LOOKING FORWARD

The Critical Nature of Implementation for Literacy Success

What happens after adoption

Policy becomes student experience through implementation.

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DEDICATION

For my children — then and now.

THEN

NOW

Based on What?

Classroom: Juvenile Justice (South Carolina)
Administrator: K-12 Children's Home (orphanage in South Carolina)
Group Home: Counselor, Tutor, Administrator (South Carolina)

Classroom: English (Oakland) District teacher of the year
Classroom: Bilingual (Oakland) District co-teacher of the year
Administrator: Elementary (Oakland) Principal Leadership Award
NAACP Education Committee (CA State and Local)
Administrator: New Leaders (Western Region)
Community Leadership: NAACP, NABSE (Oakland), Coach, Mentor, etc.
Parent of Dyslexic Child

Studying Examples of Success:

Extraordinary Districts
Bluegrass Institute
Urban Excellence Framework
Masters in Clinical-Community Psychology

Principal

Teacher

[School Transformation Court Article]

[Teaching Articles]

[Court Testimony]

The question has changed.

Not: “Do we have the things?”

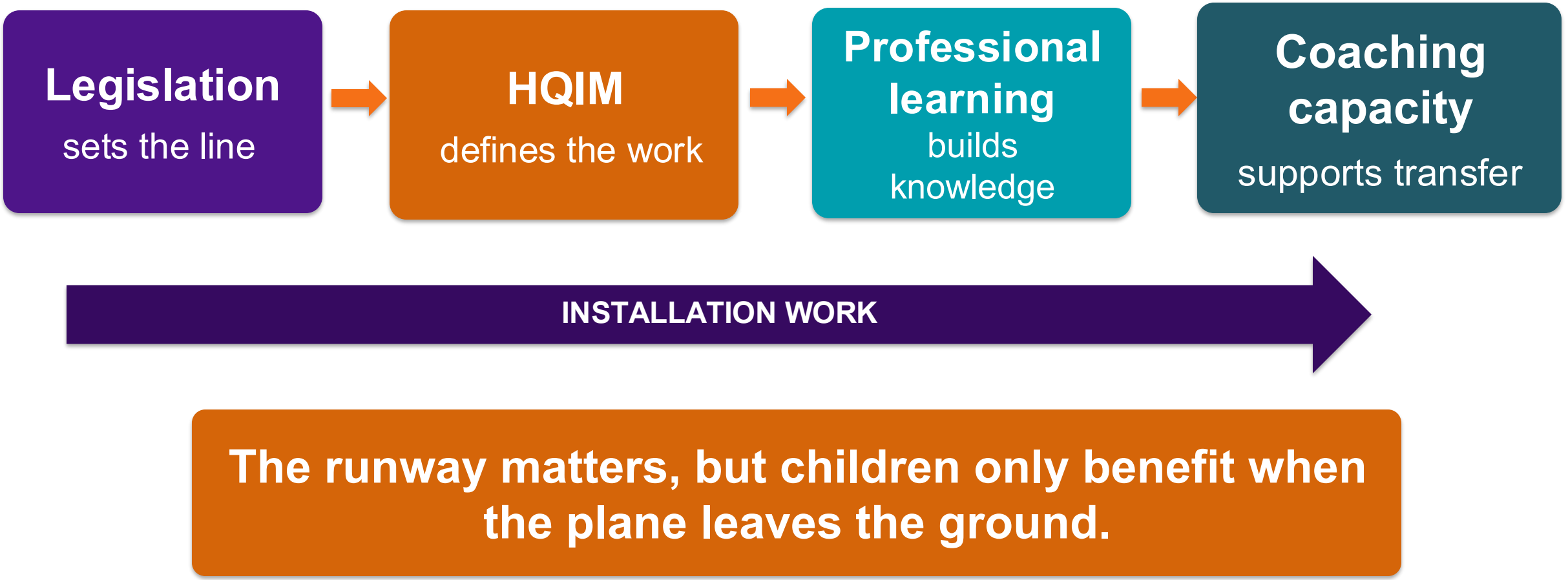
Now: “Do students experience the things working together every day?”

