EDUCATION: THE FORGOTTEN VARIABLE IN THE TREATMENT OF YOUTH WITH EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

Barry L. McCurdy, Ph.D., NCSP, BCBA-D
Rachel Eisenberg, Ph.D., NCSP
Lisa Thomas, Ph.D., NCSP

2019 Rehabilitation & Community Providers Association Annual Conference
Hershey, PA

September 24, 2019

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

www.devereux.org

Objectives

- Describe the educational deficits observed in students in on-site schools of Pennsylvania's residential and correctional facilities

- Summarize the scale-up of an organization-wide procedure for addressing the academic deficits in reading and math of students attending on-site residential/correctional schools

- Discuss the technology requirements for addressing educator development across a multi-site residential program

Background

Academic Performance of Students with EBD

- Students with EBD perform significantly below students without disabilities

- High school completion rates are lowest of any disability category
  - Highest dropout rate among IDEA disability categories

- Lower grade point averages than other students with disabilities

- 60% remain unemployed up to 4 years after departure from high school

- Reading is a problem – particularly reading comprehension

Wagner (2014)

Academic Performance of Students with EBD

- Reading and literacy remain a focus of public concern but…

- Greatest absolute deficits for this population…
  - Math
  - Spelling

- Math deficits influenced by limited classroom exposure
  - Students with EBD miss more than 4 days of school in a month
  - Approximately 20% of instructional time

- Spelling deficits may be due to short-term memory span
  - Due to attention and behavior problems

Reid et al. (2004); Wagner (2014)

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

The Impact of Setting

On-Grounds Schools

- More limited hours of instruction compared to public schools
- Taught in multi-grade classrooms with students of varying ages and abilities
- Taught by uncertified or improperly certified teachers
- Receive below-grade level coursework

Instructional Strategies

- Worksheets
- Instructional practices that lack research support
- Independent work
- Online credit programs with limited or no live instruction

(Education Law Center, 2018; Gagnon & Barber, 2014)

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

What the Research Tells Us

- Teachers have limited or no access to local LEA inservice opportunities
  - □ Particularly training targeted to unique 24-hour setting

- Common misperception that "proven" instructional approaches are inappropriate for students in 24-hour setting

- Research concerning instruction in 24-hour settings
  - □ A direct instructional approach has some positive effects (i.e., Corrective Reading)
    - Improves reading rate, fluency and accuracy of oral reading
    - May not have desired impact on comprehension
  - □ More research is still needed on reading
  - □ No studies have been conducted on match instruction in 24-hour settings

(Gagnon & Barber, 2014)

Devereux | CENTER FOR
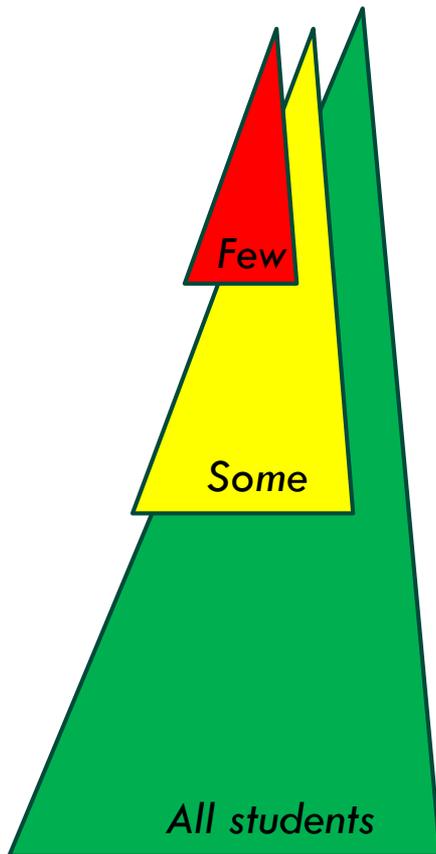ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

What can work?

