Adaptive Leadership: Supporting Innovation in Adversity

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Land Acknowledgement

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I acknowledge the pain and trauma of these past months and over 400 years of racism in the United States.

I stand with our communities of color, especially those who identify as and/or are categorized as Black or African-American. I also acknowledge the intersectionality of those who identify both as persons of color and individuals with disabilities.

I commit to centering my work to dismantle systemic racism and disrupt ableist structures.
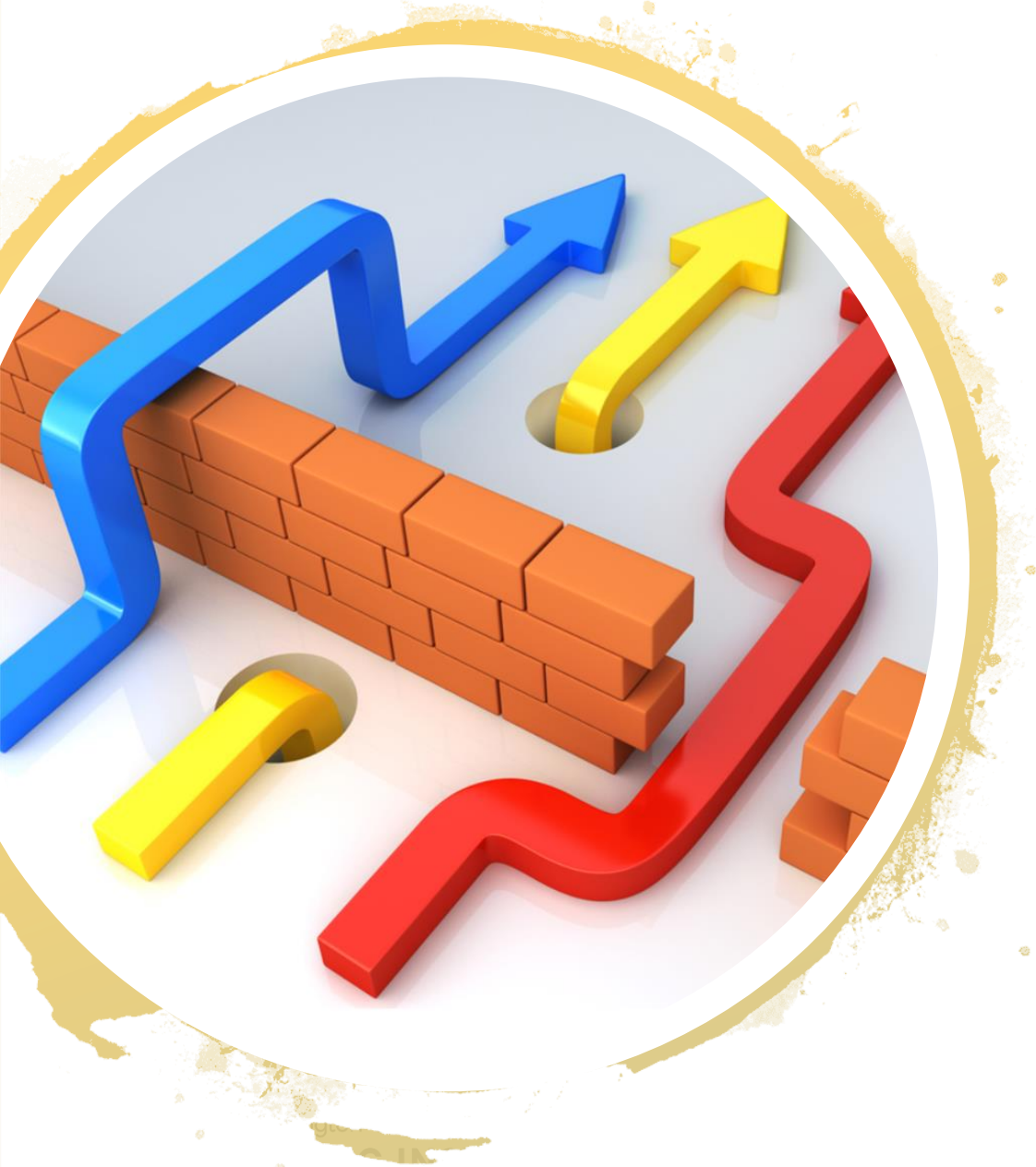
Today's Topics

