

# Sustaining Data-Based Decision Making

Kristin Orton, Ph.D.

Martha Condon, Ed.S.

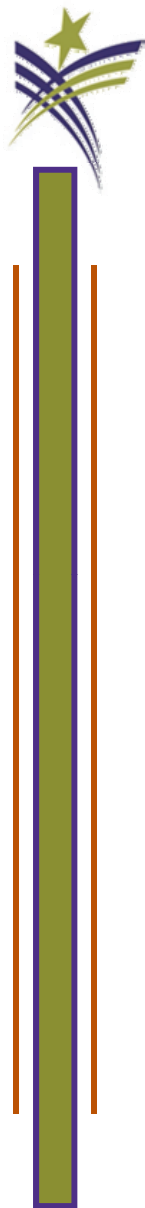
Heartland Area Education Agency

Johnston, Iowa



## Outcomes

- Understand the RtI guiding principles and training model used by Heartland Area Education Agency
- Consider the need for developing an infrastructure for sustained data-based decision making



# Area Education Agencies (AEAs)

- Statewide system of AEAs
- Established to provide equitable services across the state
- Unique and important part of Iowa's overall educational system





## Who do we serve?

- 54 Public School Districts
- 32 Accredited Private Schools
  - 129,000 students (1/4 of state's enrollment)
  - 12,000 teachers and administrators
  - 16,900 students entitled to special education
  - 330 school buildings in 11 counties (6,518 square miles, 1/5 of state's area)



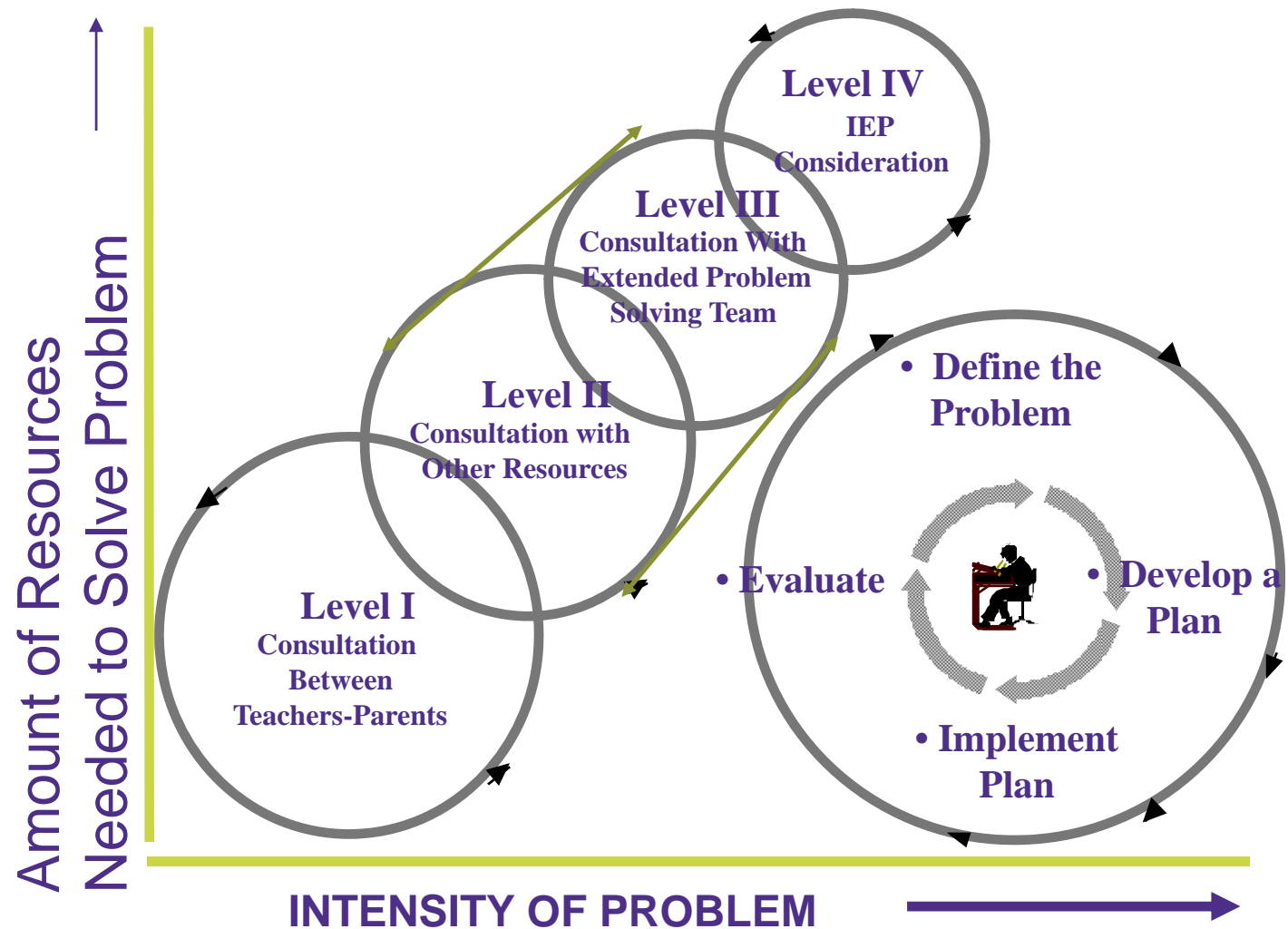
# Who Do We Serve?

## Public School Districts by Size

2	< 300 students
6	300–500 students
12	501–750 students
10	751–1,000 students
7	1,001–1,500 students
4	1,501–2,000 students
4	2,001–3,000 students
4	3,001–4,000 students
3	4,001–6,000 students
2	6,001-9,000 students
1	31,000+ students



# Heartland Problem Solving Approach





## Response to Intervention (RtI)

A set of systems and strategies designed to increase the capacity of schools to educate all students and increase student achievement and behavioral success.



# Guiding Principles of Rtl

1. ALL students are part of **ONE** proactive educational system
  - Belief that **ALL** students can learn
  - Use **ALL** available resources to teach **ALL** students

•**Proactive** approach uses data early to determine student needs and intervene.

