



# MTSS Fest 2021 Agenda

## *MTSS & Role of Leadership*

August 12, 2021



# SISEP

State Implementation and Scaling-up  
of Evidence-based Practices



# NIRN

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION  
RESEARCH NETWORK

FRANK PORTER GRAHAM CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



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# Learning Objectives

By the end of this session,  
participants will....

- Articulate the why for leadership
- Discriminate between different leadership roles within MTSS implementation
- Determine whether an implementation challenge is an adaptive or technical challenge
- Understand adaptive leadership strategies to an implementation challenge

# Cultivating Leadership: Why & Leadership Roles



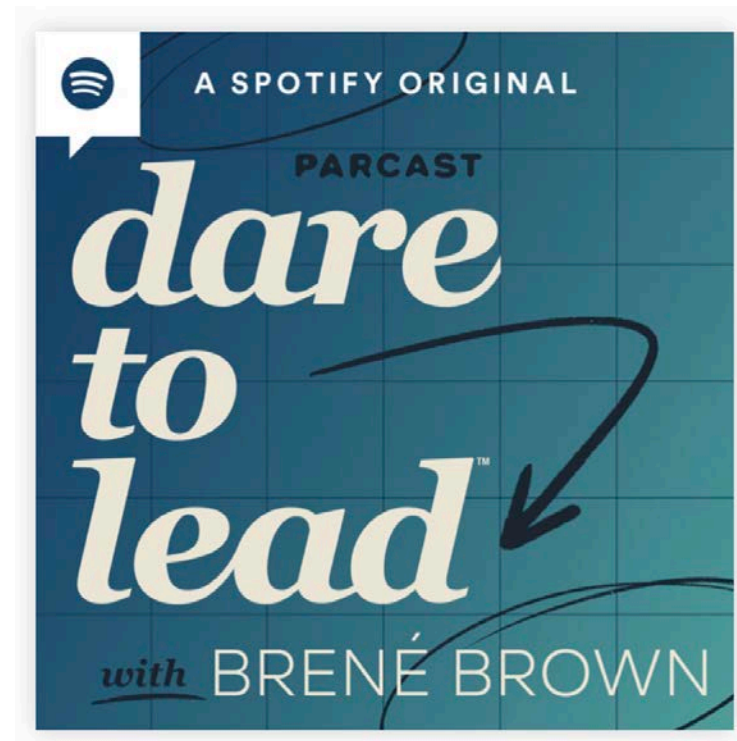
# [Discussion/Activity]

## Importance of Leadership

- Take 1 minute & reflect on Leadership & MTSS
- Complete the sentence stem in the chat.

Leadership within MTSS implementation is important because \_\_\_\_\_.

“I DEFINE A LEADER AS ANYONE WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINDING THE POTENTIAL IN PEOPLE AND PROCESSES, AND WHO HAS THE COURAGE TO DEVELOP THAT POTENTIAL.”



# Leadership Roles within MTSS Implementation

## Executive Leadership Sponsors

- Formal Authority & Decision-Making Power
- Internal to Organization
- Can also be a champion
- Not embedded in the day to day work of MTSS implementation

## Champions

- Formal or Informal Authority & Decision-Making Power
- Internal to the organization
- Have an intrinsic interest in the needed change
- Driven to succeed
- Positive approach to the work, and
- Strong conviction or belief in their ability to do the work (Miech, et al. 2018).

# [Discussion/Activity]

## Leadership Roles

- Take 1 minute & reflect on current leadership for MTSS
- Complete the Poll with the following question:
  - Do you have an executive sponsor, champion or both roles for MTSS leadership?



# Executive Sponsor's Activities

- Identifying existing leadership roles of relevance to implementation efforts
- Assisting with collaborative consensus around the work and provides a level of authority to the legitimacy of the process
- Working and communicate with relevant formal leaders involved in implementation to define, understand, and develop their role and capacity as implementation leaders
- Developing processes and structures for regular debriefs with leaders central to implementation efforts
- Supporting problem-solving opportunities identified by leaders and others central to implementation efforts
- Supporting leaders to access data and information required for them to maintain awareness of implementation work and the decisions they should be involved in