Legislation, materials, professional learning, coaching, and assessment only matter when children experience them working together.

THE MOMENT

Ohio has built the runway.

The next chapter is quality implementation.



The runway matters, but children only benefit when the plane leaves the ground.

THIS HOUR

Five levers you can pull.

Concrete moves for the work after adoption - built for real classrooms and real schedules.

1. Make the work doable

Choose materials and routines that fit the actual preparation time teachers have.

2. Protect internalization

Give adults time to study, rehearse, plan, teach, and receive feedback.

3. Train the principal

Equip site leaders to protect time, coach the look-fors, and keep the work coherent.

4. Data decisions

Screen, diagnose, match support, monitor progress, and adjust quickly.

5. Build for turnover

Use playbooks, onboarding, routines, and data norms so the work survives change.

The goal is not a better-looking initiative. The goal is a better student experience.

CHAMPIONS' SECRET WEAPON:
INTERNALIZATION & PREPARATION

TOM BRADY ON PREPARATION AS HIS SECRET WEAPON

STEP 1
PREPARATION

STUDY, PRACTICE, REPETITION
Mastering the fundamentals and game plan.

STEP 2
INTERNALIZATION

DEEP UNDERSTANDING
The plan becomes instinct, muscle memory, and second nature.

STEP 3
IN THE MOMENT

INSTANT REACTION, ADAPTATION, EXECUTION
Reacting instinctively to the defense and changing conditions.

KEY BENEFITS

- **FASTER DECISION-MAKING**
- **INSTINCTIVE REACTIONS & ADAPTATION**
- **CONSISTENT EXECUTION UNDER PRESSURE**

> *"Internalization unleashes responsiveness and an ability to adapt, in the moment."*

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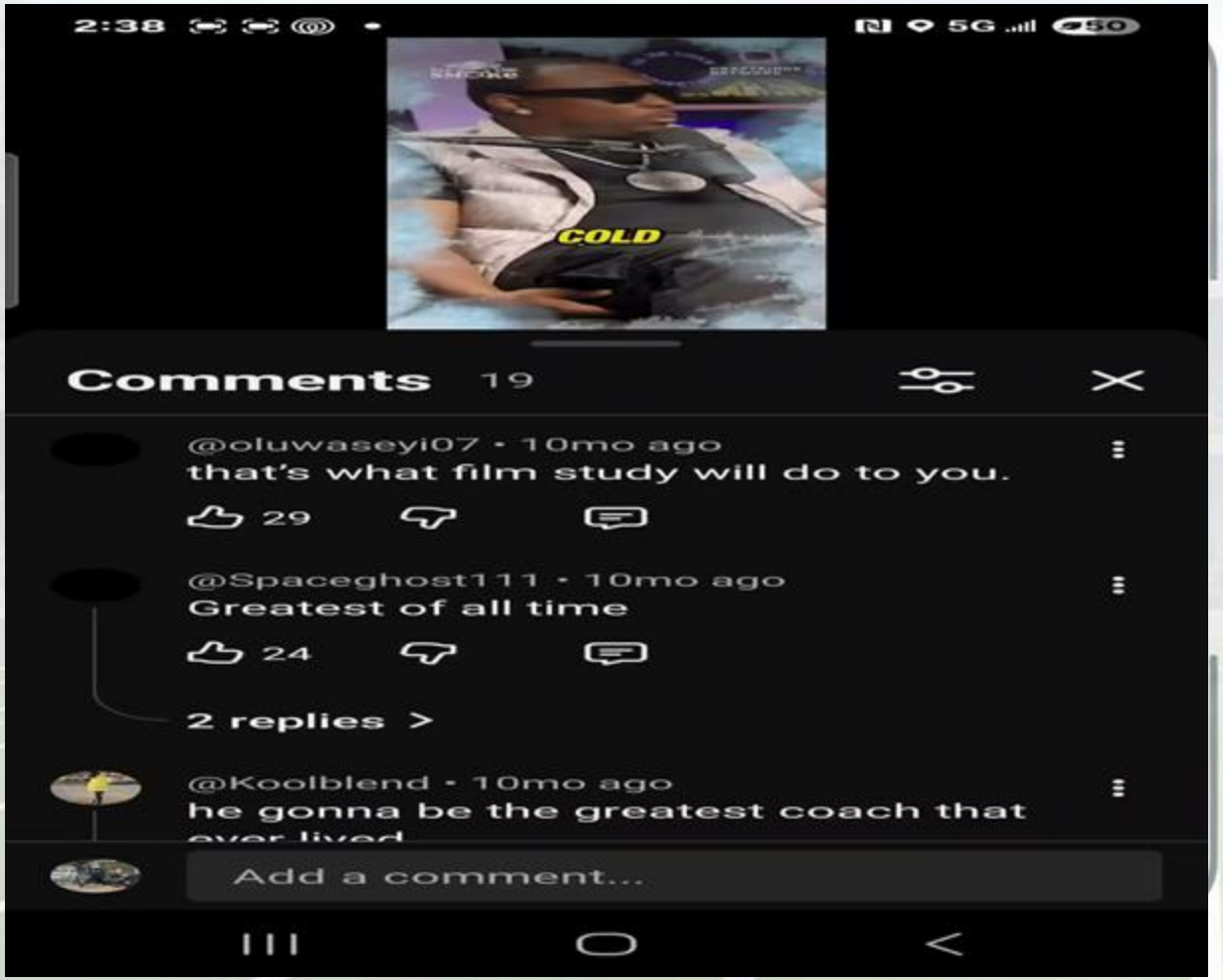

