participation” which were sometimes rooted in language barriers, not behavioral issues. The team also realized that some teachers were unfamiliar with how to refer students for academic support, relying solely on grade-level retention concerns rather than universal screening thresholds.

Using the protocol, the team identified key action steps: revising the referral process to include objective data thresholds, providing professional development on the intersection of language acquisition and behavior, and developing classroom “look-fors” to clarify when Tier 1 practices should be intensified. Principal Rivera continued to revisit the protocol monthly, helping the team track whether adjustments were leading to more equitable patterns of access and support.

Within two quarters, the school saw a reduction in disproportionality in Tier 2 referrals and increased use of preventative strategies in Tier 1. Teachers expressed greater confidence in identifying student needs and appreciated the clarity the protocol brought to team discussions. The structured inquiry process improved referral practices and reshaped how staff viewed their role in ensuring all students received the support they needed to succeed.

3. Train staff to collect, interpret, and act on data.

Ensure teachers and interventionists have the knowledge and time to collect progress monitoring data and use it in instructional decisions. Provide ongoing coaching on how to interpret and respond to trends.

In an integrated MTSS framework, high-quality data systems and protocols are only as effective as the people using them. Teachers, counselors, and interventionists are the first line of response for student needs, yet many have had limited training in how to interpret data from multiple domains or how to use those data to inform differentiated instruction. To move beyond surface-level data use, school leaders must invest in building their staff’s skills and confidence in making sense of data and in translating insights into practical action for students.

Teachers may understand how to interpret benchmark scores or identify behavioral trends, but they often lack guidance on how to synthesize those insights to select and adjust instructional strategies. Principals must create conditions where data literacy is not reserved for a few specialists but becomes a core competency across the staff. That means integrating data interpretation into ongoing professional learning, instructional coaching, and collaborative planning routines.

School leaders must embed capacity-building opportunities throughout the school year, aligned with the rhythms of instruction and intervention. This may include short learning sessions during staff meetings, modeling data interpretation during PLCs, or creating case studies based on real student profiles that require analysis across academic and behavioral indicators. When educators are supported in working through real examples, their ability to draw meaningful conclusions grows and so does their trust in the process.

Example

At Hudson Valley Middle School, Principal Ashley Bennett noticed that while her I-MTSS team had become skilled at analyzing integrated data, many classroom teachers were still unsure how to respond when students were flagged for concern. Some teachers relied on instinct or past experience to determine next steps, while others deferred decisions entirely to specialists. To close this gap, Principal Bennett launched a series of “data-to-instruction” mini-sessions during early-release Fridays.

Each session focused on one aspect of integrated data use. For example, interpreting screening results alongside behavior logs, identifying patterns of co-occurring needs, or using progress monitoring to adjust group instruction. Teachers brought real student data to the sessions and worked in grade-level teams to develop instructional responses. Coaches supported with targeted strategies and resource guides. Principal Bennett ensured that these sessions were not seen as extra work, but as time set aside to build shared expertise and reduce guesswork in decision-making.

As a result, teachers reported increased clarity in how to respond to student needs and greater confidence in matching supports to data. The school also saw improved documentation of interventions and more consistent follow-up on student progress. By building her staff’s capacity to interpret and act on data, Principal Bennett helped close the implementation gap between what the leadership team saw and what happened day-to-day in classrooms.

Potential Roadblocks



We already have too many data systems and meetings.

Suggested Approach. Streamline. Focus on the most actionable data sources and consolidate team meetings across academics and behavior.

School staff often feel burdened by the volume of data they are expected to collect, interpret, and act upon. Multiple platforms may track academic progress, behavior referrals, attendance, and intervention fidelity — each requiring time and attention, but offering limited integration. Compounding this, team meetings focused on data may occur in isolation with limited communication across grade levels or areas of focus. This fragmented approach can lead to fatigue, duplication of effort, and a sense that data collection is a compliance task rather than a tool for meaningful decision-making.

In an I-MTSS framework, the goal is not to add more data or meetings, but to align and streamline them. As outlined in Recommendation 2, Strategy 1, the principal should begin by auditing existing data systems and meeting schedules to identify redundancies and disconnects. From there, leadership teams can determine which data are most useful for identifying student needs and monitoring progress and consolidate reporting tools to reduce the burden on teachers.