# Champion's Activities

- Advocating for the implementation process and selected practices within MTSS
- Relationship building with both internal staff, as well as external stakeholders
- Persuading others of the MTSS merits, need, and selection process
- Planning and facilitating implementation team meetings
- Creating a reflective and safe learning/collaborative environment in meetings
- Involved with implementation of the selected practice or program at the ground level
- Examining data to troubleshoot or remove barriers to implementation
- Facilitating discussion around team membership to ensure a diverse and equitable group



**CHAMPIONS AND EXECUTIVE  
SPONSORS SHOULD COLLABORATE,  
COMMUNICATE, AND SUPPORT ONE  
ANOTHER,**

**AND JUST AS IMPORTANT,**

**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SPONSORS  
SHOULD CULTIVATE THE LEADERSHIP  
ATTRIBUTES WITHIN CHAMPIONS.**

# Cultivating High Quality Champions

- Five Attributes (Bonawitz, et al. 2020):
  - *Influence*: Champions should have sufficient social capital to foster trust and the authority to prioritize implementation and stimulate practice
  - *Ownership*: Champions should be willing to own the implementation work and volunteer for the role
  - *Physical Presence*: Champions on the ground understand the daily work of practitioners and provide information, coaching, and keep staff engaged
  - *Persistence*: Champions can respond to barriers with energy and resourcefulness. Champions also should have a deep belief in the efficacy of the program or practice being implemented.
  - *Participatory Leadership*: Champions should include colleagues in decision-making and welcome feedback. The environment that is created for the work should be safe and allow for learning and empathy.