LeSean "Shady" McCoy, RB

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TOM BRADY IS CHASING "GREATNESS"

MJ's 6 Championships is the data.

MJ'S 6 RINGS

YOUR LITERACY GOAL?

WHAT ARE YOU CHASING?

Define your "6 Championships" for Literacy Improvement.

Chasing Greatness in Literacy Outcomes

Elements of the Urban Excellence Framework

IMPACT & GOAL: STUDENT SUCCESS

- Equip Education Leaders
- Strengthen Teaching
- Accelerate Learning
- Success in America's highest-need schools

FOUNDATION

Transformational Leadership Framework™ (TLF™)

FIVE CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL PRACTICES

1. Learning and Teaching

2. Culture

3. Aligned Staff

4. Operations and Systems

5. Personal Leadership

Activity is not the same as implementation.

The measure is what children and teachers experience on Thursday morning.

Adoption activity

Courses completed
Materials purchased
Binders and slide decks
New calendars and pacing guides
A district says “we rolled it out”

Student experience

Coherent daily lessons
Better prepared teachers
Accurate intervention match
Successful practice with feedback
Clear progress and less waiting

If students do not experience the change, we have installation - not implementation.

A system becomes real through a chain of support.

Student need
What skill or condition is blocking access?

School goal
Which routine protects that learning opportunity?

Teacher move
What changes in the lesson or intervention?

Principal support
What time, look-for, and feedback are protected?

Evidence
How will we know the child feels the change?

Every level should answer the same question: what move makes the work more likely to reach the child?

These conditions change daily instruction:

Usable curriculum

Proven materials that fit available planning time.

Internalization routines

Adults study, rehearse, plan, teach, observe, and adjust.

Principal leadership

Site leaders protect time and keep the work coherent.

Coaching

Short feedback cycles transfer learning into practice.

Assessment

Screen → diagnose → match → monitor.

Implementation is not “one more task”. It is the system that lets the right tasks repeat.

Materials and Preparation Matter

High Quality Culinary Menu: (HQCM)

The finest ingredients

Culturally Diverse

Mindful of restrictions

Goal: Inclusivity and Belonging

Everyone should feel welcome!

Materials and Preparation Matter

A Thanksgiving menu that meets the needs of all eaters.
Mindful of dietary restrictions.
Halal and Kosher, Peanut allergies, gluten, shellfish allergies

Mulled Wine
Harvest Caesar Salad
Black eyed-peas
Gumbo: sausage, chicken, shrimp
Caramelized Brussel Sprouts
Arroz rojo
Stuffing
Cornbread
Dressing
Potato Skins
Cranberry Brie Pull-Apart Bread

Collard greens (farmers market)
Cranberry Bacon Green Beans
Walnut Cheese Log
Sweet Potato Pie
Macaroni and Cheese
Candied Yams
Horchata
Banana Nut bread (gluten free)

Materials and Preparation Matter

I had 90 minutes to prepare and four hours to cook it. I worked really hard and did my best. It's the joy of food and family that matters.