- ✓ Equity & Context
- ✓ Adaptive Leadership
- ✓ Spring 2020
- ✓ Lessons Learned
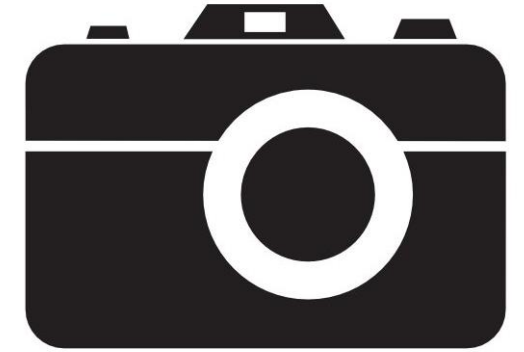- ✓ Resources & Links
- ✓ Rediscovering Our Rhythm

The Equity Imperative

Barriers to equity for students with disabilities:

➢ Low expectations

➢ Lack of access and opportunity to core instruction from content experts

➢ School schedules contribute to removals from core instruction in general education

➢ Teacher and related service shortages

➢ Staffing models that encourage segregation

➢ Disproportionate discipline

➢ Training needs for school staff & educators who support them

Snapshot of Washington

➢ WA serves 140K students with disabilities in over 2,500 public schools, across 295 school districts.

➢ 60% of students with disabilities access general education for 80-100% of the day. *For students of color, that level of access falls 10%.*

➢ In 2019, 20% of graduates with disabilities completed a diploma pathway at grade-level standard and 70% pursued an alternative.

➢ 27% of students with disabilities are not engaged in any post-secondary activities one year after leaving school.

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Are We Trying to Use Technical Solutions to Adaptive Problems?

Pre-COVID

Student Growth

Accountability & School Improvement Plans

Compliance vs Results Driven

Traditional Seat-Time & Instructional Delivery

During COVID

Anxiety & Fear

Unpredictability

Exhaustion

Student & Workforce Safety

Access Needs

SEL & Mental Health Needs

Post-COVID

Learning Recovery

Transitions

Family/Staff Concerns

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4 A's of Adaptive Leadership

Anticipation of likely future needs, trends and options

Articulation of these needs to build collective understanding and support for action

Adaptation so that there is continuous learning and the adjustment of responses as necessary

Accountability, including maximum transparency in decision making processes and openness to challenges and feedback

Source: Ramalingam, Nabarro, Oqubuy, Carnall, and Wild (2020)

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Thinking Back to Spring 2020

➢ School facilities closed statewide in Washington in March 2020.

➢ As schools began the pivot to remote learning, services for students with disabilities arose as a barrier to providing virtual instruction.

➢ Our approach: **It's not enough to say what has to be done; we needed to provide a roadmap for *how***.

  ✓ Researched federal and state health and education guidance;

  ✓ Pulled resources from existing virtual programs and posted compilations; and

  ✓ Designed in collaboration with partners and technical assistance providers.

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5 Lessons Learned in Washington State

It isn't useful, to anyone, to simply requote the law.

Start by identifying the "guardrails" of flexibility, and then adjust/expand them as you and your colleagues learn more.

When you get stuck, go back to your "why" and reconsider opportunities from that perspective.

Success relies on partnership, at all levels and programs (SEA, LEA, families, and communities).

You don't have to get it all done the first time.

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Your Questions for Us...

Question Topic	Percent
Compliance (eval/IEP)	5.6%
Inclusion	5.6%
Learning Recovery	8.3%
Remote/Distance Learning	27.8%
Staff Supports	13.9%
Student Engagement	11.1%
Student Supports	27.8%

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Special Ed Guidance for Reopening Schools

➢ **Systems Planning Guide** – action items, timelines, partnerships, and measurement/fidelity.

➢ Resources are linked in each content area to support services and instruction across reopening models.

➢ Designed for collaboration and planning across systems – inclusionary practices are everyone's responsibility!

➢ Strategies and supports for meeting a variety of individualized student needs, including learning recovery needs.

➢ **Guidance Summary for Families** – 4-page summary for families, **translated** into additional languages.

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Excerpt: <u>Systems Planning Guide</u>