# [Discussion/Activity]

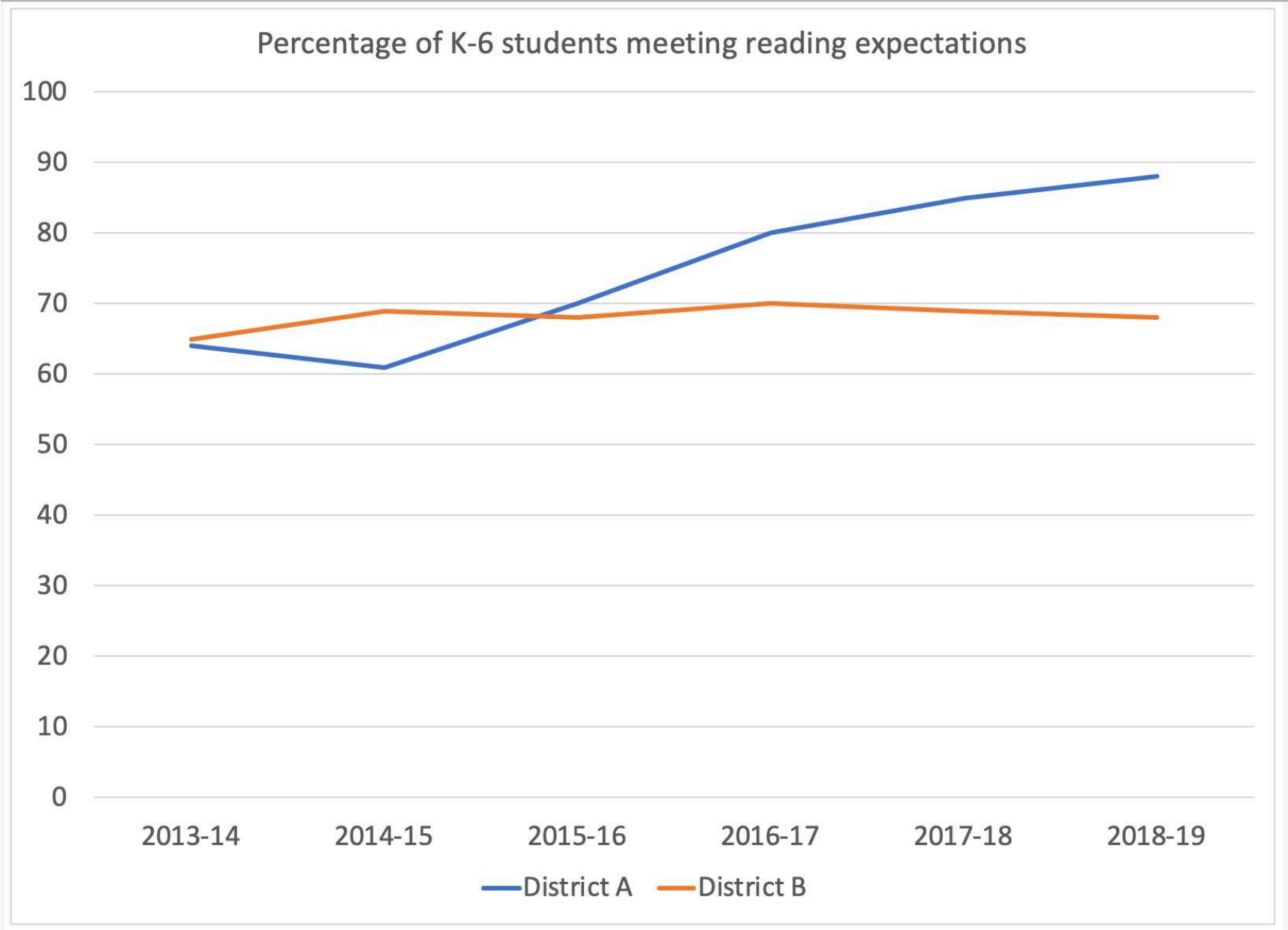
## Leadership Roles

- Take 1 minute & reflect on champion attributes.
- Complete the Poll question:
  - Which attribute as a champion do you want to focus on strengthening this year?