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Materials and Preparation Matter

Ceiling of aspiration

A beautiful curriculum on paper still fails if the planning load is too high for the actual schedule teachers live in.

Floor of implementation

Focus on the floor expectation more than the ceiling of aspiration.

PLANNING TIME IS AN IMPLEMENTATION CONSTRAINT.

Choose materials that can actually be prepared and delivered well.

Ceiling of aspiration

A beautiful curriculum on paper still fails if the planning load is too high for the actual week teachers live in.

Look at lesson complexity, annotation demands, novice-friendliness, grouping, and scheduling fit.

Floor of implementation

Focus on the floor expectation more than the ceiling of aspiration.

Every child will receive X, every day, because every teacher can prepare it within the time the system provides.

Hope is not a strategy. Fit the work to the human conditions of the job.

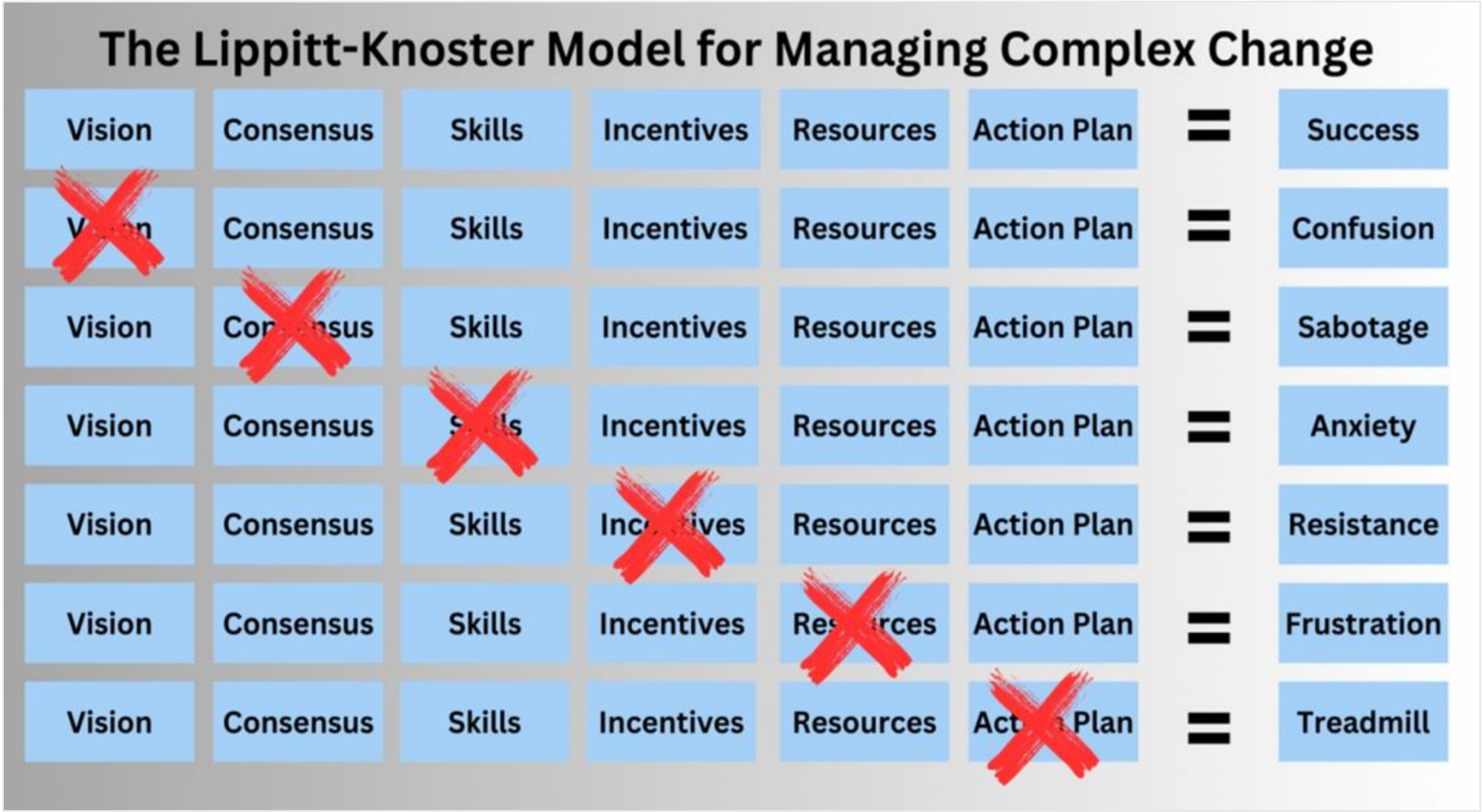
Teachers are not robots.

