



Unlocking Potential: How Leaders Can Support Strengthening Services for Students with Disabilities

Paul Steinle: So, again, I'd like to welcome you to the session on Unlocking Potential, How Leaders Can Support Strengthening Services for Students with Disabilities. During our session, we'll conduct an overview of the Lead IDEA Center's new Principal Navigator tool, focused on strengthening special education services for students with disabilities.

The content in today's presentation was informed by the work of three centers, Lead IDEA Center, the PROGRESS Center, and the National Center on Intensive Intervention, all of which are run by our organization, the American Institutes for Research.

My name is Paul Steinle, and I support the Lead IDEA Center at AIR as a researcher, and I'm joined by my colleague and co-presenter, Maggie Trout, who supports technical assistance projects at AIR, including the Lead IDEA Center team. And we're also joined by Riley O'Donnell who will be helping with any tech issues.

As we start our session today, we know that there are many challenges that educators and school systems broadly face. So I wanted to pause and give you some time to look at 5 challenges. Because we're interested to know, with our group today, which of the following challenges resonates the most with you?

Maggie's going to open a poll in just a moment for you to choose, and we know that all five may be challenges. We know that these challenges are often interconnected as well, but we're going to ask you, to see, to select one that you think is the most pressing challenge that you find in your current context, and in your current role.

Okay, we can go ahead and close the poll. I've seen we have a majority of people been able to respond. And it's so interesting. Maggie and I previously presented earlier today, and we can actually share the results too, Maggie. In a previous session, the responses were shared evenly across all five challenges, that people were facing. Here, we seem to have the majority of the biggest challenge is that special and general education teachers rarely have sufficient time to plan together to meet the needs of students with disabilities. And that's definitely a topic that we're going to discuss as we look at our navigator when we get there. So, thank you very much for sharing your thoughts on what are the biggest implementation challenges on this topic.



So, a little background on our center before we get to the main content of our session.

So one moment, please, let me go to the window.

Our mission at the Lead IDEA Center is we work with leaders to improve systems serving children with disabilities and their families through effective implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, better known as IDEA.

And so, our mission...is what we do, and our vision is how to achieve that, is to leverage our partnerships with states, districts, and other leadership networks to implement learning solutions that equip both early intervention and school administrators with essential IDEA leadership knowledge and skills. And as a result of implementing these solutions with partners at these various levels, we hope to make an impact both at the local school and the early intervention program level.

At the same time, we want to build and bolster leaders' understanding of the law around IDEA, an area that we have come to find is sometimes lacking in some leadership preparation.

I wanted to take a moment to call back to the PROGRESS Center's Beating the Odds report. Many of you were able to attend the keynote session yesterday, but we wanted to reshare the link in the chat and the QR code, because our Center's vision has connections with the findings of the Beating the Odds report.

It's that high-quality instructional programming for students with disabilities, depends on and necessitates five essential elements, supported by 5 key facilitators. See, some of those essential elements are student belonging, an effective general curriculum of supports, individualized instruction and supports, support for educators themselves, and staff collaboration.

And so, as leaders, principals play a crucial role to strengthen school-based systems and connect these elements by infusing data through both general and individualized instruction, as well as those pieces we see here on supporting educators.

So, while we're going to make connections to all of the beating the odds elements, today's focus will be in particular on the role that leaders play enabling students with disabilities to access the general curriculum with supports.

And so, when we're thinking about that access for students with disabilities to the general education curriculum, we know that principals play a key role in establishing data-driven school-wide systems that foster and ensure the success of students with disabilities. And also, that principals need more support to have the capacity to meet this charge. And that's the topic of today's session, is about what tools and resources we can provide to build that support for principals.



So, before we continue our discussion on the role principals play in influencing systems, and before getting to... getting to know our center's navigator tool for principals, we wanted to ask two questions that kind of speak to where our students with disabilities are and how they're doing. So, you're going to see, the first question...And that question is, what percentage of students served under IDEA Part B—so school-age students with disabilities, are educated inside the regular, or the general ed classroom, at least 80% of their day.

So I know that this is, like, a percent of a percent question, but what percent of students, with disabilities, spend at least 80% of their day in the regular classroom? Let's see if there's some brave souls who will be able to answer. And yeah, and I agree, it could vary state by state. This answer is going to be the national average, but yes. So I'm seeing some high numbers here. Okay.