- Expand instruction in reading to include English/language arts
  - Particularly as integrated in content areas
- Focus on reading comprehension in addition to accuracy and fluency
- Incorporate explicit instructional practices
  - Review of prior skills/knowledge before beginning new instruction
  - Brisk pace
  - Immediate and corrective feedback
  - Monitor student performance
  - Frequent opportunities to respond
  - Guided and supported practice
- Adopt evidence-based programs

(Archer & Hughes, 2011; Gagnon & Barber, 2014)

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Layers of Tiered Supports for Instruction

A Response to Intervention Approach

Few

Some

All students

➢ **High quality, evidence-based instruction**

  o Layer supports in tiers

  o Intensity of intervention practices matches magnitude of need

➢ **Assess academic skills**

  o Screen all students

  o Monitor students throughout year

➢ **Data-based decision-making**

  o Determine needs of students based on assessment outcomes

(Kovaleski, VanDerHeyden, & Shapiro, 2013)

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Improving Educational Outcomes for Students in Out-of-Home Placements

1. *What was our "need"?*

2. *What did we do?*

3. *How did our efforts make an impact?*

4. *What are our next steps?*

Devereux | CENTER FOR
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

What was our "need"?

Devereux Background

2015-2016

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health

- **Arizona**
- **California**
- **Colorado**
- **Connecticut**
- **Delaware**
- **Florida**
- **Georgia**
- **Massachusetts**
- **New Jersey**
- **New York**
- **Pennsylvania**
- **Rhode Island**
- **Texas**

- Largest not-for-profit provider of children's and adult's behavioral healthcare

- Approximately 20,000 individuals across 13 states with over 7,000 professionals
  - Residential treatment
  - Treatment foster care
  - Community–based services

- Dual mission of service and training
  - APA Internship
  - Center for Effective Schools
  - Center for Resilient Children

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | UNLOCKING HUMAN POTENTIAL™

Devereux Center for Effective Schools

Building the capacity of schools and other child-serving institutions to better serve children and adolescents with, and at risk for developing, emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD).

- Apply behavioral principles to systems within preventative framework
  - School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in urban schools
  - Alternative Education settings Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

- Professional Development Trainings, Workshops & Technical Assistance

- Product development
  - Strengthening Emotional Support Service (SESS)
    - Building Essential Skills for Teachers of Students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders (BEST-EBD)
  - Stop-Gap Model of Residential Service Delivery
  - Devereux Classroom Observation Tool (DCOT)
  - Toolbox of Parenting Skills (TOPS)
  - Lunchroom Behavior Game (LBG)

- Consultation internal & external to Devereux
  - Student-focused, Class-wide, & Systems-Level

Devereux | ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | UNLOCKING HUMAN POTENTIAL™

Examined Our Schools' Reading Instructional Practices

- Studied our students in schools within our residential treatment settings

- Purpose of this examination was to…
  - Examine student changes in reading achievement over time
  - Examine relationships between direct instruction curriculum implementation and students' oral reading fluency scores

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Our Setting

12

Residential Treatment Schools

8

States, including: AZ, CT, FL, GA, MA, NY, PA, TX

499

Students enrolled across grades 2-12

191

Students enrolled in grades 2-8

Devereux | CENTER FOR
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Measures

AIMSweb1.0 Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement

- **Standardized, individually administered reading probes**
- **Measure oral reading fluency**
  - Words read correctly per minute
  - Grade-level passages
- **Assessed in winter (January) and spring (May)**

Devereux | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Measures

Education Committee Reading Instruction Questionnaire

- Sample Questions:
  - When teaching reading to students in elementary school, do you use *(check all that apply)*:
    - No direct instruction curriculum implemented
    - Combination of direct instruction and non-direct instruction curriculum implemented
    - Only direct instruction curriculum implemented
  - On average, how much time do your students in elementary school spend in reading instruction?

What did we learn about our students' reading performance?

- Majority of students performed below national averages for each grade level

- Many students regressed or demonstrated no growth in oral reading fluency from winter to spring

- Most students who improved in reading performance demonstrated growth at average rate
  - For students whose initial performance is below average, they need to make gains at a greater than average rate to "catch up" to same-grade peers

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

What did we learn about our schools' instructional practices?