Hope is not a strategy

We hope teachers have extra time.
We hope experience fills the gaps.
We hope home stress never spills into planning.
We hope students can wait while the system improves.

That is not implementation.
That is a virtue signal about our intentions.

Missing inputs create predictable symptoms



Routines help us act on evidence, not instinct.

Learner's bias is real.

Many adults learned to read fairly easily and may underestimate how much structure many students need.

Lesson routine

A repeatable architecture protects quality.

Coaching routine

Feedback becomes action.

Data routine

Teams use the same language.

Intervention routine

Decision rules guide placement.

Preference, fatigue, and memory pull us back. Routines keep the promise moving.

Invest in the principal.

The principal makes implementation local.

What the principal protects:

Preparation time and master schedule
Look-fors for strong instruction
Tight data conversations
Coaching and follow-up
The school from distraction
Coherence when other priorities compete

Train your principals. Site leadership is the local translator of the strategy.

Takeaways

*Technical solutions are necessary but insufficient

Blueprint
RoadMap
Framework
Strategic Plan

<

Leadership
Consistency
Diligence

INTERNALIZATION IS THE HINGE

Course completion becomes classroom change through routine transfer.

Learn

Know the lesson purpose and the non-negotiable learning opportunity.

See

Study a model lesson or annotated exemplar.

Rehearse

Practice the adult move before live instruction.

Plan

Prepare examples, checks, and likely errors.

Teach

Deliver the lesson and watch student response.

Adjust

Use evidence to improve the next attempt.

Knowledge becomes practice through rehearsal, feedback, coaching, and protected routines.

Short cycles can move practice even when time is limited.

Clarify the move

What exactly are we trying to improve?

Model or observe

Show it or look at it together.

Rehearse + plan

Practice, then plan for the next real lesson.

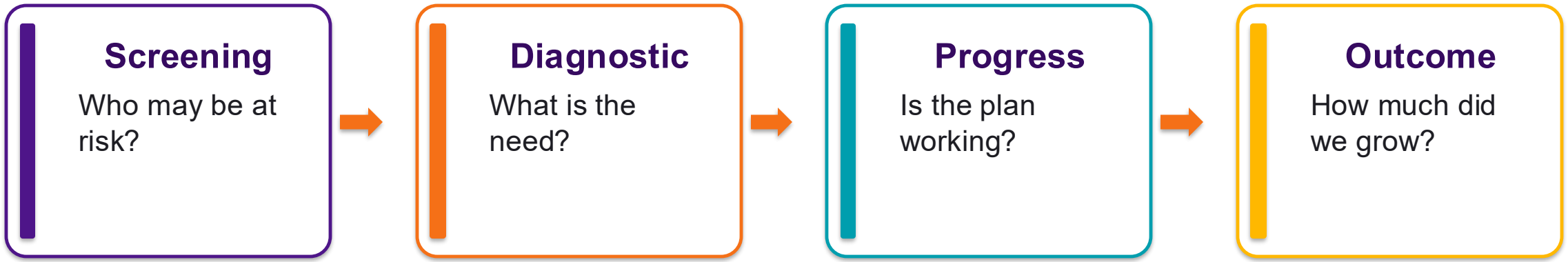
Follow up

Return quickly with feedback and the next step.