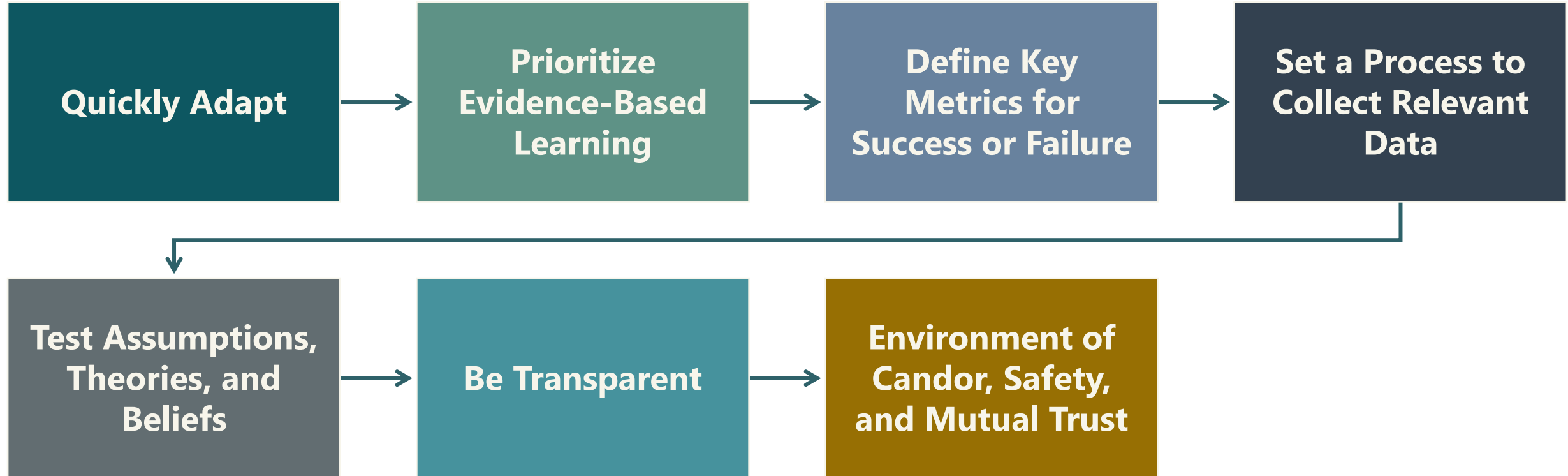| DIMENSION	ACTIONS	IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	OFFICE/PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DELIVERABLES/ MATERIALS	FIDELITY MEASURES
Supporting Individualized Student Needs					
What equipment and staff supports are available to provide specialized services across the continuum of school reopening options, while offering in-person supports to all students?					
How will you ensure ongoing communication around specialized, medical, and health supports, across the continuum of school reopening models?					
Progress Monitoring and Reporting					
How will you measure, evaluate and improve communication efforts of staff at all levels to ensure that teams are collaborating as needed to meet student and family needs?					
What internal controls will ensure ongoing progress monitoring for students with disabilities, including protocols for identifying and responding to lack of progress, across reopening models?					

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Excerpt: Guidance Summary for Families

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development

- Students must receive IEP services. The delivery of services can be online, in person, or both.

  o Many students can learn online or through a hybrid of online and in person.

  o Some students need in-person instruction to learn. Schools should provide those once it is safe to do so.

- If students are grouped for safety, schools should be careful not to further segregate students with disabilities. Placement decisions should be made individually based on student need.

- Services can be provided one-on-one, in small groups, or in a class.

  o Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) is teaching that is changed to help a student with a disability learn.

  o Related services help students benefit from special education. Supports can include language, movement, transportation, and more.

  o Supplementary aids and services help students with disabilities in general education settings. This can include support from a paraeducator, one-on-one or in groups.

- Families can help students learn at home and online. Schools should train and support families when needed.

Leading in Our New Normal (of Change)

Quickly Adapt → Prioritize Evidence-Based Learning → Define Key Metrics for Success or Failure → Set a Process to Collect Relevant Data

Test Assumptions, Theories, and Beliefs → Be Transparent → Environment of Candor, Safety, and Mutual Trust

Source: Ramalingam, Nabarro, Oqubuy, Carnall, and Wild (2020)