•**Reactive** approach intervenes after students have shown a history of failure to meet expectations/or when learning “flat lines” due to lack of challenge.



# Guiding Principles of RtI

## 2. Use scientific, research-based instruction

- Curriculum and instructional approaches must have a high probability of success for most students.
- Use instructional time efficiently and effectively.



# Guiding Principles of Rtl

## 3. Use instructionally relevant assessments

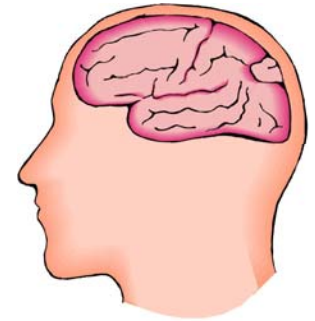
- Reliable and valid
- Multiple purposes
  - **Screening-** Collecting data for the purpose of **identifying low and high performing students at-risk** for not having their needs met
  - **Diagnostic-** Gathering information from multiple sources to determine **why students are not benefiting from instruction**
  - **Formative-** **Frequent, ongoing collection of information** including both formal and informal data to guide instruction



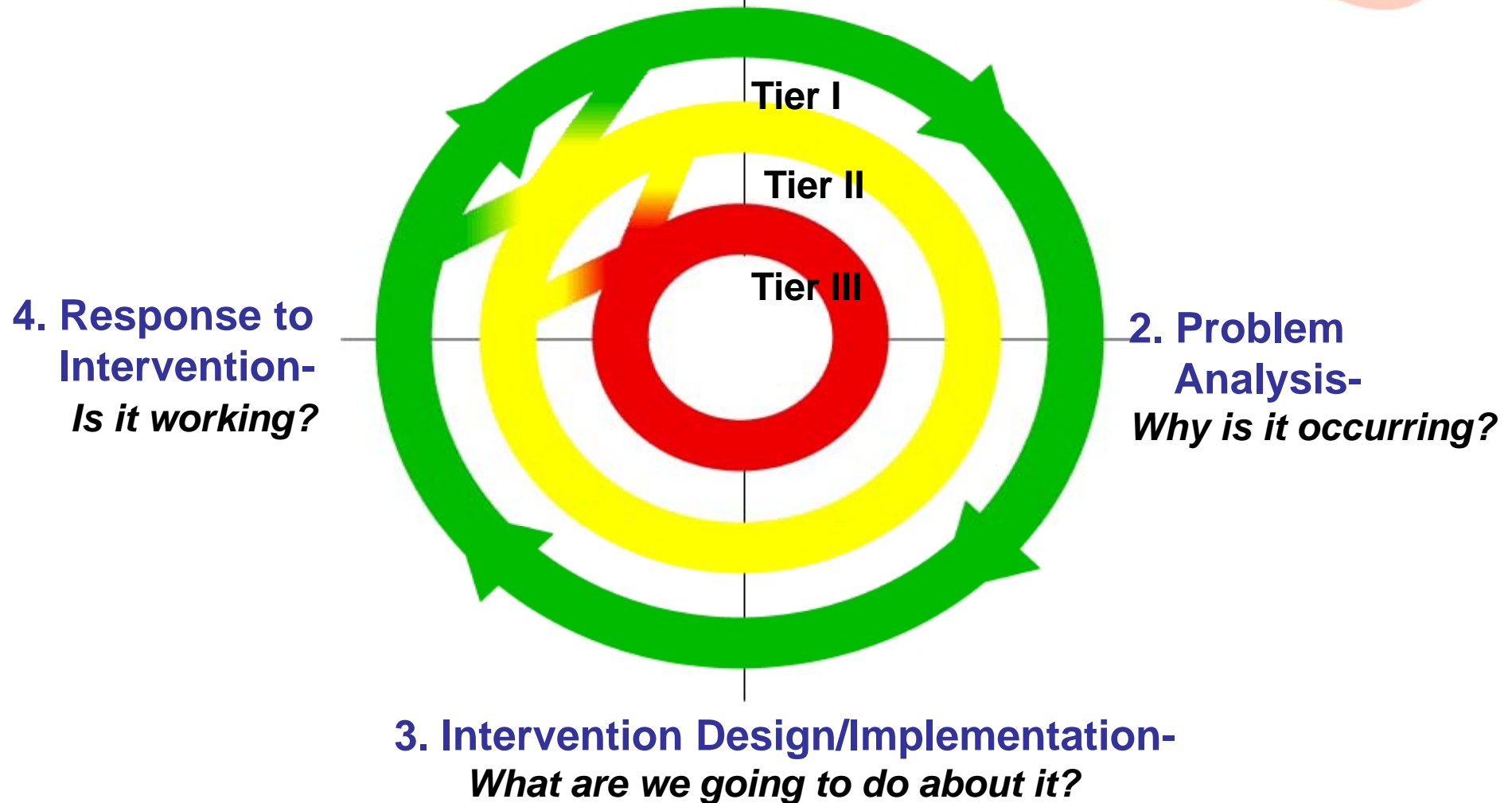
# Guiding Principles of Rtl

4. Use a problem-solving method to make decisions based on a continuum of students needs
  - Provides strong core curriculum, instruction, assessment (core cycle)
  - Provides increasing levels of support based on intensity of student needs.