Coaching is not a perk. It is the mechanism of transfer.

ASSESSMENT HAS JOBS.

Do not ask one tool to do another tool's job.



Confusing the job of the data leads to confusing decisions for students.

MATCH INTERVENTION TO THE BLOCKING SKILL.

Right program. Right placement. Right intensity.

Blocking skill

phonemic awareness
phonics / word recognition
fluency
language comprehension
writing / expression

Response

match the intervention
confirm frequency and dosage
monitor the exact target
adjust when progress is not enough

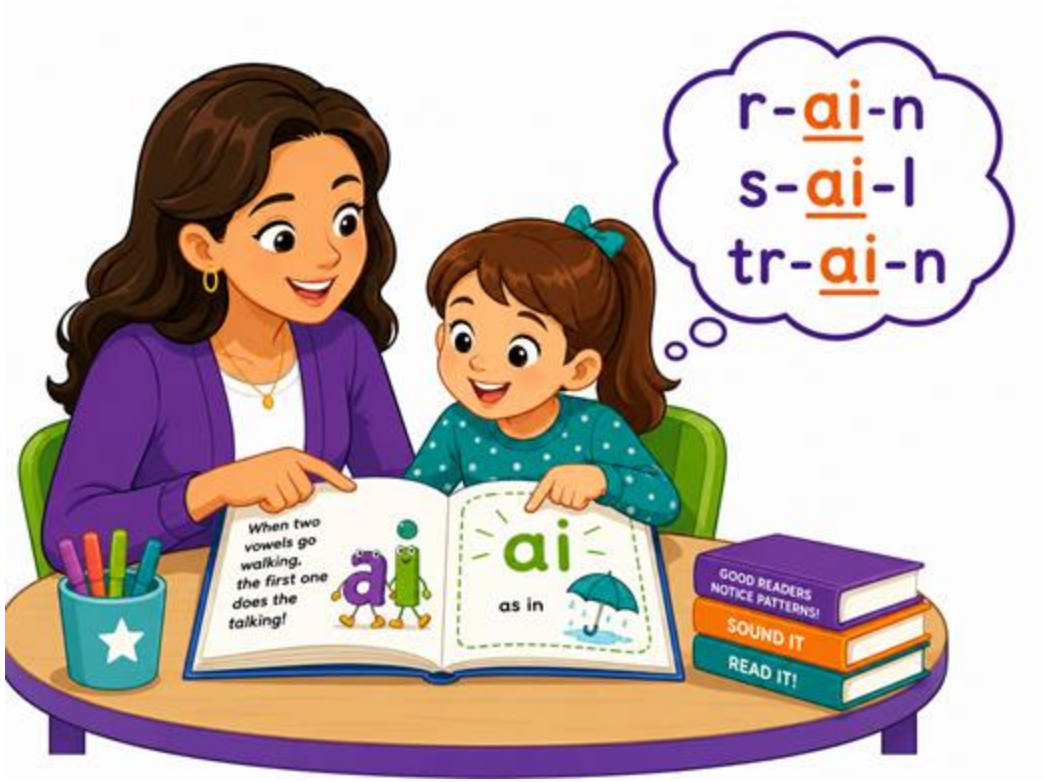
Students need help now

Safety-net supports can catch students while the larger system recalibrates. Current students cannot wait.

Extra time on the wrong target is not equity.

IN THE UPPER GRADES, MISPLACEMENT HIDES IN PLAIN SIGHT.

Students may need complex ideas and precise skill rebuilding at the same time.



Use both lenses

Access to complex text matters. So does explicit rebuilding of the precise skill that is blocking success.