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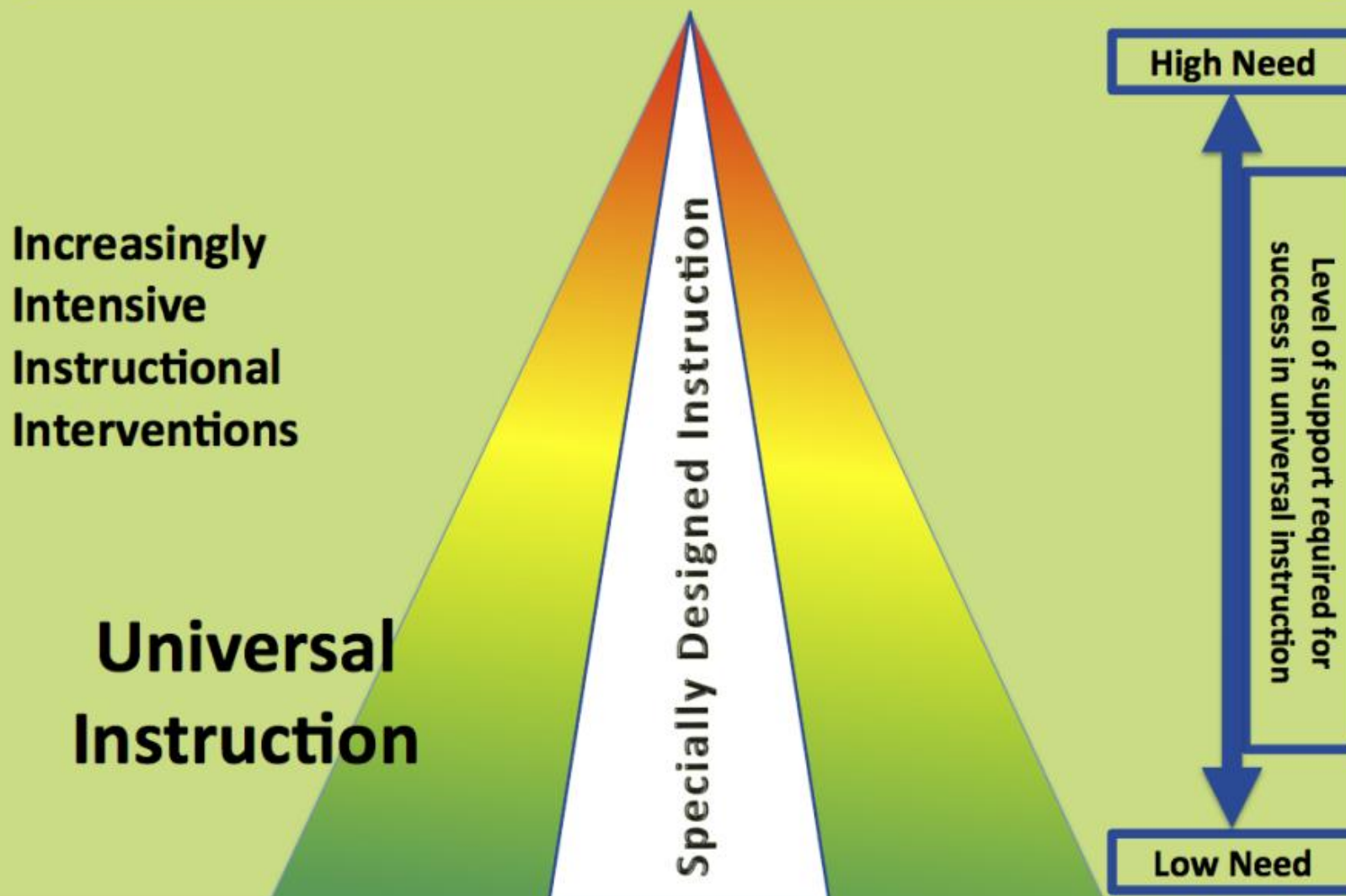PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Rediscovering Our Rhythm

➢ **Special Education COVID page**: one-stop source for resources.

➢ **Question and Answer** resource to clarify requirements; updated often; includes a summary table of changes for easier reference.

➢ Variety of modalities for self-paced and live virtual learning:

- ✓ **Inclusionary Practices Professional Development Project**

- ✓ **Monthly webinars**; **Online PD**; **Online (and Offline) Resources**

- ✓ Case Studies – real-world, student-centered examples:

  - ▪ **Least Restrictive Environment** (LRE): elementary, middle/behavior, transition

  - ▪ **High School and Beyond Planning and IEP Transition Planning**

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A Conceptual Framework for MTSS

Increasingly Intensive Instructional Interventions

Universal Instruction

Specially Designed Instruction

High Need

Low Need

Level of support required for success in universal instruction

Students may receive services in all areas of the pyramid at any one point in time.
Adapted from U.S. Department of Education

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Adjusting Tiers of Support to Meet Current (and anticipated) Needs

If we can predict it, we can prevent it! ...or, at least, mitigate the impact.

- Student data give us direction for OUR collective adult behavior.

- Decision trees should include what we do & what we don't do.

- Are our systems set up to help or harm?

  - Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)

  - District Systems Fidelity Inventory (DSFI)

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Excerpt: Guidance for In-Person Learning

Learning Management Systems

➢ Continue to review/update the district's Learning Management System (LMS) to ensure it meets the accessibility needs of students and families across all instructional models.

➢ Review and update procedures to routinely examine student accommodations and modifications needed and ensure students have access as specified in the IEP.

Staffing and Scheduling

➢ Restructure staff schedules to transition to in-person services with inclusive access.

➢ Preserve time for staff collaboration and planning across content areas.

Student Engagement and Social & Emotional Learning

➢ Review universal screening systems to ensure they include and are responsive to the needs of students with disabilities transitioning to in-person instruction.

Questions?

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