# Problem Solving Framework



**1. Problem Identification- *What's the problem?***





# Guiding Principles of Rtl

## 5. Data are used to guide instructional decisions

- To match curriculum and instruction to assessment data
- To allocate resources
- To drive professional development decisions



# Guiding Principles of RtI

## 6. Quality professional development supports effective instruction for all students.

- Provide ongoing training and support to assimilate new knowledge and skills
- Anticipate and be willing to meet the newly emerging needs based on student performance



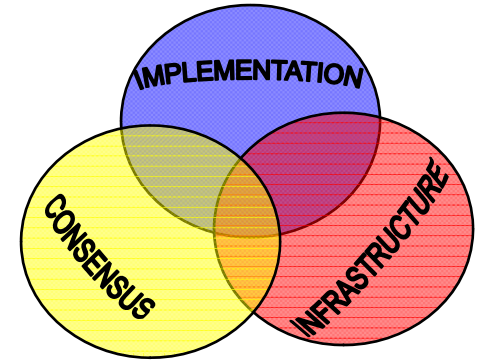
# Guiding Principles of Rtl

## 7. Leadership is vital

- Strong administrative support to ensure commitment and resources
- Strong teacher support to share in the common goal of improving instruction
- Building leadership team to build internal capacity and sustainability over time



# Three Phases



- **Consensus:**
  - Building consensus for engaging in Rtl
- **Infrastructure**
  - Schools appoint a leadership team.
  - Teams attend training to build skills and walk through the guiding questions.
- **Implementation**
  - Student supports are implemented, evaluated, and adjusted.

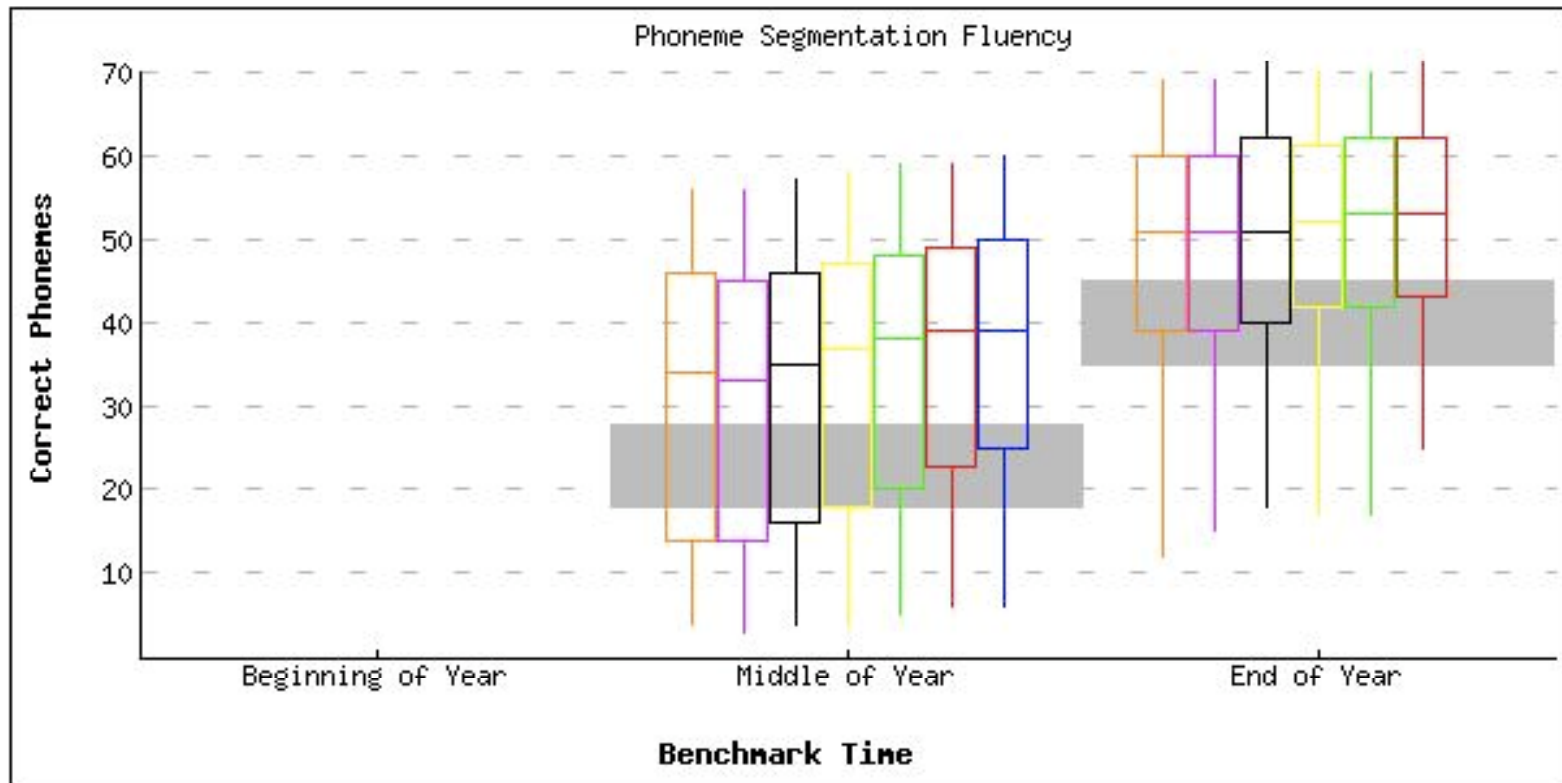


# Framework Questions for RtI

1. Is our core cycle sufficient?
2. If the core is not sufficient, why not?
3. How will needs identified in core be addressed?
4. How will the sufficiency and effectiveness of the core cycle be monitored over time?
5. Have improvements to the core been effective?
6. For which students is the core cycle sufficient and not sufficient, and why?
7. What specific supplemental and intensive instruction/curriculum is needed?
8. How will specific supplemental and intensive cycles be implemented?
9. How will the effectiveness of supplemental and intensive cycles be monitored?
10. Which students need to move to a different cycle?