Doable move

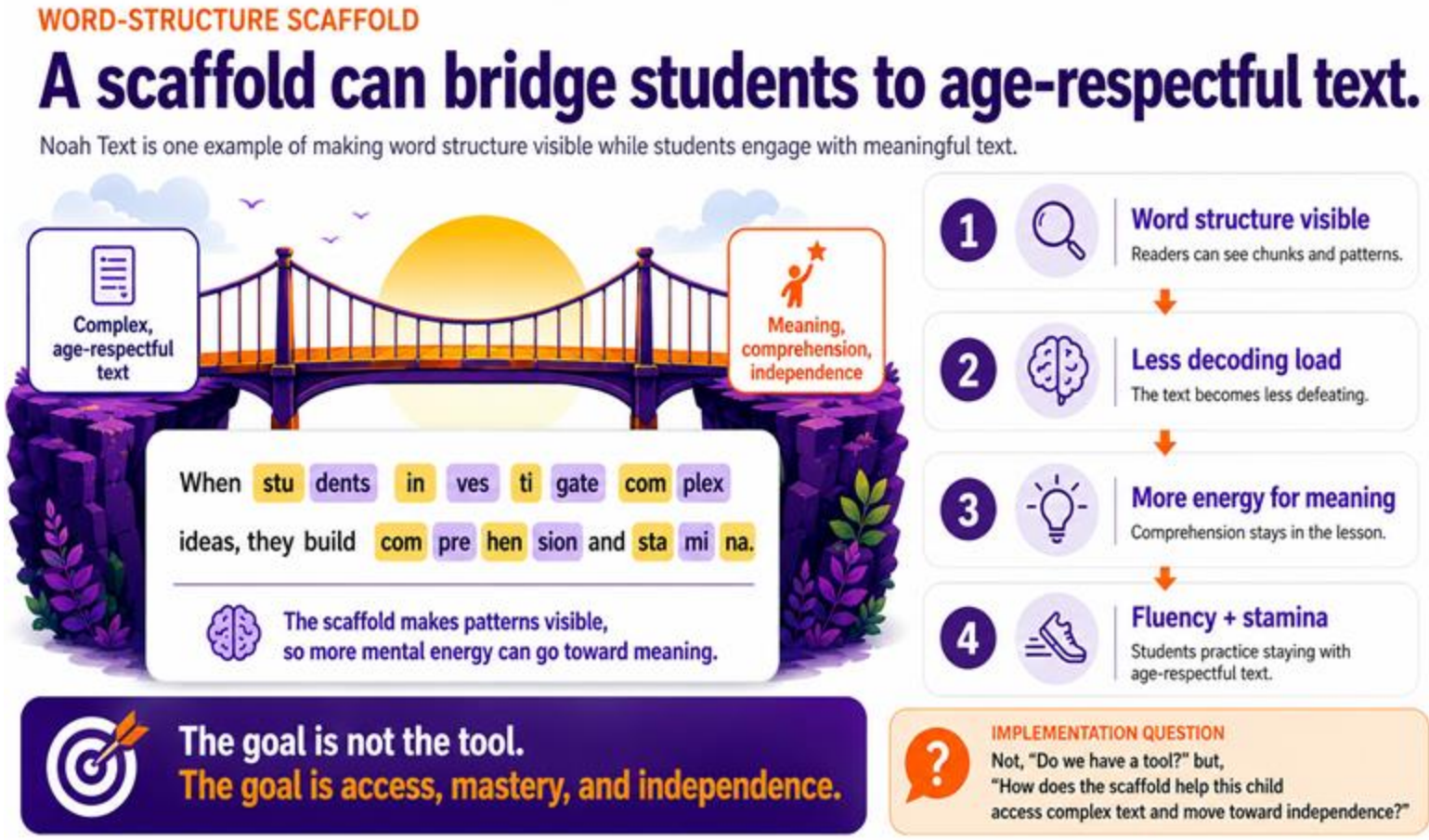
Protect grade-level meaning while using targeted intervention, tutoring, or embedded scaffolds.

Students need age-respectful text and support strong enough for mastery.

Use scaffolds that stay standing.

Embedded supports can reduce decoding load without lowering the text.

The point is access, mastery, and independence.



Who does Noah Text help?

Scaffolds in **stu**dent hands.

Access to **com**plex text.

Under**line** long **vow**els sounds.

Breaking words **in**to **syl**la**bles**.

Link to **web**site
More **in**fo

- Developing and striving readers
- Resistant struggling readers
- Students with dyslexia
- Multilingual learners
- Adult dyslexic readers
- Adult education students
- Correctional education students

Parents are partners in the feedback loop.