    - Influence
    - Ownership
    - Physical Presence
    - Persistence
    - Participatory Leadership

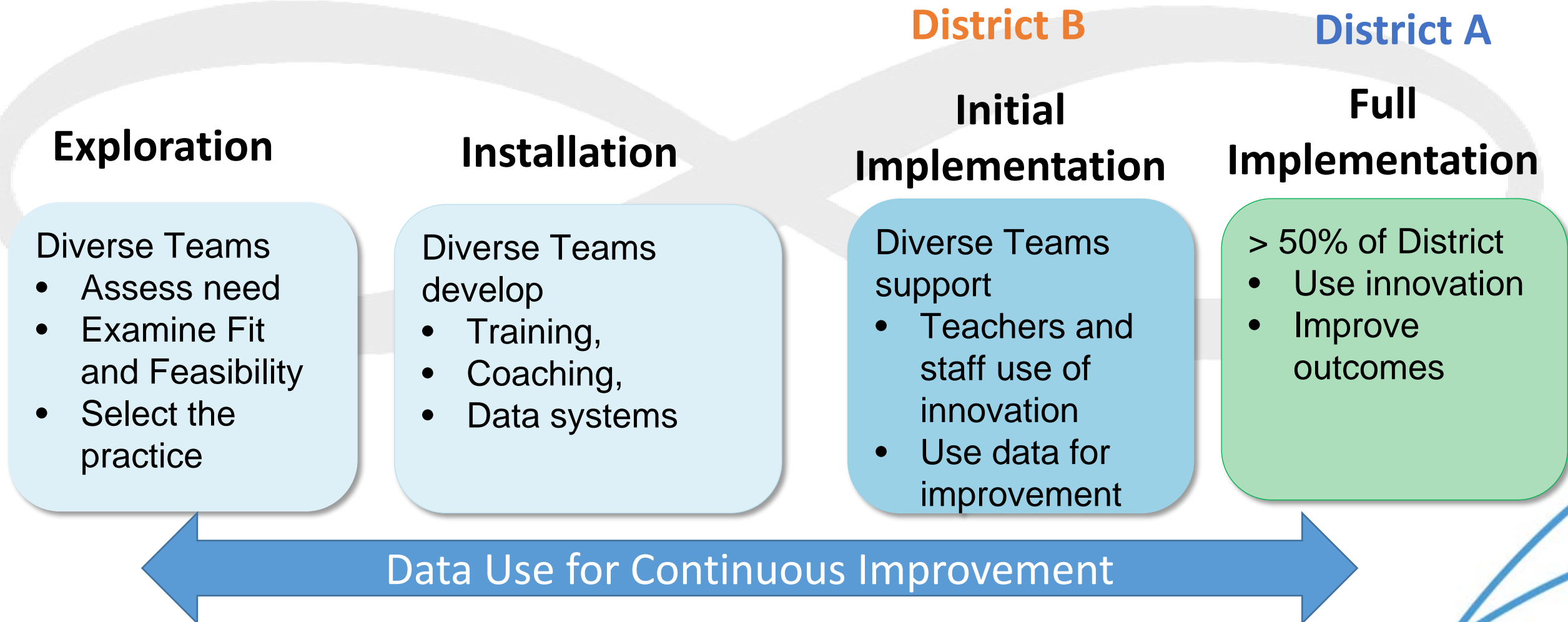
# Implementation: Systemic Change Journey