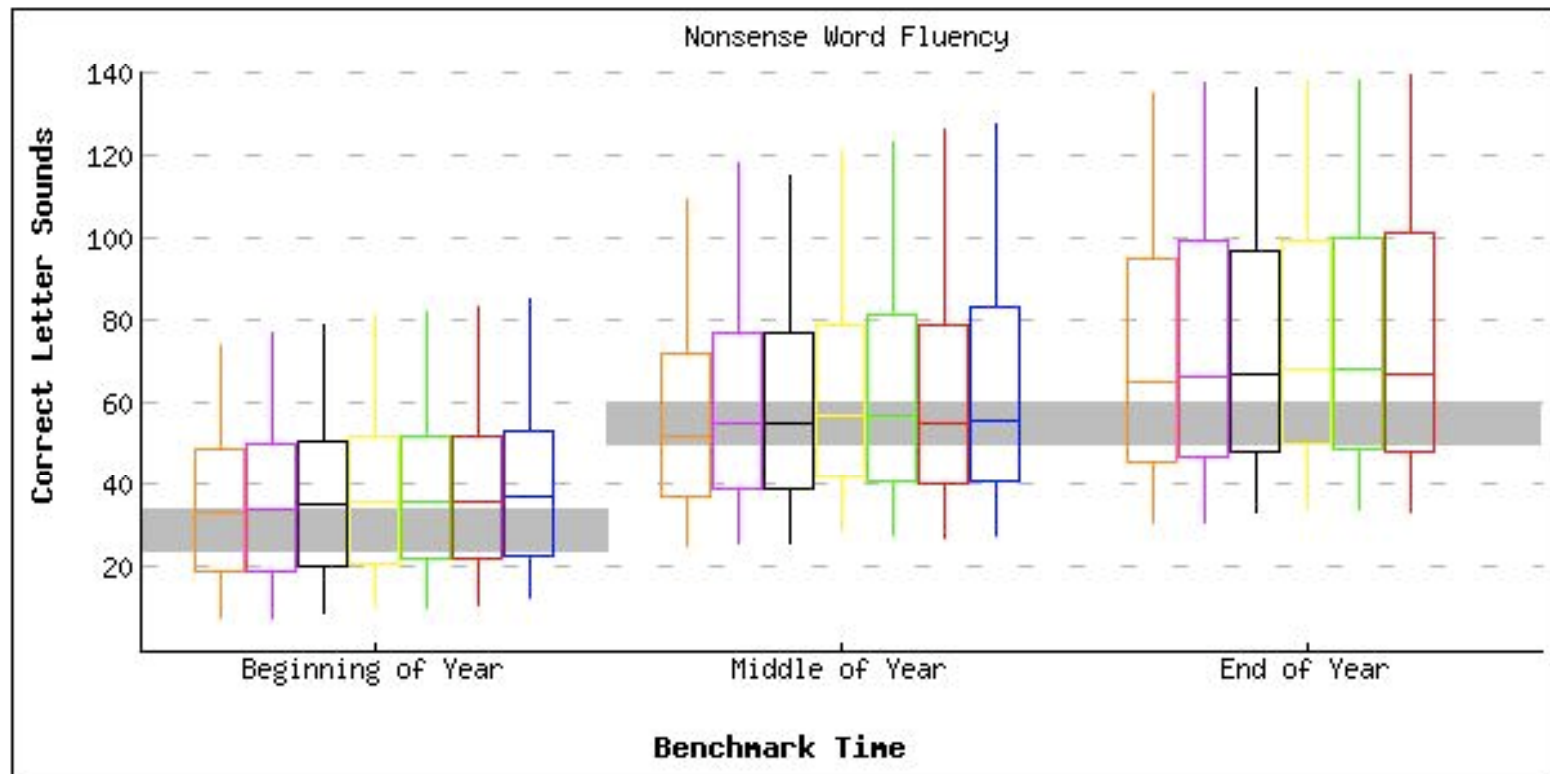


# Heartland Kindergarten PSF



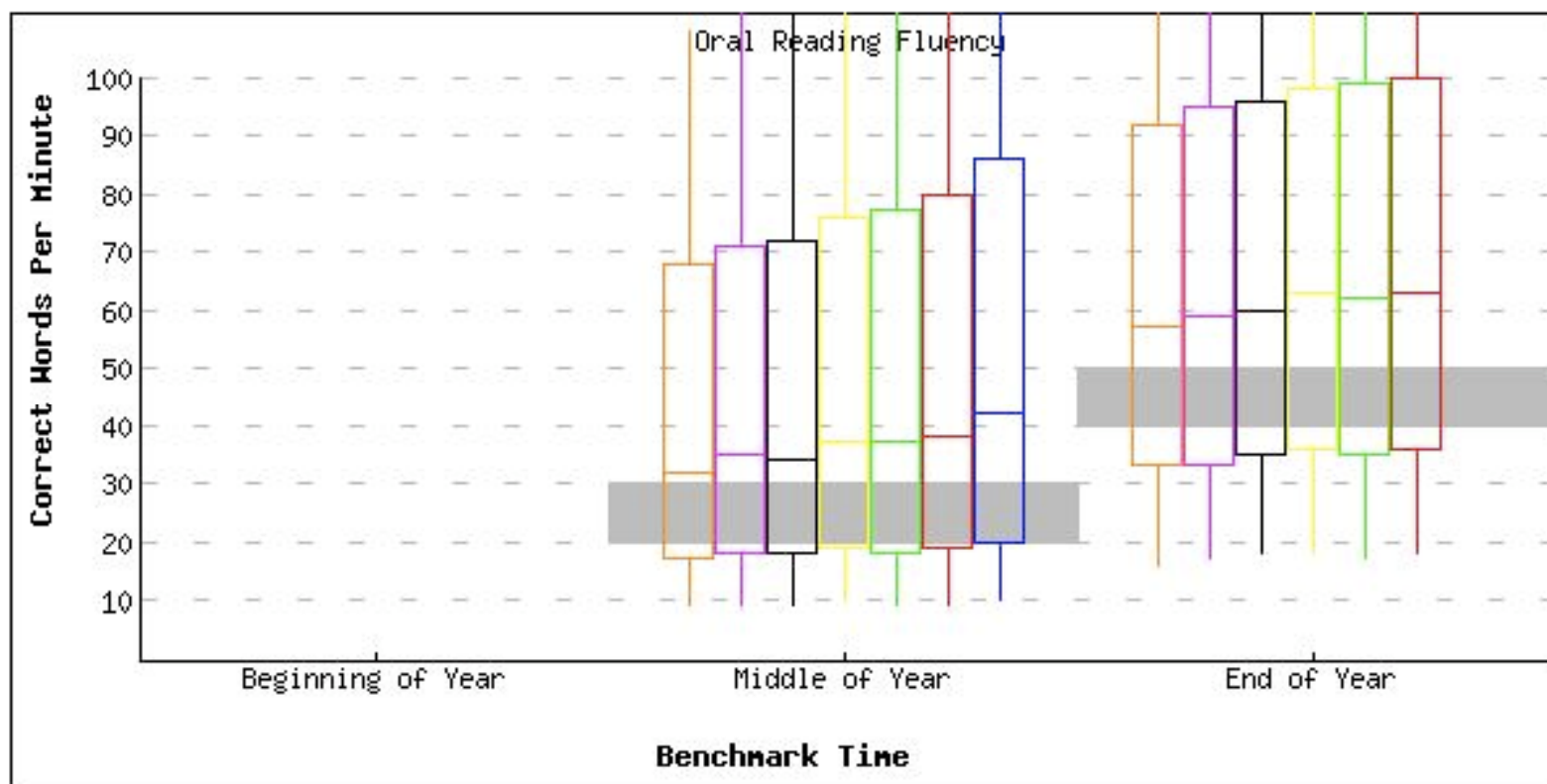


# Heartland Grade 1 NWF



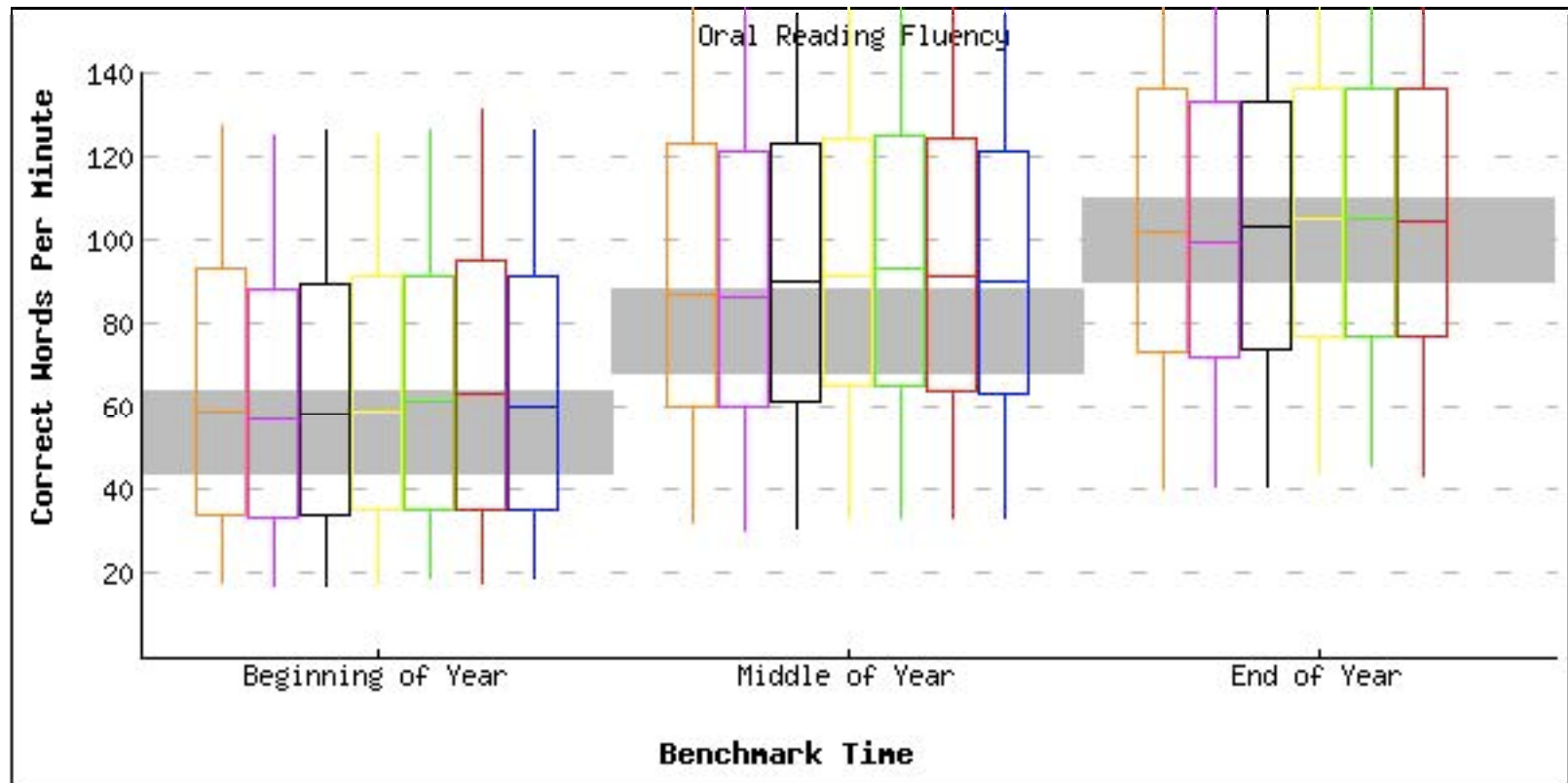


# Heartland Grade 1 ORF



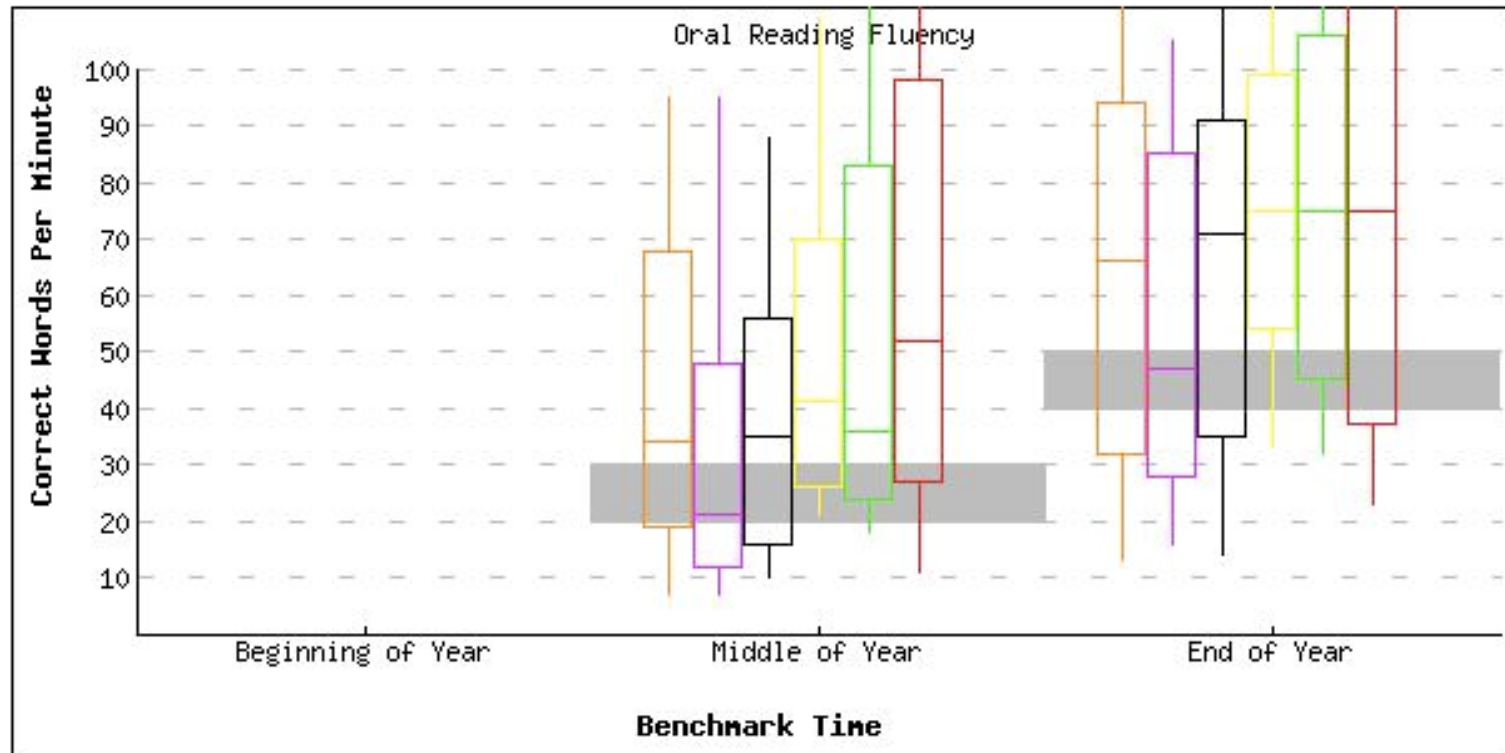


# Heartland Grade 2 ORF



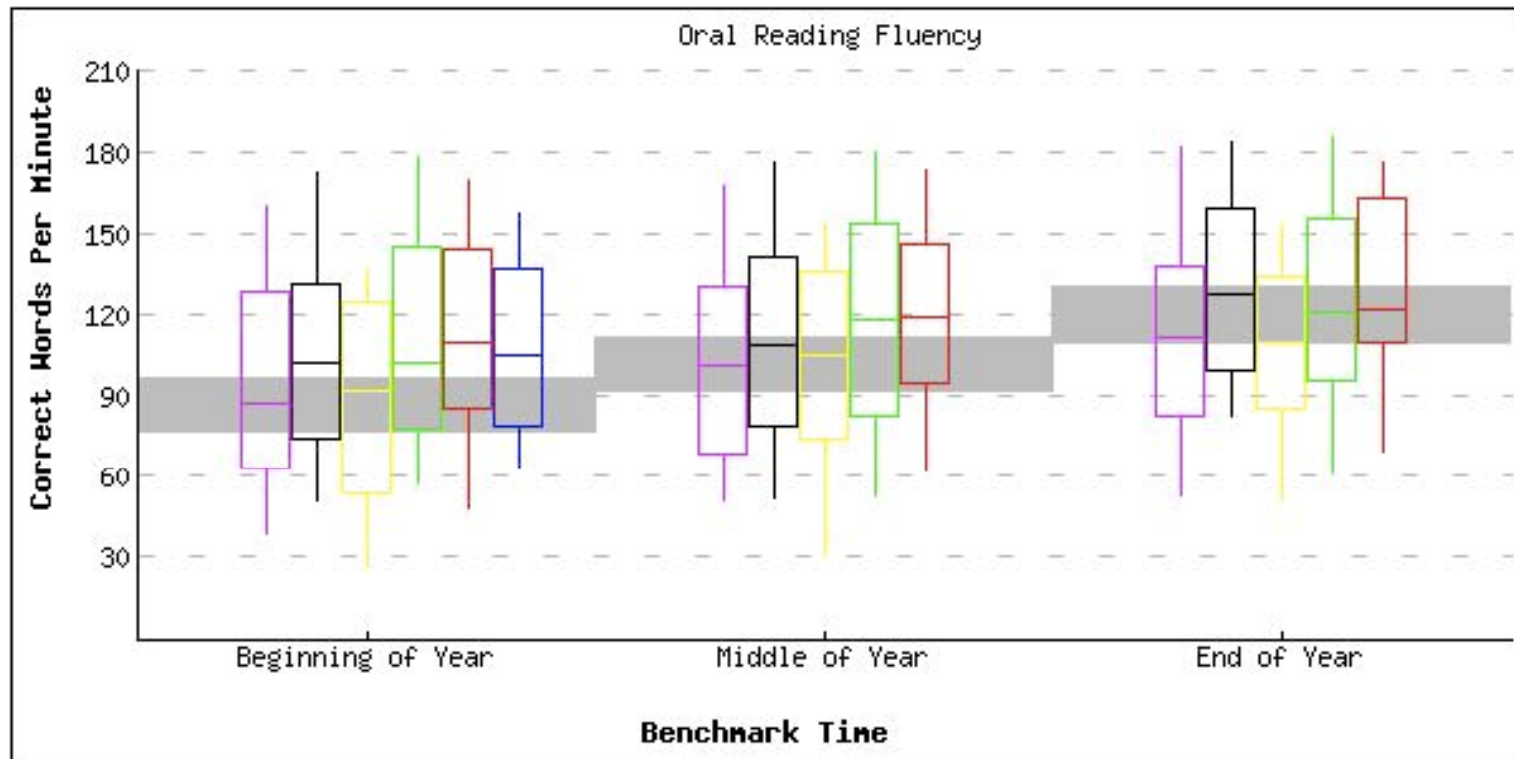


# School A: Grade 1 ORF



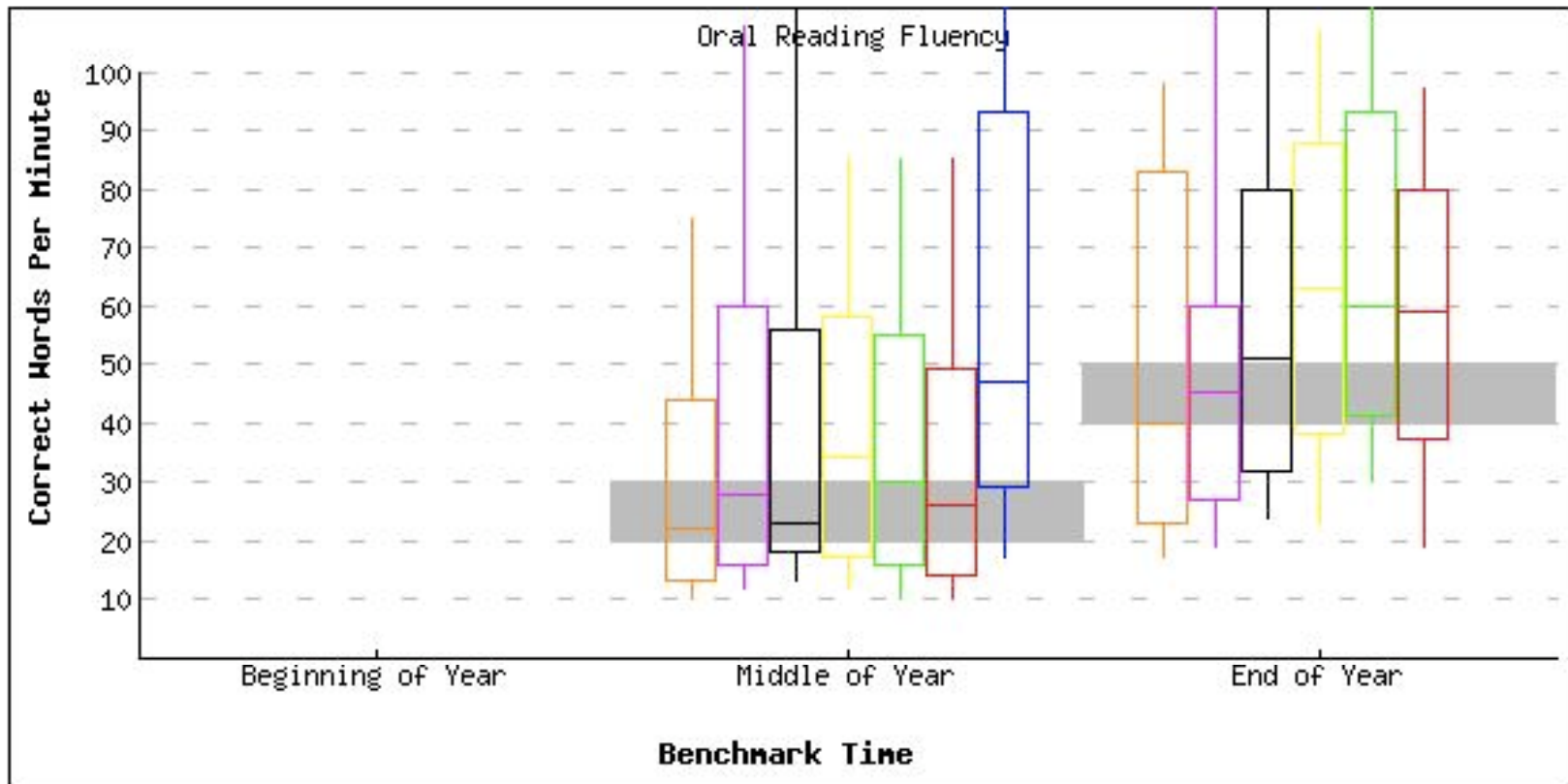


# School A: Grade 3 ORF



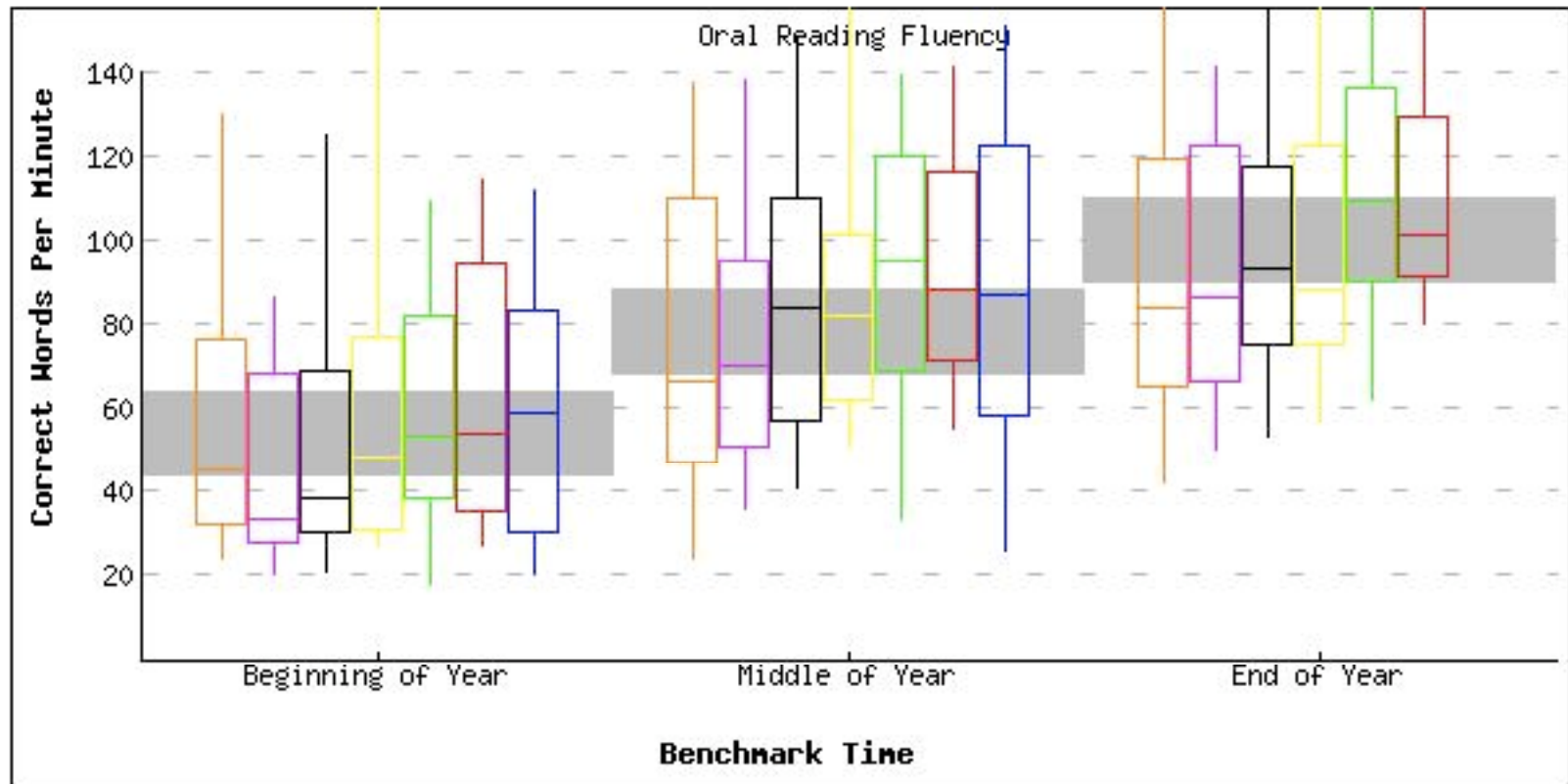


# School B: Grade 1 ORF





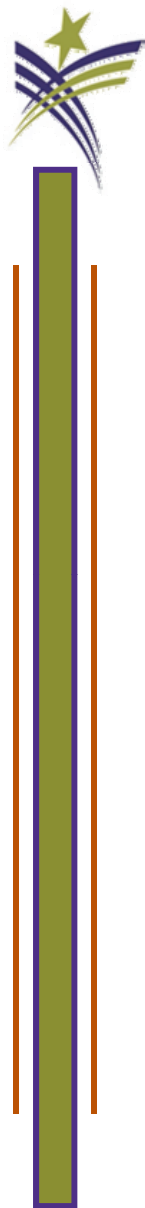
# School B: Grade 2 ORF





# Lessons Learned

- Emphasize purpose and procedures around building consensus to engage in the process.
- More emphasis needed on core
- Teachers need more content knowledge to make good decisions
- Sustaining **data-based decision making** is a challenge