- Levels of direct instruction implementation did not impact students' reading performance

- Wide variation in implementation of reading curriculum across schools

  - 112 to 450 minutes per week spent on reading instruction

  - Direct instruction curricula used inconsistently across schools

Summary of Our "Need"

1. Continue to monitor students' reading performance

2. Adopt evidence-based curricula
   - Core curriculum for all students
   - Supplemental curricula and interventions for students with more intensive reading needs
   - Provide adequate instructional time for reading

3. Implement data-based decision making to improve reading progress

Few

Some

All students

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS
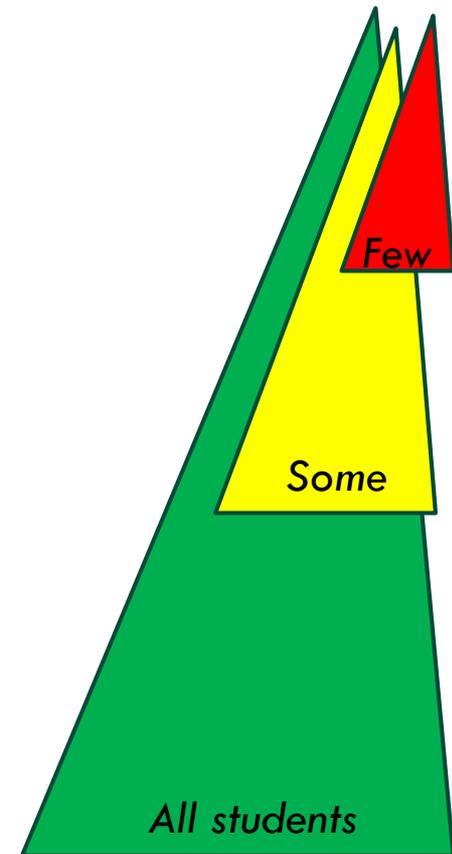
What did we do?

Organization-wide adoption of assessment and instruction practices

2016-2019

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Organization-Wide Structure

Organization-wide oversight

- Expertise in education programming
- Education Director representation

Education Committee

Bi-weekly meetings

School-level administrator

- 1 per school
- Decision-making authority

Education Director

Webinar-based meetings 3 times per year

School-level staff

- 1-4 per school
- Instructional staff
- Provide support to teachers

Coach

Webinar-based meetings

- 3-5 times per year
- Include Education Director

Organization-Wide Structure

- Webinar-based calls with Education Directors and Coaches at least 3 times per year
  - ☐ Aligned with assessment periods
  - ☐ Prompts and reminders
  - ☐ Individual schools report-out

- "Lessons Learned" for encouraging participation
  - ☐ Schedule Education Director and Coaches calls "back-to-back"
  - ☐ Establish yearly schedule over summer
  - ☐ Send calendar reminders to all electronically
  - ☐ Include executive leadership on communications
  - ☐ Provide tips and answer "FAQs" on helping teachers use assessment to inform instruction

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Education Summit:
A Shift in Our Practices

WHO?	• Led by Education Committee • All Education Directors and Coaches from all schools • Executive leadership

WHAT?	• **Assessment**: Training on updated, centralized assessment system (aimswebPlus)
	• **Instruction**: Overview of new reading curriculum:
	   • Core curriculum purchase and adoption
	   • Supplemental curriculum recommendations
	   • Evidence-based intervention training
	• **Data-based decision making**: Training in how to use school-wide data to make decisions about reading instruction

WHEN?	• Summer of 2016; before new initiative to be launched
WHERE?	• Central location (corporate offices)
WHY?	• To kick-off the new education programming structure

Assessment
Streamlining Our Approach

- Updated assessment system: aimswebPlus

- Centralized oversight as one organization-wide "district"
  - 12 schools across multiple states
  - Education Committee serves as "district" administrators
  - Oversee all teachers' access and all students' assessments

Assessment
Implementation

- Trained school-based coaches to complete assessments
  - Benchmarking (3 times per year)
  - Progress monitoring

- Method for training coaches
  - Education Summit: group training in person
  - Coaches Calls: webinar-style remote group meetings
  - Ongoing technical support: individual remote calls with screen-sharing

- Method for training teachers
  - Coaches train teachers in each school
  - Provide coaches with scripted PowerPoints and handouts to train teachers

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Assessment
Tips for Effective Administration