A tale of 2 districts



# Journey: Implementation Stages





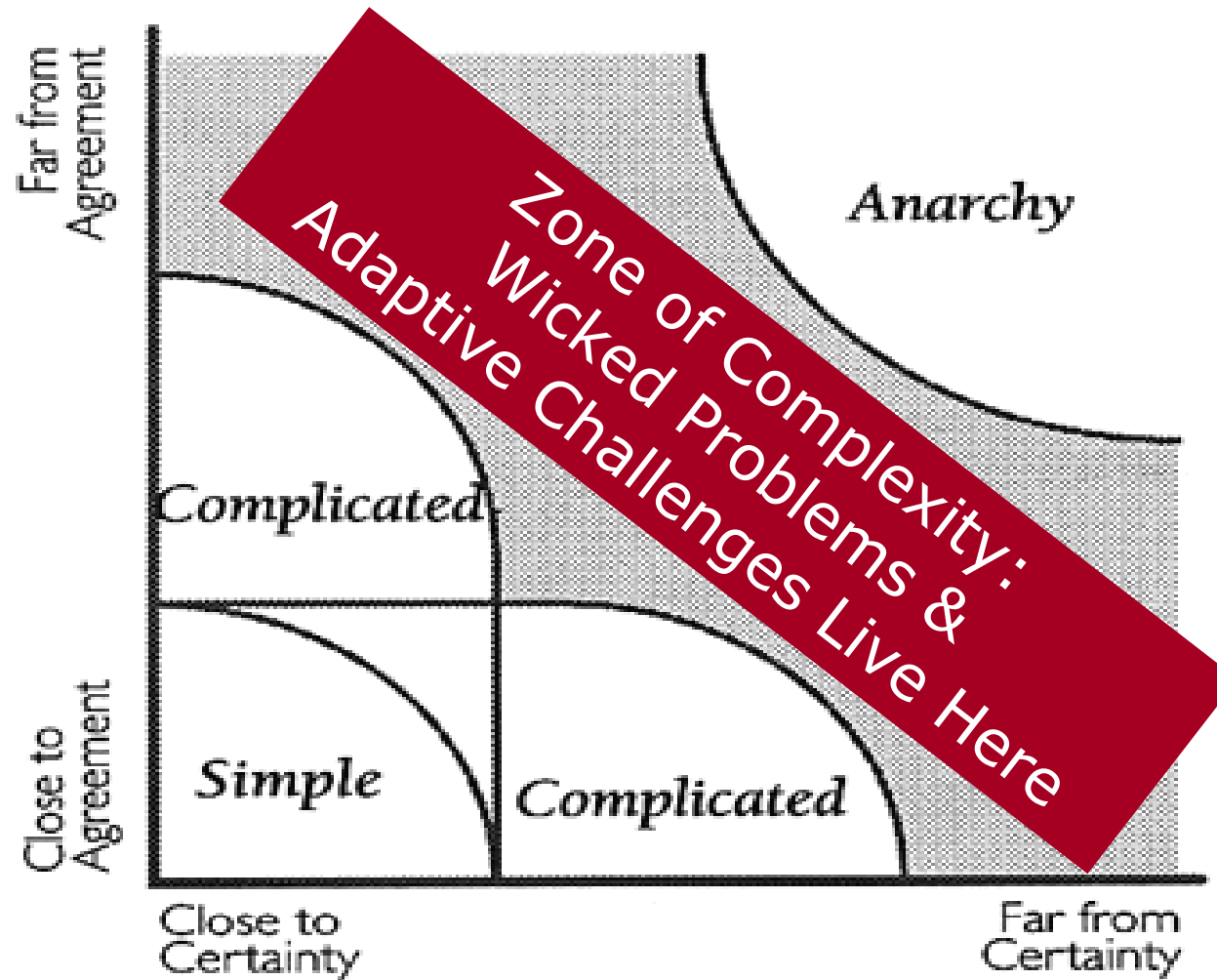
# Leaders Face Challenges to Change

- Tame Problems/Technical Challenges
  - Often complicated (e.g. safety of nuclear generators, air traffic control)
  - OR
- Wicked Problems/Adaptive Challenges
  - They are messy, devious, and fight back when you try to “solve” them

“Managers [or leaders] are not confronted with problems that are independent of each other, but with dynamic situations that consist of complex systems of changing problems that interact with each other. I call such situations messes. . . . Managers [or leaders] do not solve problems, they manage messes.

-- Russell Ackoff, Operations Theorist

# Change Landscape



# Assess your Challenges and Context

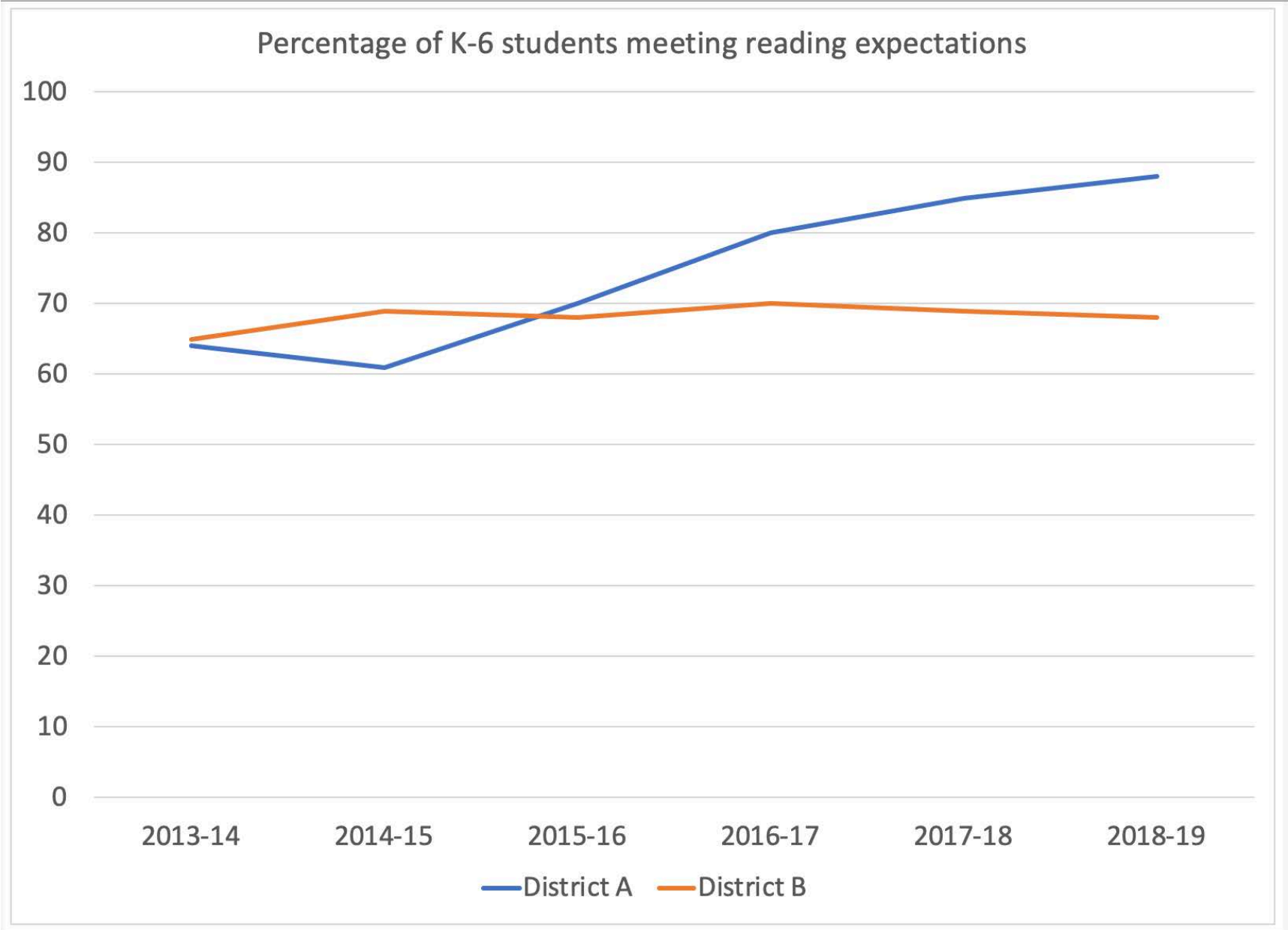
- Are there legitimate, yet competing, perspectives?
- Is there lack of agreement about how “the problem” is formulated and therefore lack of agreement about the “solutions”? (e.g. What “causes” the achievement gap? How should teachers be evaluated?)
- Are there are deeply rooted and different perspectives on the “issue” at hand (political, moral, philosophical, pedagogical)?
- Will solutions and implementation require learning?
- Will attempting solutions generate feelings of loss, grief, disloyalty and/or incompetence?
- Primary locus of responsibility cannot be a single entity or person

# Work of Leaders & Teams



- Get on the Balcony
- Identify the Adaptive Challenge
- Regulate Distress
- Maintain Disciplined Attention
- Give the Work Back to the People
- Protect All Voices

A tale of 2 districts



# Getting on the Balcony & Identifying Adaptive Challenge

## District A

- Too many practices
- Professional learning not addressing competencies needed or using enough adult learning practices
- Coaching is needed
- Teacher and student voice needed

## District B

- We have great staff and programming of interventions!
- Coaching is for new teachers only.
- Professional development is done at the beginning at the school year.
- We support attendance at conferences and sharing of learnings.

# Example

## District A

Intended Participants	Training Topics
	MTSS process and procedures
	Training in instructional model
	Training for core and intervention programs
	Universal screener training
	Progress monitoring training
	In-program assessment training
	Instructional components in core observation form

### *District process/criteria for selecting or planning PD experiences*

- The leadership team will make decisions about holding PD experiences and/or sending people to attend PD
- The leadership team will examine PD experiences the district is considering to determine if the PD experience:
  - Matches the district focus
  - Has trainers with successful experience training (measurable improvements)
  - Training include practice for 70% or more of the training time
  - Follow up support is available and planned
  - There is a fidelity plan to monitor implementation

Coaches	Use of in-program assessments for core and/or intervention
	Gathering instructional data
	Analyzing instructional data to identify coaching and PD needs
	Coaching process (initial meeting, coaching activities, debriefing/reflection) and coaching issues (e.g., dealing with resistance)
	Individual coaching strategies (providing effective feedback, side by side coaching, coaching through use of videotaping)
	Analyzing student data (universal screener data, in program assessment information, diagnostic)

## District B

We have a beginning of year professional learning event for all staff

We send staff to conferences and they come back and share what they learned with others



# Regulating Distress & Maintaining Disciplined Attention

## District A

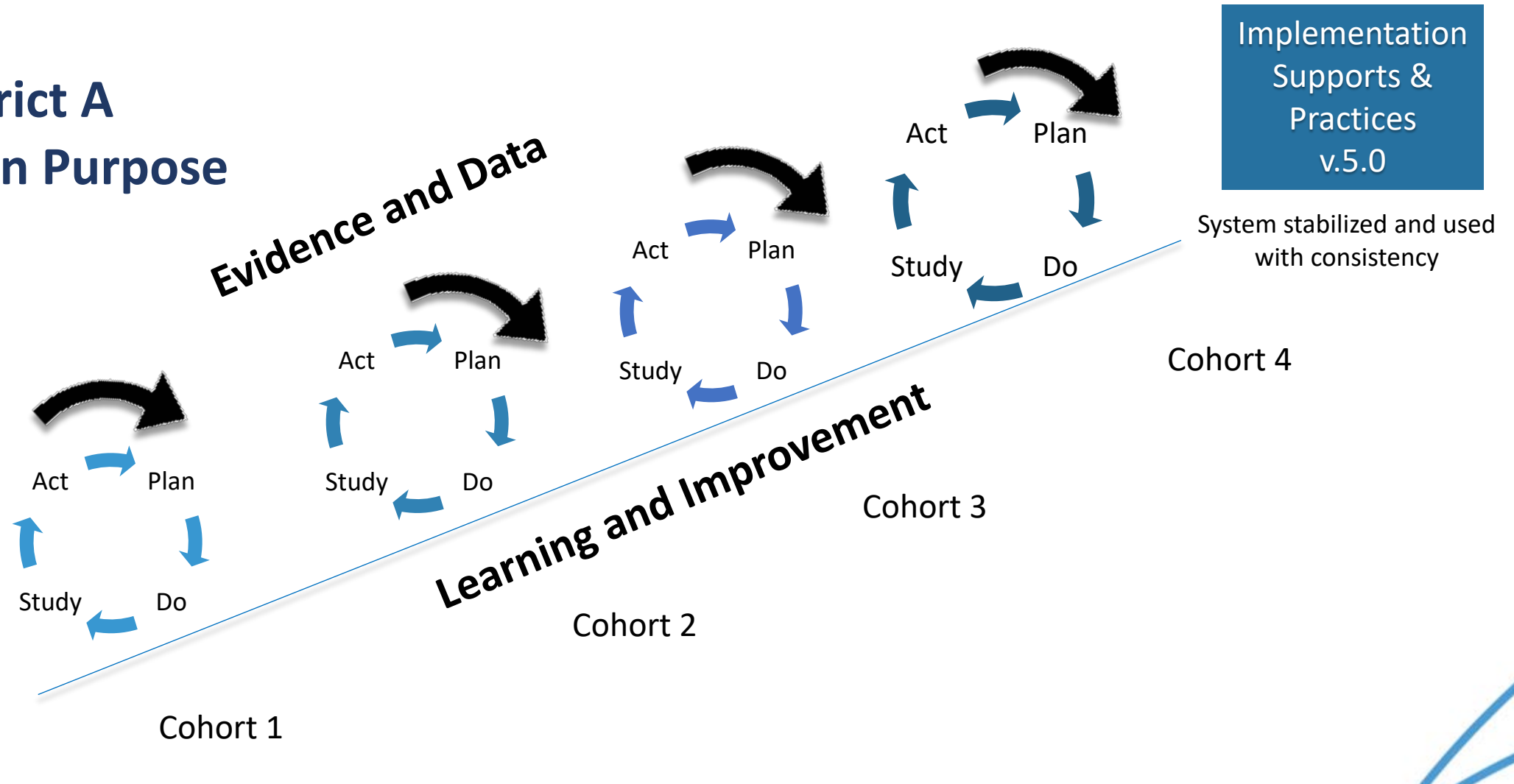
- Started small and get better. Identified a small number of teachers from specific grade levels to focus
- Implementation team aligned and leveraged new priority to support current literacy emphasis.

## District B

- All school staff must be using literacy practices and programming at start of the school year
- All staff meetings and supports focused on new priorities

# Example:

## District A Change on Purpose



# Giving Work Back to People & Protecting Voices

## District A

School leadership teams meet monthly to review and use data for improvement

Staff surveys and listening sessions

Empathy interviewing and student shadowing with students

## District B

Principal meets twice a year with school leadership team to review data and review improvement plan  
contracted consultant wrote Standard staff survey

# Do teachers report that they are getting the support they need?

## District A

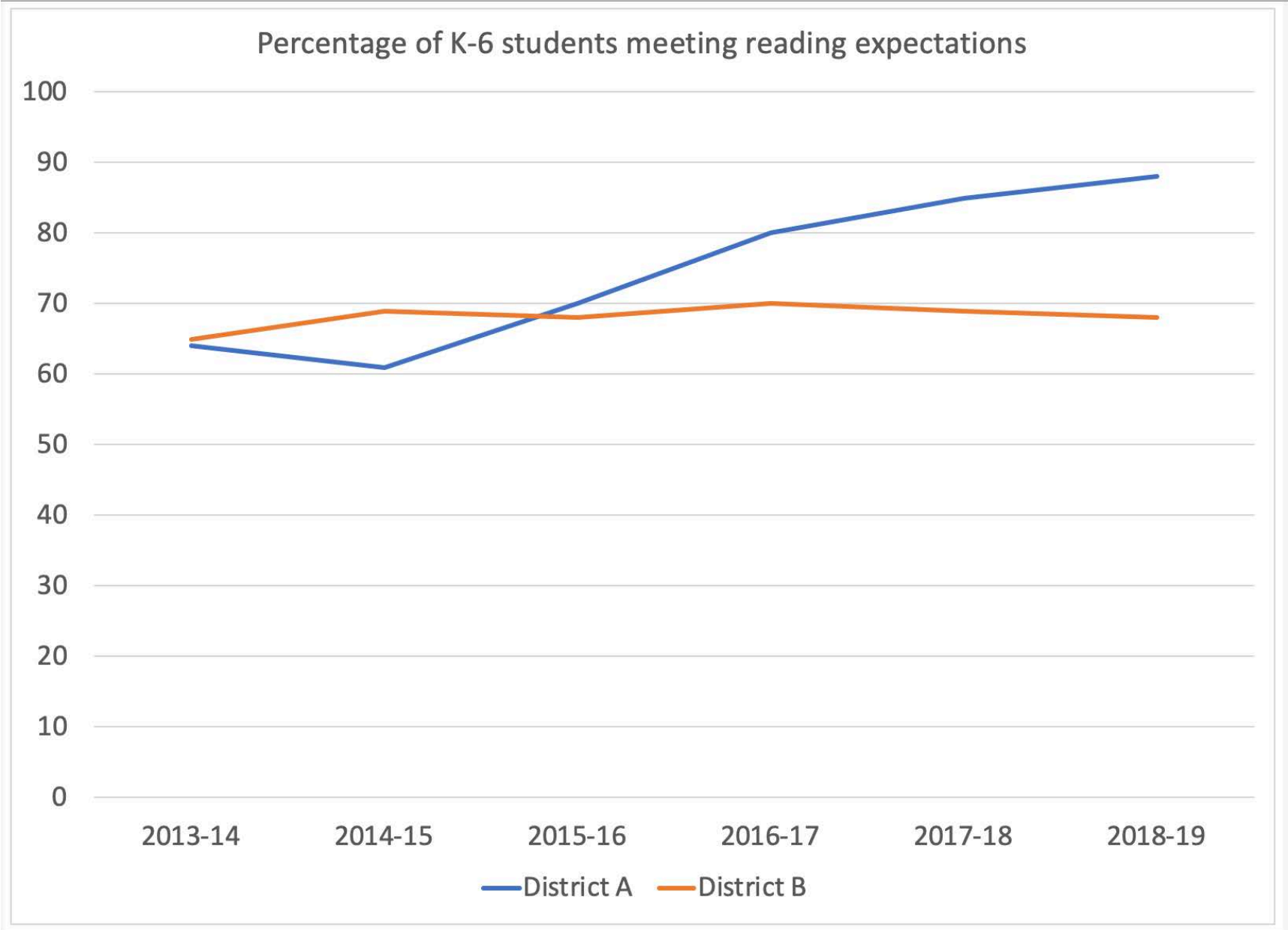
### MTSS Staff Survey Results

	# Agree or Strongly Agree	# of respondents	% Agree or Strongly Agree						
1. I have a clear understanding of how my school's MTSS works to meet the academic needs of all students	46			<i>Directions: Thinking about implementation of the selected evidence-based program/practice to this point, rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements</i> I am gaining essential knowledge and skill for the use of this Evidence Based Program/ Practice and my confidence with regards to being an effective teacher is increasing	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Results
2. All students, including students with disabilities (e.g. specific learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders), are capable of achieving grade-level benchmarks (i.e., general education standards)	40				1	2	3	4	3.67
3. There is strong leadership guiding development and implementation of our MTSS	47								
4. The MTSS team at my school effectively communicates about our MTSS implementation process and provides opportunity for									

<i>Directions: Thinking about implementation of the selected evidence-based program/practice to this point, rate the degree to which you agree with the following statements</i>		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Results		
5	I receive high-quality coaching to assist me in deeply implementing the program	1	2	3	4	3.73		



A tale of 2 districts



# [Discussion/Activity]

## Leadership

- Take 1 minute & reflect on current implementation challenge
- Complete the Poll question:
  - Is it an adaptive or technical challenge?
- If adaptive, what is one adaptive leadership strategy you would want to try? (CHAT)



# Solutions to Adaptive Problems


- Attempted solution leads to more wicked problems
- No stopping rules – Iterative processes, changing contexts
- Solutions are not true-or-false, but better or worse
- You don't understand the problem fully without trying solutions



# Active Implementation Tools & Resources

<https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/ai-hub>

Online Learning Includes:



**Modules**

Check out internet based training on active implementation, including content, activities and assessments, designed to be self-paced or blended with in-pre-service or in-service training.



**Lessons & Short Courses**

AI Hub Lessons and Short Courses will get you and your team started using implementation tools and practices, so that you can build implementation skills and capacity. These resources can be used for self-paced learning or professional development in a team setting.



**Resource Library**

Find just-in-time active implementation resources and tools (e.g., planning tools, handouts and video clips)

# Exit Ticket

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**Share in chat:**  
one action you will  
take next in your  
implementation  
planning



Believe in Possibilities....



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Advancing knowledge to  
transform children's lives



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