Meeting structures should follow suit. Rather than holding separate meetings for academics, behavior, and intervention, schools can adopt an integrated student support cycle where cross-disciplinary teams review all relevant data at once using shared protocols. Principals can support this shift by protecting time on the calendar, providing user-friendly dashboards or templates, and ensuring that meetings focus on timely decisions, not just reporting. As data use becomes more purposeful and efficient, staff are more likely to see its relevance and re-engage with the process.



Staff are unsure how to use data to change instruction or supports.

Suggested Approach. Offer short, practice-based trainings and coaching on interpreting data, identifying trends, and matching students to appropriate interventions. Use early-release days, PLCs, and coaching to build skills gradually and reinforce integration through observation and feedback.

Even when schools have strong data systems and clear protocols, many educators feel underprepared to act on the information in front of them. They may know how to read a screening report or recognize a pattern of discipline referrals, but translating those data into instructional adjustments or behavioral interventions can be overwhelming. This gap between data analysis and instructional response is one of the most persistent challenges in implementation and it cannot be closed without targeted support.

Principals must address this challenge by investing in professional learning that is grounded in real student data and focused on the practical application of instructional strategies. Recommendation 2, Strategy 3 emphasizes the importance of building staff expertise in data interpretation. This includes modeling how to analyze data across domains, guiding teams through case studies, and providing opportunities for teachers to plan and revise instruction collaboratively based on identified needs.

Coaching is also essential. Teachers benefit from real-time support that helps them make instructional decisions with confidence. Principals should ensure that coaching cycles are aligned to integrated goals and that teachers receive feedback on how their use of data is shaping outcomes. Leadership should also encourage risk-taking and learning, reinforcing the idea that adjusting instruction based on data is a dynamic and reflective process, not a sign of failure. As staff become more fluent in interpreting and applying data, their ability to deliver timely, integrated supports improves and so do student outcomes.

Additional Resources

Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making

- **Recommendation 1:** Make data part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement.
 - Use formative feedback loops to refine instruction.
- **Recommendation 2:** Teach students to examine their own data and set learning goals.
 - Provide structured goal-setting templates.
 - Incorporate student reflection on progress.
 - Align goals with broader state standards and long-term outcomes.

The Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkit

The Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkit from REL Northeast & Islands is designed to help practitioners systematically and accurately use data to inform their teaching practice. The toolkit includes an agenda, slide deck, participant workbook, and facilitator's guide and covers the following topics: developing data literacy, engaging in a cycle of inquiry, accessing and analyzing available data, identifying and creating student goals, and using data to make action plans about instructional decisions.

Leadership Area	Level of Evidence
Instruction	 Strong

RECOMMENDATION 3

Build staff capacity for integrated practices through professional learning and coaching.

A strong I-MTSS system depends on educators consistently implementing integrated academic and behavioral practices with fidelity. Leaders play a critical role in developing this capacity by organizing aligned professional learning, embedding coaching, and modeling use of the framework. Leadership within an I-MTSS framework is not only about setting direction and managing systems. It also involves cultivating the knowledge, confidence, and collective efficacy of educators to implement integrated academic and behavioral practices with consistency and fidelity.

Building staff capacity begins with establishing a shared understanding of what integration looks like in practice. For many educators, traditional training has treated academics and behavior as separate priorities. I-MTSS requires a shift in mindset and practice, where instruction is designed and delivered with both academic content and behavioral expectations in mind. Effective professional learning helps staff bridge this divide by providing clear models, aligned tools, and opportunities for reflection. It also positions integration as something that is practical and doable, not an added burden.

School leaders play a critical role in ensuring that professional learning is sustained, embedded, and connected to the daily realities of classrooms. This includes allocating time for collaborative planning, organizing content-specific coaching that addresses both instruction and engagement, and prioritizing strategies that can be implemented across content areas and grade levels. Rather than relying on isolated workshops, leaders who embrace I-MTSS treat adult learning as an ongoing cycle. They create structures for modeling, feedback, and peer-to-peer support, and they ensure that all staff, including paraprofessionals and interventionists, are included in the learning process.