- Behavior management strategies
  - Use a motivation/reward system for student task completion
  - Have all testing materials prepared ahead of time
  - Provide breaks during tests that last longer than 1-2 minutes
  - "Grandma's Rule" → Assessment first, then preferred activity
  - Limit distractions in the testing environment
  - Allow choice for timing or location of assessment when possible
  - Monitor testing sessions for online assessments
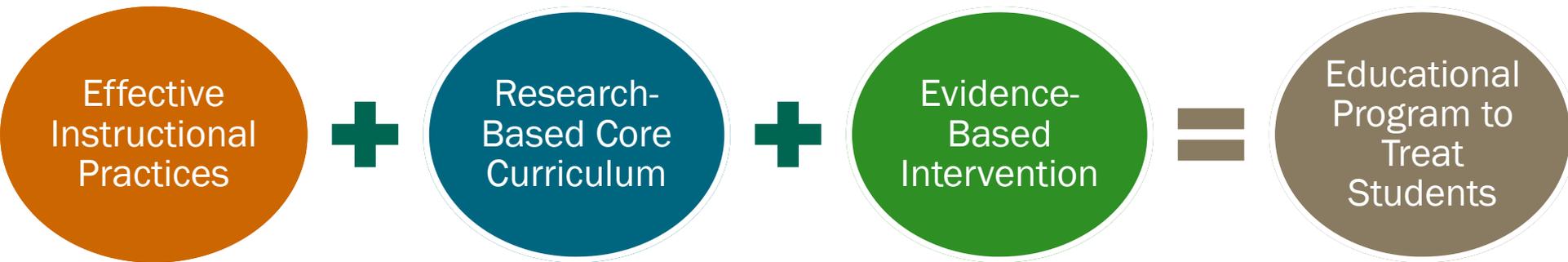
Assessment
Tips for Effective Administration

- Assessment completion incentives

  - Post assessment completion rate progress in students' residential units

  - Unit-based competitions to reach 100% assessment completion

  - Reward menus for preferred incentives for…

    - Students
    - Staff

- Outlook calendar invitations for testing periods

- Email reminders prior to assessment periods

Devereux | CENTER FOR
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Instruction
Adopting Effective Practices

Effective Instructional Practices **+** Research-Based Core Curriculum **+** Evidence-Based Intervention **=** Educational Program to Treat Students

Instruction
Adopting Effective Practices

- Train coaches to support teachers with implementing explicit instructional practices
  - Establish clear expectations for instruction
  - Review prior knowledge before introducing new content
  - Provide immediate and corrective feedback
  - Offer frequent opportunities for students to respond
    - Response cards
    - White boards
    - Choral responding
    - Shoulder partners
    - Think-Pair-Share discussions

Instruction
Adopting Research-Based Core Curriculum

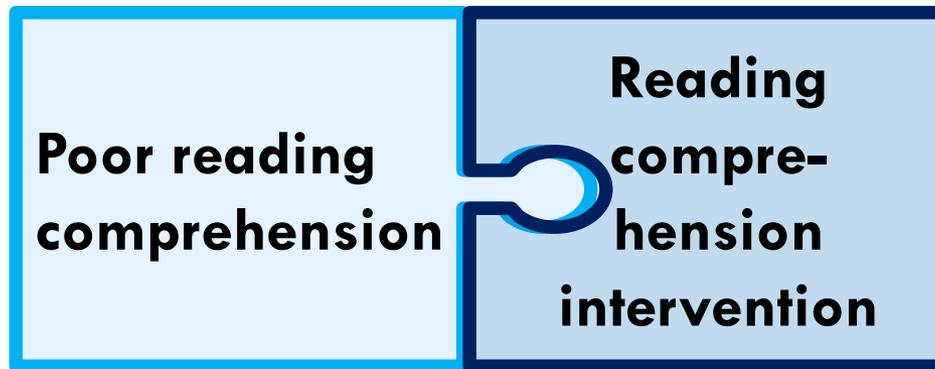|	
Current Use	• Surveyed staff to identify existing curriculum use
Research	• Examined evidence based for existing curriculum • Identified other curricula with strong evidence base
Compare	• Compare curricula with strong research support
Select	• Choose curriculum that is most cost effective and meets greatest need
Advocate	• Share with senior leadership the need for better academic outcomes • Identify the selected curriculum
Coordinate	• Coordinate organization-wide purchase of curriculum
Follow Through	• Ensure schools adopt the purchased curriculum

Effective Instructional Practices **+** Research-Based Core Curriculum **+** Evidence-Based Intervention **=** Educational Program to Treat Students