So I'd like you to hold that... hold the answers to those questions and look at a second question here about how students are doing. So, for our second question is, what percentage of 4th grade students with disabilities were proficient on the NAEP reading assessment, in 2024? So we chose 4th grade, and it was students with disabilities, and then we looked at reading. What percentage scored at proficient on the National Reading Assessment? So we know where students are being educated, and I would like to see how they're doing—students with disabilities.

And I know that for people, for people in the field, we know that it's an area where we are working to improve. Because we have the answers here. So I'm going to put the answers to both questions here and then talk about their connection. So, the majority of students nationally, it's 67% who spend more than 80% of their day, in the regular classroom. And then about...Again, we just looked at one grade level, but for 4th grade students with disabilities, only 11% were proficient.

And so we share these two questions just to speak to the rationale for why strengthening services is so crucial for student success, and how it starts with, the general education classroom and that core curriculum. Leaders need to build instructional behavior management skills through professional learning to strengthen services, to strengthen services by improving the data-based decision-making that educators use, and how they are examining progress towards IEP goals. With the goal to reduce that inequitable or hindered access to the general curriculum.

So...And so, the importance of this is what brings us to the Lead IDEA Center and the development of a Principal Navigator tool, and here's where I'm going to pass it to, Maggie, my co-presenter, and she will introduce us to the Principal Navigator.

Maggie Trout: Thanks, Paul, and thank you all for your engagement so far. It's interesting, we have more state colleagues, state-level colleagues in this session, so continue to share your perspective there with us today. So with that, we are going to share Lead IDEA Center's Navigator tools with you, that you can leverage to explore solutions and resources for different key issues and challenges that



you may be experiencing in your, or you may be supporting others and providing technical assistance to them within their context.

And so, the Lead IDEA navigators are really interactive resources and tools that are topic-based guides and frameworks designed for school leaders, so maybe you're sharing with principals, or maybe you are a principal or assistant principal, some of you are, who are joining us today. So you can use them to oversee special education implementation and think about the different specific challenges that may be aligned to your context. And so there's two navigators, one that we'll really spotlight today, and one that we'll share towards the end of the session. The first that we're really showing you today is about strengthening services for students with disabilities.

And then, the second navigator that we also encourage you to explore is the special educator retention navigator. And so we'll share those links throughout our presentation today. But really, each navigator unpacks pressing issues, such as retention and strengthening services, and provides a series of modules that offer concrete strategies rooted in school stories, reflective tools, different resources, and provide practical ideas to help principals take action with those different suggestions within the toolkits.

And so, again, in short, they are pathways that are research-based, beginning from a problem identification that resonates with you as a leader, and then provides you with practical solutions, all of which are rooted in federal IDEA requirements, and designed to support you along the way. And so we're going to explore one of them, again, today, as I mentioned, specifically the strengthening services for students with disabilities navigator, and the remainder of our session will help you navigate to different aspects of this, and so we'll have time to explore the Navigator today.

And so this navigator specifically highlights two main challenges that leaders face as they strive to create systems that ensure students with disabilities both learn and thrive in the classroom. And sometimes educators face challenges in using data to effectively ensure students with disabilities access the general education curriculum and make progress towards IEP goals, but then other times, educators may need additional support to face the complex challenges that are academic or behavioral in nature of students with disabilities.

And so with that, we're going to dive into the two issues that we just mentioned. I'll talk about the first, and then I'll hand it back over to Paul in a little while, and we'll talk about the second. So one challenge that leaders face is supporting their educators to use data to make decisions. And educators struggle using data to ensure equitable access and effective instruction for all students accessing the general education curriculum. And additionally, perhaps limited data literacy may impact teachers' ability to use data to make instructional decisions and measure the impact of student progress.



And so with that, we know that if instruction is ineffective and not grounded in data-informed decisions, then students are consequently victims of maybe widened opportunity gaps and diminished educational outcomes.

And so, thus, I think we can all probably agree here that it is so critical for principals to strengthen the systems within which students with disabilities are served, so that we ensure that they are receiving high-quality instruction aligned with data-driven instructional and behavioral needs that foster progress and promote general curriculum access.

And so, in the chat, you will see in just a moment a link that will take you to an overview of this first issue, Missing the Mark Decisions Without Data, within our Navigator. And we're going to really dive into this key challenge in more detail, and take you and navigate you, pun intended, to different aspects of the Navigator.

So, some educators struggle to use data to ensure high-quality access to effective, meaningful general education opportunities and curriculum for their students. And so, in the chat, we invite you to share any strategies that you've use to strengthen data-informed instruction and provide access to students with disabilities within the general education curriculum.

And if you're joining us as an educator today, what obstacles, maybe, did you face while trying to provide that access? So, if you're a leader, what have you done to strengthen that instruction, and as an educator, what were some obstacles, maybe, that you faced? We would love to hear from you in the chat today to continue to contextualize what's relevant for you.

So what strategies have you implemented that increase access to the general curriculum? And, you know, I shared in the district that I came from, I was supporting, you know, we had a master schedule, and there just was not a great amount of time in order to collaborate with others and our colleagues, and so part of one strategy that we implemented and an action step that we took was revamping the master schedule to provide more collaboration time. We know that that's challenging for our special educators who maybe need to meet at different planning times because they serve students at different grade levels, but that was one of our goals was to at least increase the collaboration time for educators themselves, and then the related service providers and special educators who could come into those times.

So as you're thinking of... some of you may already be back to school, or you're heading back to school, I know scheduling is top of mind for many of us throughout the summer. Paul, I saw you come off mute. Did you want to share something?

Paul Steinle: I was just going to add, for those of you who are working at the state level, what are you seeing in the districts that you support as well?

Maggie Trout: Thanks, Paul, for adding that. And Emily is one of our state colleagues here today, from Rhode Island, saying that changing universal screening, absolutely, and progress monitoring tools can interrupt some of that data collection, and we need to make sure that everyone learns and uses those, those new tools appropriately and with fidelity. So absolutely, that can be a hiccup or a challenge within that process, absolutely. Thank you for sharing that. Sarah, time, staffing vacancies, so Sarah, at the end, we will share with you the other navigator that talks about retaining special educators, so I hope that that's pertinent and useful to you. And then, Michael, thank you for also sharing teaching the problem-solving model. We only have enough time for our topic today, but I could talk for an hour about the collaborative problem-solving model myself, and so maybe we'll connect about that later, but how that can help leaders structure time and really use that time effectively to talk about data and improve data literacy, so absolutely. Those are... that's a way to strengthen, and, and leverage, You know, data-informed collaborative meetings.

There are not enough teachers to get coverage, even if schedules are improved. Absolutely, yep. So they get coverage instead. Thank you for sharing that. Yeah, definitely a barrier. Scheduling can only fix so much, right, if we don't have the staff in order to support that, to Sarah's point.

So with that, thank you so much for sharing. So that you've shared some strategies. Here are just a few others. So, whether it's the problem-solving model or a different model you want to build, leaders can build staff data literacy, through professional development. Maybe leaders themselves need some coaching or professional development support, and that could be by... with using new screening and progress monitoring tools, for example.

We want to ensure that there is that time, and even if we have those dedicated times, do we have the coverage to support educators moving into those different spaces? And then, of course, everything is done within a culture of continuous improvement.

And so, thank you for your engagement so far, but we also want to pose an additional question here, and this kind of gets at what we've already talked about. So, we know that some educators need support to use data to make instructional decisions and really to measure that impact, and so if we have new tools, such as progress monitoring tools, that can be a challenge if we need to learn those as well. And so, in the chat if there's anything else that comes to mind about ways that you've supported building data literacy or using data to monitor progress towards IEP goals, we invite you to share that now. But we'll just share a few additional strategies, thinking again about that progress towards IEP goals specifically, not just access to the general curriculum.

And those include similar themes, right? We still want to build data literacy, thinking about the resources that we have, how do we set up infrastructure that both supports data collection that's efficient, but also time to review and analyze that data.



How do we empower our teams, again, to think about that data in terms of intensification and individualization of instruction? So, some of us may be familiar with DBI, or data-based individualization, so talking about that intensification there. And then, again, how do we collaborate and have that shared accountability and ownership of our students and their progress? And so, with that, we want to share a... within the Navigator, there is a school story that may resonate with some of you, and it's related to our key issue today.

And so, again, Principal Donahue is a new principal at Crestwood Elementary, and he is noticing in his context that the teachers are really facing significant challenges in using data effectively to support and then also monitor the progress of all students, but especially the students with disabilities.

And so, if this resonates with you, if you could just give us a thumbs up, does this sound like something that may be, you know, something that you've experienced, or maybe you're experiencing right now? And with that, as you're thinking about if this is... this sounds... Principal Donahue's context sounds like something that you've experienced. We are going to drop in the chat. Thank you, Sheila, and I'm seeing Lisa and others. Yeah, so... so we need to build principals' capacity to support teachers to make instructional and data-informed instructional decisions.

And so with that, we're going to have you... we're going to pause. I'll stop... stop talking so that you can dive a little bit deeper into Principal Donahue's story, and so in the chat, you can see that Paul dropped a link to Principal Donahue's story. If you'd rather use the QR code that's on the screen as well, we invite you to do so, but we're just going to take a minute and pause and allow you to finish reading about this story, and we're going to come back together and think about what action steps you would take if you were him.

So if... I know some of us mentioned that this sounds familiar to us, maybe this is a challenge that you are facing leading your instructional leaders within your context, if you're at the district level, or you're a principal or assistant principal, and you want to support your teachers to be able to use data more effectively. And so, or you're at the state level and you're providing technical assistance to those who are moving the needle within their context, right?

If this was you, in your setting, what action steps would you take? Maybe your coaching Principal Donahue or maybe you just want to speak from your own perspective? Either way, what are some action steps that you would take, given what was shared within the story? We encourage you to drop those in the chat, or if you want to come off mute briefly, we would encourage that as well, if you feel so inclined. But what would you take? What action steps would you take?

And some of this we've already talked a little bit about in the chat, right? So, how do we find time? How do we fill staffing vacancies? Firm data meeting times. I love the use of the word firm. We're going to stick to it. We're going to commit to these opportunities.

So that is definitely one of the buckets...that's an action step that if you continued reading and had the opportunity to read about the principal actions on the page, I know there's only so much time for us to be together today, so we recognize that we probably didn't have... all of us have the time to finish that, but there's three buckets, one of which is absolutely finding the time within our systems to meet and being consistent with that. Sarah mentioned, again, scheduling time for staff to meet, and Emily, that draws right next to your connection.

So, each of the actions really falls into three main buckets, which include training, systems, and then collaboration. And so in the session before this, there was a lot of conversation about collaboration specifically, and here, it seems like we're kind of talking more about the systems level approach. And so, I'm glad that that action step is resonating with you, and maybe you have experience supporting that action step, and we'd love to hear about that as well.

So as you can see, you know, there is a clear need to provide hands-on, actionable professional development. If we're thinking about maybe these are new data tools, maybe these are new data protocols that we're using, how do we train, provide professional development, and make sure that there's a clear understanding of what our next steps are?

And then, you know, at the systems level. You know, being firm about our data meeting times. Maybe that's a bi-weekly cadence that has a clear protocol, perhaps. I think something that can be really supportive. And maybe if you're transitioning to new assessment tools, maybe there's a different digital dashboard that can see data in real time, which we know can be so impactful. And then, obviously, collaboration is only so impactful if we really have that time and the staff to do it, right? So thank you for elevating all of that in the chat as well.

And so with that, we want you to also... so that was a school story...the Navigators all have different stories that we encourage you to look at, and Paul's going to share another one in a moment. But it's always so impactful to hear about leaders in the field. So, Karla is a leader who is going to share with you a little bit more about the problem-solving meetings that they have to support teachers and related service providers to review student data. And so, Emily, to your point, it sounds like perhaps there were some consistent, to use your word, firm data meetings, and so Karla's going to share a little bit more about that today. So think about what connects with you as well as we listen to this video. And as we play it, if you just want to give a thumbs up to make sure that we can hear it, we can all hear it, that'd be great.

Video of Karla Miller: Once a week, every week, we have a problem-solving meeting, and teachers can sign up to bring a student to that problem-solving meeting. And that can be a student who already has an IEP, it can be a student who doesn't have an IEP, that really doesn't matter. Instead, they're coming to this team. And they have to... and they are bringing their data to solve the problem and really talk through that. And so, in that... on that team I have all sorts of different teachers. Some of them are intervention teachers, some of them are just really strong classroom teachers. I have special education teachers in there, our school psych, so that we can really take that team approach and look at that kiddo as a whole, not just look at, oh, here's some academic data. Instead, what's going on with them socially, what's going on with that behavior? So really looking at the whole student and how all of those pieces fit together.

And...the data collection from those different sources, we can start to really look for patterns. And that's one thing that we really focus on, is, okay, is it happening always on a Friday? It could be who they're interacting with, it could be which family member they were with that night, if something else had happened. We start noticing different patterns, like, oh, is it always around reading, or is it always when they go to PE? We can really start keying into those pieces and, when we look at our data collection tools in those team meetings, we will revamp that tool and look at, like, okay, no, we don't need frequency instead, we really need to look at that level of intensity. That's... that's the big issue. It's not necessarily how often it's happening, it's how intense it is.

Maggie Trout: So I think what Karla shared might resonate with you in your context, Lisa. You know, you said you also had weekly data meetings, so how do we make sure that everyone's at the table, and in those conversations, that we're bringing data to look at, and so Karla did such an eloquent job explaining their process.

And so with that, we want to give you an opportunity to... so again, we're looking at the Strengthening Services Navigator. School Stories is one component within that Navigator, and now we're going to look at a toolkit, which is another supportive resource within that broader Navigator, if that makes sense.

So, so here we're going to walk through the toolkit in just a moment here, but we want to share that the toolkit is really designed to detail strategies that are short-term solutions meant to deepen knowledge, mid-term solutions meant to support staff, and then long-term solutions that really are influencing the systemic level. And so, if you think about implementation science, this is kind of that trajectory, right, where we're falling in different places within implement... our own implementation within our context.

And so with that, you'll see across all of the different toolkits that these solutions are here, but then there's different strategies aligned with the key topics. So here, you know, decisions about using data.



So the first strategy that you may consider exploring here is using data to guide instructional and service decisions, as well as to monitor student access to and progress in the general curriculum, as well as towards IEP goals.

So if that resonates with you, maybe you want to explore Strategy A in a moment, and then alternatively, maybe strategy B is piquing your interest, and you want to look more into tailoring general and specially designed instruction to meet students' needs.

So in the chat, while we're switching screens to share with you...actually, before we do that, sorry, if you want to share in the chat A or B, which one you think you want to explore, before we navigate to the next, to the Navigator itself, where you can look at it. We wanted to just share that we're going to give you some time to dig into the Navigator and look at this toolkit, and we hope that, you know, in the next few minutes, you'll be able to share out in the chat an action that sounds like something you want to take, or you want to have more conversation about. And then, also, if there's a resource that you want to explore, or maybe you've shared recently, or something that you've been looking for. So, as we navigate to the toolkit itself, I'm seeing some of us are thinking about tailoring instruction to meet students' needs. So, here you can see that if that's of interest to you, Emily, Sarah, and Holly. In a moment, you'll want to... we'll share... I'll drop a link in the chat now, but, you may want to explore strategy B, so if you click on that, from the link in the chat, you would choose the strategy that you're more interested in, so in this case B, and you can see those short, mid, and long-term solutions I just mentioned.

And then if you click through those, you will see detailed actions, that align with deepening knowledge or, you know, building systemic capacity, for example. And then resources that also may support deepening knowledge or supporting teachers.

And so, we're going to pause for just a few minutes, and we recognize our time is limited today, and so we won't be able to explore everything to the level of depth, but we hope that, you know, you explore this in the future. So we'll take about 2 or 3 minutes to allow you to use the link in the chat to dig through the toolkit a little bit, identify an action that you might want to take, thinking about moving into this academic year. And then, if there's a resource that you have either used, or maybe you want to explore more, we would love to hear about those in just a few minutes. But we'll pause and give you some time to explore this.

Sara Jorgensen: Hi everyone, Sara Jorgensen. I'm from Nevada, and I represent our state public charter schools authorities, and thank you for, all of these great tools. I really love what I'm seeing. And I kind of looked at the short-term solutions, mid-term solutions, and long-term solutions, and what really stood out for me for, the midterm, mid-term solutions, excuse me, is the ongoing professional development to build data literacy skills. I always say with training, it's never one and done, you know. And you have to revisit, and then also, after you have PD, you also have to make sure staff understands



your expectation for using that information learned at PD, and then as you are evaluating staff, that's a look-for for you. And so, you know, and I always believe, you know, our teachers in the classroom make the magic happen, so whatever it is, what tools they need, learning they need, building their capacity, knowledge, and skill set, collectively creates this ecosystem or that collective efficacy there, and then they start to support each other in these activities as well, too. So, you know, I see a lot of value in putting in time and effort, in... in offering that ongoing professional development.