Developing capacity for integration also requires differentiated support. Just as students benefit from layered tiers of instruction, educators need personalized coaching and feedback that meet them where they are. Some staff may be new to explicit instruction or positive behavioral supports, while others may be ready to lead professional learning communities (PLCs). Principals must know their staff well and collaborate with coaches to provide targeted, data-informed support that addresses individual growth areas while reinforcing schoolwide priorities.

Strategies

1. Provide job-embedded professional learning that supports integrated practice.

Design professional development sessions that address both academic and behavioral practices and show how they can be integrated into Tier 1 and Tier 2. Use lesson plan templates and modeling to support implementation.

Professional learning is most effective when it is grounded in the daily work of teachers, directly connected to student needs, and focused on helping staff build and refine the practices they use in classrooms every day. In an integrated MTSS framework, this means offering professional learning that explicitly connects academic instruction and behavioral support not as separate tracks, but as complementary components of effective teaching. For school leaders, the challenge is not simply to provide more training, but to embed learning opportunities into the fabric of school life in ways that model integration and support long-term change.

Job-embedded professional learning is distinct from traditional workshops or one-time training sessions. It includes collaborative planning, instructional modeling, peer observation, and real-time coaching — all of which allow teachers to develop new strategies, try them in practice, and reflect on results with support. For integration to take root, this learning must help teachers see how to connect evidence-based academic practices (such as explicit instruction or scaffolded feedback) with classroom routines that promote positive behavior, engagement, and self-regulation.

Principals play a central role in designing and sustaining this learning environment. They must ensure that professional development calendars, PLC agendas, and staff meetings all reinforce the same instructional priorities and that these priorities reflect integrated practice. They must also coordinate the work of instructional coaches, behavior specialists, and school psychologists so that their support is aligned and collaborative. When professional learning is coherent and grounded in real student work, staff are more likely to see its value and apply what they learn.

Leaders must also consider how professional learning supports different roles within the school. General educators, special educators, interventionists, and paraprofessionals all contribute to integrated support systems. When professional learning is tailored to these roles but connected by a shared vision, it promotes consistency across classrooms and grade levels. Principals who are intentional about this alignment reduce confusion, eliminate redundancy, and help staff focus on what matters most, delivering effective, coordinated instruction that meets the diverse needs of all students.

Finally, job-embedded learning becomes even more powerful when teachers are invited to lead it. Building opportunities for staff to share strategies, analyze student work together, and facilitate sessions fosters distributed leadership and reinforces a professional culture rooted in collaboration. Principals who create time, space, and support for this kind of learning demonstrate a deep investment in their staff's growth and in the success of the I-MTSS framework.

Example

At Cedar Creek Elementary, Principal Monique Harris knew her staff had received training in both academic and behavioral frameworks, but few felt confident in integrating the two. Teachers struggled to manage small-group instruction while addressing student behavior, and many viewed social-emotional support as separate from their instructional role. To address this, Principal Harris launched a schoolwide initiative called “Teach Together,” which focused all professional learning for the year on connecting behavior and instruction.

The initiative began with a summer institute co-led by the reading coach and the school counselor. Together, they introduced a planning template that integrated explicit instruction routines with strategies like behavior prompting, active supervision, and reinforcement. During the school year, grade-level teams used PLC time to co-plan lessons using the template, review student engagement data, and reflect on implementation. The principal and coaches visited classrooms not to evaluate, but to observe how integrated strategies played out and offer feedback during follow-up meetings.

What made “Teach Together” effective was its coherence. Every learning activity, coaching conversation, and team discussion focused on helping teachers integrate core practices in manageable ways. By spring, staff reported increased confidence in delivering instruction that supported both academic growth and student behavior. Classrooms felt calmer, small-group work was more productive, and students responded positively to the consistent routines. For Principal Harris, the initiative was a turning point not only in practice, but in the staff’s shared belief that integration was both achievable and worthwhile.

2. Use instructional and behavior coaches to support integration.

Leaders should allocate coaching time and structures to focus on integrated practices. Coaches can support lesson planning, co-teaching, and feedback cycles that reinforce integration.

In many schools, coaching systems have evolved around specialized roles. For example, literacy coaches support reading instruction, behavior specialists focus on classroom management, and interventionists work primarily with small groups. While each contributes valuable expertise, these supports often operate in parallel rather than in partnership. In an I-MTSS framework, this separation can undermine coherence and result in inconsistent guidance for teachers. To promote meaningful integration, school leaders must organize coaching as a unified system, one that bridges academic and behavioral domains and supports educators in delivering aligned, effective instruction.

Coordinated coaching does not require every coach to become an expert in all content areas. Rather, it calls for leadership that brings coaches together with a shared understanding of the school's integrated priorities, a common language for effective practice, and clear protocols for collaboration. When coaches plan together, observe together, and co-facilitate learning experiences, they model the very integration they are helping teachers achieve.

School leaders play a critical role in enabling this alignment. They are responsible for defining the focus of coaching, ensuring time is protected for joint planning, and providing structures for consistent communication among coaching staff. This may include establishing cross-disciplinary coaching cycles, facilitating weekly check-ins among coaches, or assigning joint roles in professional development sessions.

Example

At Woodhaven K–8 School, Principal Aisha Morgan noticed that teachers were receiving fragmented coaching support. The reading coach focused exclusively on pacing and lesson design, while the behavior specialist addressed classroom disruptions using a separate set of expectations and strategies. This lack of coordination left teachers confused about priorities and unsure how to address students with overlapping needs.

Principal Morgan responded by launching a coaching alignment initiative. She began by convening her coaching team (including academic, behavior, and SEL coaches) for a summer retreat to develop shared goals. Together, they identified core practices that applied across content areas, such as clear routines, active engagement, and feedback systems. They then created a joint coaching cycle model in which each coach would observe classrooms together and provide integrated feedback using a common framework.

During the school year, teachers began receiving coaching that addressed both instructional quality and classroom climate in a single conversation. Professional learning sessions were co-led by pairs of coaches, demonstrating how academic and behavioral supports could be embedded in real lessons. Staff appreciated the consistency and felt more supported in navigating the complexity of integrated practice.

By spring, Woodhaven saw increased implementation fidelity across Tiers 1 and 2, as well as improved student engagement. More importantly, teachers began viewing the coaching team as a unified resource rather than separate specialists. Principal Morgan’s leadership in coordinating the coaching system helped transform fragmented supports into a coherent driver of schoolwide improvement.

3. Model and reinforce integrated practices as a leader.

Principal modeling signals priority. Visit classrooms, share videos of integrated instruction, or co-lead Tier 1 planning meetings. Celebrate examples of integration in staff meetings and newsletters.

Leadership actions communicate priorities. In high-functioning I-MTSS schools, teachers and staff implement integrated practices not just because they are trained to do so, but because they believe the work is important and supported. One of the most powerful ways to build this belief is through consistent, visible leadership modeling. When principals actively demonstrate what integration looks like through their language, behaviors, and routines, they create momentum, clarify expectations, and reinforce the message that I-MTSS is a schoolwide priority, not a temporary initiative.

Modeling integrated practice goes beyond verbal encouragement. It includes participating in data meetings and asking reflective questions that connect academic and behavioral supports. It involves visiting classrooms not just to evaluate, but to learn and affirm examples of integrated instruction. Principals can co-plan with coaches, use shared templates, or publicly highlight examples of staff integrating instruction and behavior support. These actions, though small, establish alignment between leadership rhetoric and instructional reality.

Staff meetings, family newsletters, and internal communications all provide opportunities to reinforce the vision and share examples of progress. By framing integration as a student-centered approach that reduces fragmentation and increases efficiency, principals help staff understand not only what to do, but why it matters.

Example

At Southwood Elementary, Principal Jorge Alvarez was eager to support the school's shift toward integrated Tier 1 practices but noticed staff still viewed academic instruction and behavior management as separate priorities. To shift mindsets, he committed to modeling integrated practices himself. He began by joining each grade-level PLC once a month, where he facilitated a short case study discussion combining academic and behavior data. Rather than leading the meetings, he asked guiding questions and highlighted how the team's insights reflected I-MTSS principles.

In classrooms, Principal Alvarez conducted informal walkthroughs focused on both instructional engagement and student behavior supports. Afterward, he wrote weekly reflections to staff, sharing what he observed and celebrating small wins such as a teacher using specific praise during a math group or implementing a calm-down strategy before a writing task. He also created a bulletin board in the staff lounge called "Integration in Action," where teachers submitted photos and notes about practices they were trying. These entries were regularly featured in staff newsletters with short explanations of how they aligned to the I-MTSS framework.

Staff began to respond. Teachers tried new routines they had seen highlighted in walkthroughs. Grade-level leads began referencing I-MTSS language in their own meetings. By the second semester, integration felt less like a separate initiative and more like part of the school's identity. Principal Alvarez's visible, intentional leadership helped foster a climate where integration was not only understood but embraced.

Potential Roadblocks



We do not have enough time in the schedule for professional learning focused on integration.

Suggested Approach. One of the most frequently cited obstacles to sustained professional development is a lack of time. School schedules are often packed with instructional demands, assessment windows, and operational tasks, leaving limited space for meaningful adult learning. When staff are asked to implement new practices (especially complex ones like integrated instruction) without sufficient time to learn, collaborate, and reflect, the result is often surface-level adoption or staff fatigue. This creates a disconnect between schoolwide priorities and what actually happens in classrooms.

To address this challenge, school leaders must treat time for professional learning not as an afterthought but as a foundational component of the school improvement plan. Recommendation 3, Strategy 1 underscores the importance of job-embedded learning; however, this kind of professional development cannot occur without structural support. Principals may need to revisit master schedules, adjust early-release days, or create rotation models that free up time for collaborative planning. In some cases, schools have found success by embedding micro-learning opportunities into existing structures such as short strategy shares during staff meetings or weekly PLC protocols that include a focus on integration.

Principals also need to communicate why this time matters. When staff understand that professional learning is not separate from instruction but directly tied to improving student outcomes, they are more likely to view it as essential. Clear alignment between learning goals and classroom priorities reinforces this message. Leaders can further model commitment by participating in the learning themselves and protecting the time from being overtaken by unrelated initiatives. When professional learning becomes part of the school's culture, not a periodic event, implementation deepens, and integration becomes sustainable.



Coaching support feels inconsistent or unavailable for many teachers.

Suggested Approach. Coaching is a vital lever for sustaining integrated practice, but in many schools, access to coaching is uneven or uncoordinated. Some teachers receive ongoing support, while others go weeks without meaningful feedback. In smaller schools, coaching roles may be part-time or spread thin across multiple responsibilities. This lack of consistency can lead to frustration, limit the reach of implementation efforts, and reinforce inequities in professional support. It also places undue pressure on teachers to implement complex changes without sufficient guidance.

To address this, school leaders must ensure that coaching is organized as a strategic and equitable resource. As described in Recommendation 3, Strategy 2, this begins by clarifying coaching roles and responsibilities in support of I-MTSS priorities. Principals should ensure that all teachers, not just new or struggling staff, receive regular, aligned coaching. This may involve adjusting caseloads, prioritizing time for walk-throughs and feedback, or building teacher leadership to extend the reach of coaching supports.

Equally important is fostering trust in the coaching process. Teachers need to know that coaching is developmental, not evaluative, and that it is tied to shared goals. Principals can reinforce this by celebrating coaching wins, spotlighting integrated practices observed during cycles, and providing public support for coaching as a form of professional investment. Over time, consistent access to coaching helps normalize feedback, deepen staff expertise, and accelerate the integration of academic and behavioral supports schoolwide. When coaching is equitable and embedded, it becomes a driver of culture change, not just compliance.

Additional Resources

Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making

- **Recommendation 1:** Make data part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement.
 - Use formative feedback loops to refine instruction.
- **Recommendation 2:** Teach students to examine their own data and set learning goals.
 - Provide structured goal-setting templates.
 - Incorporate student reflection on progress.
 - Align goals with broader state standards and long-term outcomes.

The Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkit

The Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkit from REL Northeast & Islands is designed to help practitioners systematically and accurately use data to inform their teaching practice. The toolkit includes an agenda, slide deck, participant workbook, and facilitator's guide and covers the following topics: developing data literacy, engaging in a cycle of inquiry, accessing and analyzing available data, identifying and creating student goals, and using data to make action plans about instructional decisions.

Leadership Area	Level of Evidence
Instruction	 Strong

RECOMMENDATION 4

Embed integrated practices into Tier 1 instruction and progress monitoring.