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Instruction
Adopting Evidence-Based Interventions

- Student needs must drive intervention selection

Poor reading fluency scores → Reading fluency intervention

Poor reading comprehension → Reading compre-hension intervention

Effective Instructional Practices + Research-Based Core Curriculum + Evidence-Based Intervention = Educational Program to Treat Students

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Instruction
Adopting Evidence-Based Interventions

- Skill-specific

- Need varies by school and student

- Provided intervention "manual" of free, evidence-based strategies

  □ Florida Center for Reading Research activities (https://fcrr.org/resources/resources_sca.html)

- Recommended evidence-based supplemental curricula

Instruction
Adopting Evidence-Based Interventions

- Identifying evidence base for academic interventions and supplemental curricula

Resource	Location
What Works Clearinghouse	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/
National Center on Intensive Intervention	https://intensiveintervention.org/intervention-resources/literacy-strategies#comprehension https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/instructional-intervention-tools
Best Evidence Encyclopedia	http://www.bestevidence.org/

Instruction
Adopting Evidence-Based Interventions

- Training provided in evidence-based interventions
  - Folding In (Shapiro, 2010)
    - Flash-card based intervention
    - Begin with 70% known material, 30% unknown
    - "Fold" the unknown material into the known material
    - Provides multiple opportunities for practice of unknown material in low frustration context
  - Online training prepared with voice-over
  - Quizzes to check understanding throughout
  - Available on organization-wide learning site

Instruction
Adopting Effective Practices

- Use progress monitoring data to monitor students' performance and adjust instruction as needed

1. If the student is making **improvement** toward the goal…

Keep up the intervention & keep progress monitoring!

2. If there are an **insufficient** number of data points to make a decision about a student's progress…

Keep up the intervention & keep progress monitoring!

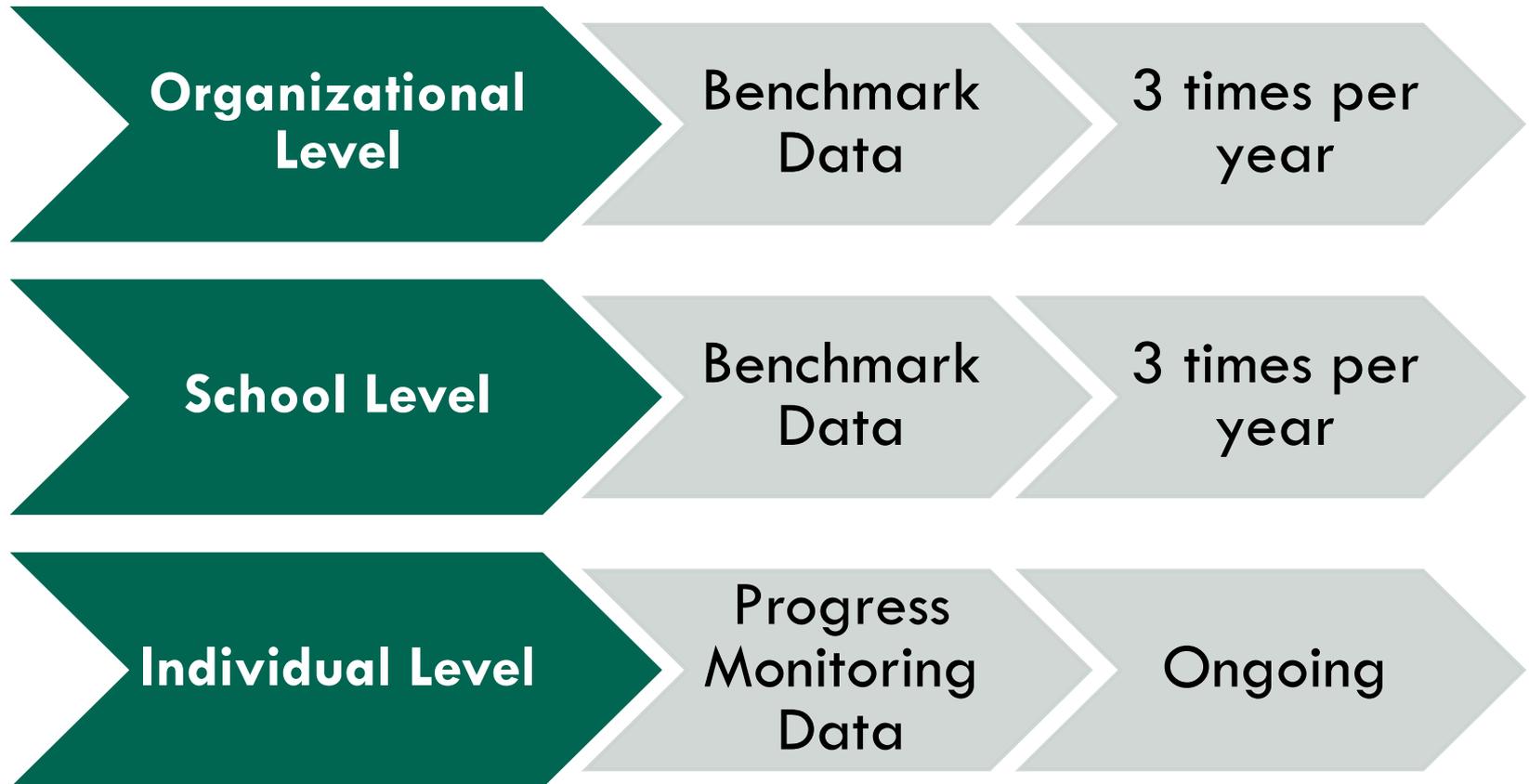3. If the student is **not** making improvements toward the goal…