Maggie Trout: Thank you so much for sharing, Sara. And I see that some of us, probably in the chat, feel free to respond to that too, but two points you made really resonate with me. So, some of our state-level colleagues, I would love to hear if you're leaning one way or the other here, but you talked about, Sara, look-fors, and I know some states, you know, we hear about implementation fidelity, and some of us are now changing from the term fidelity, which feels like compliance, or maybe evaluative of sorts, to now integrity, and so that ownership, that collective efficacy, to your point that we're building, right? Like, all of that is part of high-quality professional learning where, you know, we know what our next steps are, and we're all fully committed to that. And I think it speaks to the shared ownership we want for students with disabilities, for everyone as well. So thank you so much for sharing that.

And again, I think, too, speaking to that sustainability piece. You know, if we have collective efficacy, as someone...we talked about the need for staff retention, or there's, you know, staff turnover. I'm not just bringing something as Maggie to the table, and Paul's coming into the school and it's going to be his way, right? We're sustaining really impactful practices over time that we've all bought into, right? So it's not this just churning wheel of new, new, new, new, new initiatives, right? And so, thank you so much for calling that out.

And then Michael mentioned in the chat that there's a tool that, he would like to explore as well, so thank you for sharing, both of you, with that. So, so you definitely are peaking—you know, what I've had conversations a lot about lately, which is that fidelity, but turning it into integrity, because we want to take ownership of that piece. So, Sara, thank you again for your engagement and willingness to share. And so, with that, I mentioned earlier, again, we have this strengthening services navigator that we're...highlighting today. The first issue is what I've been discussing, you know, really focused on decisions with data... using data, and now I'm going to turn it back over to Paul to talk about the second key issue that is detailed within the Navigator. So, Paul, I'll turn it back to you.

Paul Steinle: Thank you, Maggie, and thank you for getting us started with previewing the Navigator. We barely have time to look at just one strategy within the first issue, but I'm going to give you a second issue with some more strategies, so...as Maggie was talking about the challenge around improving data literacy for educators, there's also the challenge of meeting students with their instructional needs, even when we have those data collection systems in place and those data review procedures are in place.



So for our second issue, we know that students with disabilities often have intensive and persistent academic needs, and these needs often intersect with functional and behavioral needs as well. And as schools meet the requirements of IDEA, Leaders and educators often encounter challenges and barriers to creating a full student support system, which includes the pieces that you're familiar with that students with disabilities require, such as specially designed instruction, aligned service delivery, and intensive interventions.

Leaders must find ways to overcome these barriers and ensure students with disabilities are fully included in the school's academic and behavioral support systems. And so, as we discuss the needs of students with disabilities, I'd like you to consider how it relates back to the... to the beating the odds elements that we showed at the beginning, and how... think about how school leaders can support students with high intensity needs, and help them access, an effective general education curriculum. And so...given this statement that schools face persistent challenges in meeting the complex and multi-faceted needs of students with disabilities, the question that we pose to you, like to hear from everyone, is what systemic barriers do students face, preventing them from being fully included in school support systems?

And again, you can answer this from your own perspective, whether that is in a classroom role, in a leadership role, in a state role. What are the barriers keeping students from being fully included in a support system? And I'll try to see what's coming through here.

So, Sara's mentioned, student belonging. Lisa's mentioning weekly data meetings to help identify where we need to meet those students, and what students...what their areas of strength and weaknesses are. Thank you for sharing that. And then also, of course, you know, supporting students who are English language learners, yes. And families, too, so... so you'll see some of those strategies represented here.

So, we need to support staff understanding of the collaborative service delivery through the IEP, prioritizing the systems, some of the systems that people mentioned just in the chat that support student well-being, ensuring the delivery of specially designed instruction, and to foster those strong, trusting relationships among teachers, students, and families.

And so, like in, in Maggie's section on data literacy, we also have a school story from a principal's perspective—in this case, about meeting the needs of students with disabilities. And so, in this, principal story, we have a new principal, and she's notices that her teachers are facing some challenges in... in, meeting the needs of students with more significant behavioral needs, and also to connect, supporting students' functional skills within the general education curriculum.



And so, Maggie's shared a link, to... so take a minute, a minute or two, to look at this principal story and be thinking about what you would do in this situation, what recommendations you would have for this principal on how to, how to support the teachers in her school, and to build their expertise on meeting the needs—meeting more significant academic and behavioral needs. So I'll go ahead and just preview that question there as you go ahead and look over the school story for just about a minute or so. And I recognize that this is not enough time to fully read and think about the principal's story, but thinking about this challenge that principals do face, what might be an action step that you recommend before we preview the action steps at the end of the story?

Build educators' awareness of, yes, of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Collaborative planning. So, we'll go ahead and look and see where those, those recommendations that were in the chat, what categories they would fall under here.

So we can see one about that, again, positive behavior interventions and supports. That supports student well-being. Should be a school-wide behavior management system, that can also address helping students, with their sensory and emotional regulation. And right there is collaboration, again, under instructional practices, so that we need to have our teachers working together and not be siloed into general ed versus special ed. Your kids versus my kids, and then also building the family engagement, and I think that's tied together with the student well-being, as well. That families are involved, and that families feel supported as well.

And so, again, thinking about how principals, have to come up with solutions to these, to these challenges, we're going to share and hear from another, another,

Another leader in the field who's worked with the Lead IDEA Center, another principal. So I'm going to switch over, and we're going to listen to just about a minute or so of another principal, and how she and her school, has tried to meet the complex needs of students with disabilities, and encourage collaboration with her staff. So, one moment.

Video of Lonice Priester: So, strategies that we have implemented that assisted general educators with being able to implement IEP needs or goals have been to, one, I'm very intentional about ensuring that we have time set aside that's protective for teachers to plan, whether that is me paying them for, to be able to come in after school, or before school, or stay later, or paying for subs for them to get some more time to do some long-range planning together between the co-teacher and the general education teacher. And then also making sure that the co-teacher, serves as they're supposed to, as a person that supports the student directly, so again, providing time for our co-teachers within the master schedule to have more than one planning period so that they can pop in and out of classes and see what is happening with their students on their caseload in classes, and again, providing that time for them to be able to give feedback to the lead teacher, as well as working with the administrative team to support an understanding just across the school building, to ensure that everyone understands



it's everyone's responsibility to ensure that students are successful. And so, just making sure we have protected time for that work.

Some of the ways that we make sure the functional behavioral needs of students are met is a... a...we want to make sure that we are going into classrooms frequently, so as an admin team, we also calibrate around what do these specific needs of students mean. So my school has, in addition to, general ed, we also have a regional and CRI wing, so we do a lot of work on just calibrating on what we can expect to see based on this particular student's needs.

Because again, if we don't have an understanding of what that student's challenges may be, then we won't really have a clear understanding of what strategies to use. So we do a lot of calibrating around what we can expect to see, but then we also again, with that protected time, we want to make sure that we review the strategies, review the needs of our students together, that nothing is done really in isolation. While we have our teacher leaders in special education that provide us with their expertise, it's not a just sit and get of, this is what we say the students need to thrive, but we really have some real conversation. And when things aren't working make sure that we revert back to the data and that it connects to, what our...what the IEP needs says that the students need.

Paul Steinle: And so, we heard from, Principal Priester there, and some of the things that stuck out to me is this idea of calibrating between, different teachers to make sure they fully understand what the IEP is saying about students' needs, and then also the quote about reverting back to the data when things aren't working, so it ties it back to the content that Maggie presented on earlier. So, these two issues are connected, for sure.

I want to be sure that we now give you time to explore the toolkit for this issue. And so, similar to what Maggie already presented and walked us through, this issue is organized in the same way. There are short-term to mid to long-term solutions. For this particular issue, there are three strategies that you would be able to explore. One strategy related to creating a learning environment that supports the well-being of our students with disabilities. Strategy B is how we support the educators, through professional learning, so that they can design and deliver that specially designed instruction, and that general educators have that knowledge as well. And then, strategy C, is about family engagement, building strong, supportive relationships, between teachers, students, and families.

And so, I'd like you to take about 3 minutes or so and review the actions and strategy... resources for the strategies A, B, and C within the toolkit. And again, as we did before, with data literacy, think about an action you would take or a resource you would want to explore. And so, feel free to choose across the three strategies there and as you're looking through it, also please feel free to, as you're seeing things that catch your attention, feel free to share them in the chat with others.



So we have about 5 minutes left in our time together, so I wanted to give people an opportunity to share any last takeaways, whether it's about, the strategies around this issue of meeting students with their academic needs, or about building educators' use of data... And please feel free to use either the chat or to, come off mute and actually speak, to, the takeaways that caught your attention.

And I can see Emily speaking to training parents and families in joint sessions. And Emily, if you could...if you could share maybe one of the topics that you've trained parents and families on or would like to. Yes, that sense of collective purpose is very important.

And one of the major barriers to outcomes for students with disabilities is the lack of shared ownership and responsibility. The principal in the video for this issue spoke to that, saying that everyone needs to understand that it's everyone's responsibility. Well, thank you all for sharing that in the chat. I'm going to now allow Maggie to close us out with final thoughts.

Maggie Trout: Oh, and Ronnie just also shared a key takeaway is establishing a culture of data-driven support systems, and I think that really summarizes both of our topics today. So thank you for sharing that. And then again, to the maximum extent possible, including students in those data talks to help ensure that they fully understand their progress. I love that, so not only are we involving the student, but... or the family, as we've mentioned, but really bringing the students into that conversation. So thank you, Ronnie, for elevating such an important point for all of us to consider today. And so with that, if you want to continue to share some key takeaways, or, you know, we invite you to do so, but some key takeaways we hope that you got out of today include that, you know, the Lead IDEA Center's Strengthening Services Navigator that we've gone over in the past hour together is designed to help leaders understand the complex academic and behavioral challenges students with disabilities face, and really how essential it is, as we all know, to provide professional learning that strengthens educators' ability to support students with disabilities access within grade-level learning, and then also in that progress towards their IEP goals, which includes, you know, having some of these conversations with students, to your point, Ronnie.

And so, with that the Lead IDEA Navigator tools really present solutions to multifaceted issues that we've talked about today, and have a lot of resources, so if you want to share as we close out an emoji in the chat, or share one about what you're, you know, how you're feeling about the Navigator we've gone through today, we invite you to do so. But we also encourage you not just to explore, you know, continue to explore, rather, the Strengthening Services Navigator, but we also encourage you to explore the Special Educator Retention Navigator. So I know somebody mentioned earlier the need to maintain staffing, and so this would be a navigator I would highly encourage you explore as well. So there's the QR code on the screen, and then Paul, thank you so much for dropping the link in the chat as well.

So we also invite you to sign up for our Lead IDEA Center newsletter, as well as what I think is a really valuable and unique opportunity is that there is a form on the... in the newsletter, on the website,



where you can present a challenge that you're experiencing, so a real-world, you know, situation that you're dealing with, and we have some experts that are available to respond to that issue and make sure that you're receiving a response that meets your needs and is relevant for you. So, we encourage you to engage with us in that way to make sure that we're you know, sharing solutions that can support you in real life, right?

And so with that, we also... there's a few ways to engage with us and stay connected beyond just the newsletter, and they include some of our networking and social media platforms.

And, just a quick plug, you've maybe seen this on LinkedIn if you're already following us, or perhaps on other social media networks, but we do have an academy, a leadership academy. Some of us are assistant principals and principals here, so really this is specifically for you. It's designed to increase your capacity to lead effective, sustainable systems for IDEA implementation within your context, so we'll share, Paul shared a link in the chat, to share a little bit more about this opportunity. And we do recognize, you know, you've probably seen this before, but the deadline is quickly approaching, and so if this is something of interest, you want to talk more about what we've shared today, we encourage you to do so.

We've really enjoyed our time together today. Thank you so much for your engagement. If you have any questions or want to, you know, have follow-up conversation, we encourage you to email us. The emails are on the slide and then in the chat as well, but we appreciate all of your engagement and the rich conversation that we've had, and we hope that you find these navigators valuable. So thank you so much for your time today, and we hope you have a wonderful rest of the day and an amazing start to the school year.