For an Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support (I-MTSS) to succeed, integration must be visible where it matters most: within the classroom. While leadership teams, data systems, and professional learning structures set the foundation, the daily experiences of students are shaped by what happens during Tier 1 instruction. It is in these moments, during core content delivery, transitions, group work, and independent practice, that students either receive instruction aligned with their academic and behavioral needs or experience fragmented expectations that undermine engagement and learning. School leaders must ensure that Tier 1 instruction models integration, and that the systems used to monitor fidelity and progress reflect the full scope of students' needs.

Integrated instruction is not simply a matter of adding behavioral cues to academic routines or pairing SEL lessons with reading time. It is a deliberate effort to embed evidence-based practices that support student learning and behavior within a unified instructional framework. This includes using clear expectations, active supervision, opportunities to respond, behavior-specific praise, and structured group contingencies alongside explicit instruction and scaffolded feedback. When these practices are woven together, they promote a safe, predictable, and engaging learning environment that supports the success of all students, including those at risk for academic or behavioral challenges.

School leaders play a critical role in ensuring that these practices are implemented consistently and with fidelity. They must provide tools and structures for teachers to design and reflect on integrated lessons, conduct walkthroughs that examine both academic engagement and classroom climate, and ensure that core instructional practices promote participation, regulation, and academic rigor. In doing so, they create a culture where integration is not reserved for interventions or specialized supports, but is a visible part of Tier 1 instruction across content areas and grade levels.

Monitoring the impact of integrated instruction also requires a shift in how progress is measured. Traditional progress monitoring tools tend to focus either on academic performance or behavioral incidents, but rarely both. I-MTSS calls for the use of dual-domain data that allow schools to track how students are responding to instruction in terms of skill growth, engagement, and regulation. This includes tools for classroom-based data collection, fidelity checks, and integrated progress monitoring protocols. Leaders must ensure that systems are in place for reviewing these data at regular intervals and using them to adjust instruction, refine Tier 1 supports, and prevent unnecessary escalation to Tier 2.

Strategies

1. Support teachers in designing and delivering integrated Tier 1 instruction.

School leaders should ensure that teachers are equipped with the tools, routines, and coaching they need to design lessons that support engagement, behavior, and learning as interconnected goals. Integrated instruction draws on evidence-based practices from both academic and behavioral domains. For example, a well-structured Tier 1 reading lesson might include clear expectations for engagement during partner reading, multiple opportunities to respond during guided instruction, and strategic use of behavior-specific praise to reinforce effort and focus. These practices not only increase participation and skill acquisition, but also reduce the need for corrective responses and Tier 2 referrals. The result is a more inclusive and responsive classroom environment.

The school leader's role in promoting integrated instruction is twofold. First, principals must provide or coordinate professional learning that helps teachers understand how to embed behavioral strategies into their core content delivery. This includes modeling how to use integrated lesson planning templates, co-facilitating PLCs focused on instructional routines, and offering walkthrough feedback that reinforces what integration looks like in practice. Second, leaders must protect the time and structures that allow teachers to plan collaboratively. Integrated instruction is more likely to succeed when teachers are supported in developing lessons with shared expectations, materials, and reflection cycles.

Leadership visibility also matters. When principals visit classrooms with a focus on integrated instructional practices such as student engagement, use of prompts, or group reinforcement, they signal that this work is valued and expected. They can use observation tools aligned with I-MTSS to guide their feedback and ensure that it addresses both instructional quality and classroom climate.

Example

At Brighton Elementary, Principal Lila Novak had long supported strong literacy instruction but noticed inconsistent classroom climate and engagement during core reading blocks. Teachers implemented explicit phonics routines, but behavior challenges during transitions and partner work often disrupted instruction. Rather than creating separate interventions, Principal Novak worked with the school's reading coach and behavior specialist to develop an integrated lesson planning template.

The template prompted teachers to embed behavioral practices, such as setting expectations for materials use, incorporating active supervision strategies, and using specific praise into each phase of their reading lesson. Grade-level teams used PLC time to co-plan lessons with the template and receive feedback during walkthroughs. The principal visited classrooms weekly, using a shared observation tool that captured both academic and behavioral elements of instruction.

Within a few months, teachers reported fewer disruptions and stronger student engagement during Tier 1 instruction. Reading scores improved slightly, but the more significant shift was in classroom climate. Students knew what was expected, and teachers felt better supported to manage both instruction and behavior in tandem. For Principal Novak, the key was helping teachers see how high-leverage practices could be unified in service of stronger outcomes for all students, rather than adding new programs.

2. Implement fidelity monitoring systems for integrated Tier 1 practices.

Sustained I-MTSS implementation depends not only on having the right practices in place, but on ensuring those practices are delivered as intended. Without monitoring the fidelity of Tier 1 implementation, school leaders are left to guess whether integrated supports are being consistently applied across classrooms and whether those supports are driving improvements in student outcomes. Fidelity data provide the essential feedback loop between planning and practice, allowing leadership teams to identify strengths, uncover implementation gaps, and provide targeted support where it is most needed. Use monitoring data tools that examine key Tier 1 indicators, such as engagement strategies, routines and procedures, use of prompts and feedback, and classroom management systems within the context of instruction.

The principal's role is to ensure that fidelity monitoring is embedded into the school's improvement infrastructure, not treated as an add-on or evaluation tool. Leaders must select or adapt observation tools that align with I-MTSS principles, train leadership team members and coaches to use them reliably, and build cycles for data collection and review. Importantly, this process should be transparent and growth-oriented. When teachers understand that fidelity monitoring is designed to support their development, not to catch mistakes, they are more likely to use the feedback to refine their practice.

School leaders should also use fidelity data to guide schoolwide decisions. If monitoring reveals that certain practices — such as behavior-specific praise or active supervision — are inconsistently applied, this can inform the focus of future professional learning or coaching cycles. Fidelity data can also be shared in aggregate to celebrate progress and reinforce shared expectations. Over time, consistent monitoring helps normalize the use of integrated practices and builds staff confidence that their efforts are leading to positive change.

Example

At Glenwood Intermediate School, Principal Marcus Delgado had led professional learning on integrating academic and behavioral strategies during Tier 1 instruction, but he lacked a way to track how consistently those practices were being implemented. Teachers expressed interest in support, but without structured feedback, it was unclear which practices needed reinforcement. In response, Principal Delgado partnered with the I-MTSS leadership team to create a fidelity walkthrough tool that reflected the school's integrated priorities.

The tool included items such as use of explicit expectations, student engagement during group tasks, academic scaffolding strategies, and reinforcement systems embedded in instruction. The principal and two coaches conducted biweekly walkthroughs in all classrooms, recording observations and offering brief, non-evaluative feedback. Each month, the leadership team reviewed the data to identify trends and adjust PD focus areas.

After several months, fidelity scores increased in targeted practices, and student engagement improved across grade levels. Teachers appreciated the consistent feedback and felt more supported in implementing integration with fidelity. For Principal Delgado, fidelity monitoring became a key lever in bridging the gap between professional learning and classroom practice, ensuring that the instructional shifts the school had invested in were actually taking root.

3. Develop integrated progress monitoring systems to inform instruction and supports.

In traditional school models, academic and behavioral progress are tracked separately, often using tools that are disconnected from daily instruction and from one another. This separation limits the school's ability to understand how students are responding to Tier 1 instruction in a holistic way. I-MTSS demands a more comprehensive and integrated approach. Schools must develop systems that allow them to monitor student growth across both academic and behavioral domains and use that information to adjust instructional strategies and Tier 1 supports in real time.

Integrated progress monitoring includes multiple data sources, such as screening scores, classroom engagement observations, behavioral event tracking, and academic work samples. The key is how the data are aligned and used, rather than the volume of data. Progress monitoring is most effective when it is directly tied to instruction and embedded in teacher routines. For example, a teacher might track both reading fluency and the frequency of task initiation during independent work, helping to identify whether instructional strategies are addressing both skill acquisition and self-regulation.

School leaders must ensure that staff are equipped with the tools and training needed to collect and interpret this data effectively. This includes developing or adopting monitoring tools that reflect integrated goals, building time into the schedule for data review, and facilitating collaborative conversations around student progress. Leaders should also ensure that data are disaggregated and used to identify gaps, allowing teams to reflect on whether all student groups are benefiting from Tier 1 instruction. Leadership teams can analyze aggregate data to identify whether core instruction is meeting the needs of most students or whether specific instructional routines or content areas require adjustment.

Example

At Emerson K–5, Principal Sarah Langston recognized that her team’s data reviews focused heavily on academics, with behavior and engagement discussed only when there were major concerns. She wanted a way to monitor how well Tier 1 instruction was supporting students across both domains, especially given the school’s goal of reducing unnecessary Tier 2 referrals. Working with her I-MTSS team, she introduced a new data tracking template that included weekly snapshots of academic skill growth, time on task, and behavioral prompts required.

Teachers used the template during guided reading and math groups, noting how students performed as well as how they responded to instructional supports like modeling, scaffolds, or praise. During grade-level PLCs, staff discussed these data alongside curriculum pacing guides and made targeted adjustments to groupings, routines, or expectations. Coaches supported with quick cycles of observation and feedback.

Over time, the leadership team began using the data to identify trends across classrooms, such as increased engagement during lessons with embedded self-monitoring strategies, and made those practices the focus of schoolwide PD. Principal Langston found that in addition to informing instruction, integrated progress monitoring helped build a shared language among staff and a stronger culture of responsiveness. The approach enabled her school to intervene earlier with more precision, and ensured Tier 1 instruction evolved to meet the full range of student needs.

Potential Roadblocks



Our teachers see behavior and instruction as separate responsibilities.

Suggested Approach. In many schools, a long-standing division exists between academic instruction and behavioral support. Teachers often view behavior management as the role of counselors, deans, or paraprofessionals, while their focus remains narrowly on delivering content. This mental model, reinforced by years of siloed training and evaluation systems, presents a significant obstacle to integration. When educators do not see how academic and behavioral strategies reinforce one another, they are unlikely to adopt practices that blend the two, especially within Tier 1 instruction. To shift this mindset, school leaders must provide more than new expectations. They must lead with modeling, tools, and learning opportunities that show teachers how integration enhances both learning and classroom management. As described in Recommendation 4, Strategy 1, this begins by embedding behavioral practices into lesson planning and instructional routines as core components of effective teaching, rather than add-ons. Principals should showcase examples of integration during walkthroughs, highlight them during staff meetings, and invite teachers to observe peers who use integrated practices successfully. Professional learning must also address the “why” behind integration. Teachers need time to reflect on how behavior and engagement affect access to instruction, and how a more proactive, integrated approach can reduce the need for reactive discipline or one-on-one interventions. Over time, as staff see improvements in both student behavior and academic outcomes, their beliefs begin to shift. Principals must be patient and persistent in reinforcing this cultural change, recognizing that transforming instructional identity is as important as adopting new strategies.



We don't have a clear system for tracking whether Tier 1 supports are working.

Suggested Approach. Many schools invest significant time in developing Tier 1 practices but lack structures for evaluating whether those efforts are leading to meaningful improvements. Without systems to monitor the fidelity and impact of Tier 1 supports, leadership teams are left to rely on assumptions, anecdotes, or referral data to assess effectiveness. This reactive approach undermines the preventative intent of I-MTSS and limits the school's ability to identify gaps, celebrate progress, or adjust instruction with precision.

To address this, principals must lead the development of fidelity and progress monitoring systems that reflect integrated priorities, as described in Strategies 2 and 3. This includes selecting observation tools that capture both academic and behavioral components of instruction, training staff to use them reliably, and building time into the schedule for regular data collection and reflection. It also means creating templates and dashboards that help teams track student growth across domains and disaggregate results by group to ensure equity in access and outcomes.

Leadership visibility is key. When principals regularly participate in walkthroughs, attend progress monitoring reviews, and use the resulting data to inform schoolwide decisions, it reinforces the importance of these systems. Staff begin to see that progress monitoring is about continuous improvement, not compliance. Over time, a culture emerges where feedback loops are tight, instructional adjustments are timely, and Tier 1 instruction becomes more adaptive to student need. With the right tools and leadership, tracking effectiveness becomes a powerful tool for change.

Additional Resources

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 - Align goals with broader state standards and long-term outcomes.

Instructional Improvement Cycle: A Teacher's Toolkit for Collecting and Analyzing Data on Instructional Strategies

- This toolkit, developed by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Central in collaboration with York Public Schools in Nebraska, provides a process and tools to help teachers use data from their classroom assessments to evaluate promising practices. The toolkit provides teachers with guidance on how to deliberately apply and study one classroom strategy over the course of one unit and systematically document and compare results to consider the effects of a given instructional strategy on student learning.

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