Change the intervention & keep progress monitoring!

ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Data-Based Decision Making
How do we know if we are improving?

- Use assessment data to identify progress

Organizational Level	Benchmark Data	3 times per year
School Level	Benchmark Data	3 times per year
Individual Level	Progress Monitoring Data	Ongoing

Devereux | CENTER FOR
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

How did our efforts make an impact?

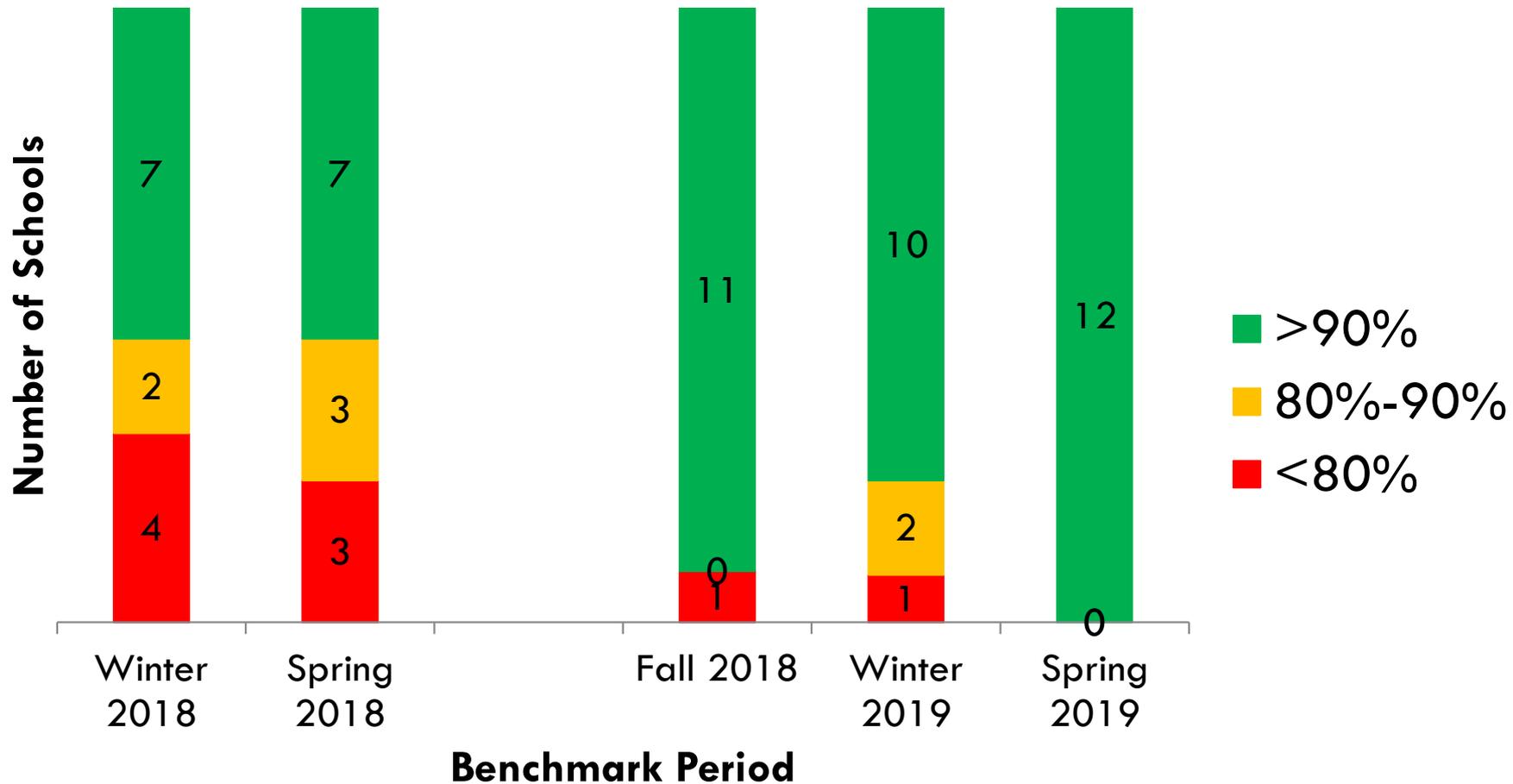*Examining students' growth*

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Assessment Completion for Reading

- Increased oversight over assessment completion
- Benchmark completion percentages
  - By school year
  - School-specific
  - Categories: <80%, 80-90%, >90%
- Shared with organizational leadership
  - CEO and Clinical Director
  - Residential program executive leadership
- School-specific completion percentages shared with each school
  - Praise for schools with 80-90% or >90%
  - Corrective suggestions and support for schools with <80%

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Assessment Completion for Reading

Current Reading Performance
Rate of Improvement

- **Student improvements in reading**
  - Examine students' growth in reading skill
  - Students at different reading levels need to improve at different rates
    - <u>Average range</u> = grow at average rate to "stay the course"
    - <u>Below average range</u> = need to grow at faster rate to "catch up"

- **Student growth percentiles**
  - Compare students' rates of reading improvement to the improvement rates of other students in the ***same*** reading level

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

What are our next steps?

Continuing to improve educational outcomes

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

How can we continue to support each of our schools remotely?

- Hold coaches calls separately
  - Individualize supports provided to the needs of each school
  - Maintain updated "task lists" for school staff and Education Committee staff

- Establish and maintain common online shared resources for ease of access to documents, trainings, and assessment materials