  - Need to plan for the decisions that need to be made
    - What decisions need to be made? Who? When? How



# Data-Based Decision Making: Why is sustainability difficult?

- We know the guiding principle of using data to make decisions. We provide training on:
  - Assessment basics
  - Progress monitoring
  - Using DIBELS reports and websites
- However, additional guidance must be provided regarding how to build a data-based decision making infrastructure



# Levels of Decision Making

- **District:**
  - Allocate resources across district
  - Common needs for curriculum, professional development, assessment.
- **School:**
  - Examine the needs of all students, and find groups of students who need more support.
- **Individual Students:**
  - Helping individual students who are “falling out” of group interventions.



# Planning Tools

- This year we are going to guide schools to do more planning around sustaining the 10 decisions.
- We hope that by having leadership teams do more planning about when and how decisions should be made the work is more likely to become part of the school infrastructure.



# Data Days: Successes and Missteps

## Successes!

- Agenda and meeting outcomes are known
- Building leadership is present
- Resource staff are included
- Person designated as “bearer of data”
- Planned consistently
- Focus remains on problem solving and actions for CIA

## Missteps

- Unclear outcomes, often leads to “admiring the problem” rather than action
- Building leader absent
- Resource staff and/or students excluded
- Data is missing
- Inconsistent scheduling of data days
- Focus on evaluation of teachers, instruction, programs, etc.



# Data-Based Decision Making: Individual Students

- Repurpose the building or student assistance team
  - Advantages: lots of ideas, fewer staff need to be skilled in problem solving
  - Disadvantages: pre-referral team, too many kids
- Grade level teams take on responsibility
  - Advantages: deeper knowledge of students, grade level standards and benchmarks, and available resources
  - Disadvantages: must have at least one person per grade level skilled in problem solving, data interpretation, and CIA



# Individual Student Problem Solving: Successes and Missteps

## Successes!

- Focus remains on problem solving and actions for CIA
- Building leadership is present or “in the loop”
- Clear intervention plan and progress monitoring data is collected and reviewed consistently
- Teachers have extensive content knowledge and a variety of tools for assessment and instruction
- Teachers know when and what types of diagnostic assessment information to collect

## Missteps

- Focus shifts to entitlement
- Building leader absent or not included
- No plan for review of progress monitoring data in between school-wide data days
- Teachers lack content knowledge about what to teach or how to change instruction when they need to
- Too many kids being sent through individual problem solving rather grouping when possible



## Contact Information

- Kristin Orton, Ph.D.  
[Korton@aea11.k12.ia.us](mailto:Korton@aea11.k12.ia.us)  
515-270-9030
- Martha Condon, Ed.S.  
[Mcondon@aea11.k12.ia.us](mailto:Mcondon@aea11.k12.ia.us)  
515-289-4575