Families see what reports may miss.

fatigue
avoidance
confusion
guessing
confidence
what practice feels like at home
whether hope is growing or shrinking

Treat observations as evidence, not irritation.

DURABILITY BEATS HEROICS.

A system that depends on heroic individuals will collapse under turnover.

Onboarding

New people learn core routines quickly.

Playbooks

Clear moves, examples, and decision rules.

Model lessons

What good looks and sounds like.

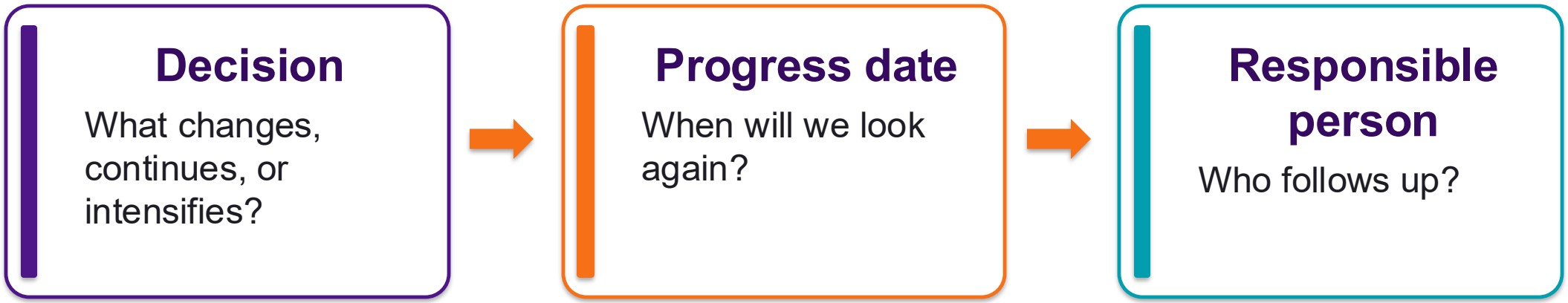
Data routines

Meetings end with decisions.

Organizational memory is a literacy strategy.

DATA MEETINGS END WITH DECISIONS.

A meeting without a decision is a status update.



The student should not wait because adults left the meeting unclear.

Districts can calibrate the teacher pipeline.

Use audits + hiring signals to align preparation with the law and reading research.

Two calibration points

Ohio higher-ed audit

NCTQ findings released June 9

District leverage

Hiring and placements sends clear signal

Reject unaligned trainees: pre-service

(aligned to: law + research consensus)

Collective action

Coordinate expectations across districts

One message: alignment matters for students and teachers

Make the plan visible enough to manage.

30 days

Audit curriculum fit
Protect planning time
Train principals on look-fors
Find/build assessments that map to targets

60 days

Run coaching cycles
Data-meeting routines
Train: Observation+ Feedback

Observation expectations

Choose a low-lift safety-net with evidence of success

90 days

Review student experience
Adjust what's not sticking
Capture routines in a playbook

IN THE NEXT 10 SCHOOL DAYS…

Choose the move that belongs to your role.

Teacher

Name one routine you will protect.

Principal

Protect prep time and one coaching look-for.

District

Check curriculum fit and tighten one data routine.

State / support org

Strengthen principal training and the implementation safety net.

Implementation is how we keep our promise. Every child. Every classroom. Every day the system can get better.

USEFUL PLACES TO GO NEXT.

Do not admire the problem. Study examples, routines, and results.

Extraordinary Districts Podcast

Examples of systems thinking and district leadership.

Seaford Debrief

A concrete look at literacy implementation decisions and lessons.

Fulcrum Literacy / Literacy Now, Together

Tools, conversations, and field-facing implementation insight.

Reading Universe + AIM Pathways

Accessible, usable, free support for evidence-based instruction.

Proven safety net (example: Ignite Reading)

High-dosage tutoring that catches students while systems recalibrate.

Can the child feel the system getting better?

More accurate instruction.
More successful practice.
More confidence. Less waiting.

Implementation is how we keep our promise.