- Provide resources for implementing evidence-based instructional strategies for:
  - Core curriculum
  - Supplemental curriculum and interventions

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

How can we support our teachers?

- Provide professional development in:
    - □ Assessment completion
    - □ Instructional practices
    - □ Using assessment data to set goals and make decisions

- Use online learning system to provide trainings remotely

- Help coaches better train teachers
    - □ Provide scripted trainings for coaches to use during live trainings with staff

Devereux
ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

How do we know we are doing what we are supposed to do?

- Fidelity of assessment completion
  - Coaches monitor teachers' use of the assessment system independently
  - Examine teachers' use of assessments to progress monitor individual students' progress

- Fidelity of curriculum implementation
  - Core curriculum
  - Supplemental curricula and interventions for students who struggle most

- Build sustainability for schools to maintain integrity of assessment and instruction practices

What other content and supports can we provide?

- Expand to other academic areas
    - Math
    - Science

- Support schools in identifying adequate time to provide instruction
    - Allocated time for core instruction
    - Allocated time for interventions

- Continue to provide training and coaching in behavior management at the school and classroom levels to promote positive behavior

48 Summary

Key Take-Aways

- Students in on-site schools of Pennsylvania's residential and correctional facilities experience unique academic challenges

- Organization-wide scale-up to improve:
  - Assessment practices
  - Instructional content and strategies
  - Data-based decision making

- Online and remote technology necessary for remote assessment oversight and professional development in instructional strategies

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Comments…

Questions…

Thoughts…

Things that make you go hmm…

Contact Information

www.centerforeffectiveschools.org

Devereux ADVANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS