

2025 NeMTSS Summit Breakout Session Summaries

All times listed are Central Daylight Time. Sessions will not be recorded for later viewing.

In an effort to save paper, hard copies of the summit schedule and session summaries will not be available at the event. You may print materials (as needed) in advance.

SESSION TYPES:



Hybrid



In-Person



Recommended for
Pre-Service Educators

THURSDAY, OCT. 9

10:30-11:30 a.m. | Breakout Session A



Gold 1

Strength in Collaboration: Empowering Schools to Achieve Literacy Success

Allyson DenBeste, Academic Officer; Jamie Cook, Literacy Officer; and Olivia Alberts, Reading Specialist, NDE

LEVEL: *Beginner* **TOPICS:** *Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making*

In this interactive session, team members from the Offices of Literacy and Teaching, Learning and Assessment will provide updates on statewide literacy initiatives, including an overview of requirements for elementary buildings under the revised Nebraska Reading Improvement Act. Participants will also learn about proposed activities within the Comprehensive Literacy State Development grant applications that emphasize strong Tier 1 instruction, along with examples of how other schools/districts are working to improve literacy outcomes in our state.



Gold 7

Getting to Know Students from a Strength-Based Perspective

Shelley Moore, Ph.D., Inclusive Educator, Storyteller and Researcher, Five Moore Minutes & Outside Pin Consulting

LEVEL: *Beginner* **TOPICS:** *Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports*

How can we respond to student needs without focusing on deficits? This session will explore how individual and class dimensions can be used for planning and advocacy from a positive and responsive perspective that considers student identity and contribution. Learn how to use a class profile to make decisions that reflect the unique composition of a classroom community, and build on Universal Design for Learning and differentiated practices.



Silver 1

School Spotlight: Constructivist Co-Teaching with the Creative Research Stages: De-Siloing Special Education, English Language Arts and Social Studies

Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools

LEVEL: *Beginner* **TOPICS:** *Literacy, Communication & Collaboration*

Discover how a team of rural educators broke down traditional silos between special education, social studies and English Language Arts to design a universally accessible, co-taught unit on World War I. Using the Creative Research Stages framework, the team created the unit to support all learners by embedding Universal Design for Learning principles from the start. Learn how their collaborative approach empowered learners and transformed their practices. Attendees will receive access to the full WWI unit, co-teaching strategies and practical tools to integrate creativity, inquiry and accessibility into their classrooms.









Silver 2




School Spotlight: Building Bridges, Not Walls — Transforming School Culture Through Restorative Practices

Brady Public Schools


LEVEL: *Beginner* **TOPICS:** *Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, School Safety, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration*






Brady Public Schools is transforming school culture through Restorative Practices that strengthen relationships, foster mutual respect and build a true sense of community. This session dives into how these practices have become central to daily interactions — from classrooms to the school board — creating a more collaborative, supportive environment. Educators will share how restorative practices are embedded into the school's culture to prevent conflict, repair harm and ensure every voice is heard. Attendees will learn practical strategies for repairing harm, preventing conflict, building strong connections and cultivating a school community where all students and staff feel valued and heard.






 Silver 3/4	<p>Cruising with Confidence: Refueling Your Literacy Efforts with the Targeted Improvement Plan Brooke Gebers, Regional Support Lead (R3), NeMTSS; and Darsha Pelland, Director of Low Incidence, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Buckle up and get ready to supercharge your literacy efforts! This session explores how to “upgrade to premium” by using the Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) as high-octane fuel for literacy achievement, especially for students with disabilities. Presenters will spotlight real examples and ideas from schools that educators can use to refine and strengthen their TIP, transforming it from a compliance checklist into a powerful roadmap for measurable student growth. Whether participants are just revving their engines or already cruising with confidence, this session will provide just what they need to stay fueled and focused for the road ahead.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>Developing a Continuous Improvement Roadmap Using State Classifications Derek Ippensen, Director of Accountability, Assistant Administrator, Coordinated School and District Support, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Continuous Improvement</i></p> <p>In this session, attendees will be introduced to the next iteration of Nebraska’s classification system and learn how it can help steer school improvement efforts in the right direction. Discover how the system can serve as a GPS for developing a continuous improvement roadmap — guiding schools toward meaningful, data-informed progress.</p>
 Silver 6	<p>Fueling Understanding: Strong Comprehension Classroom Practices for Reading Success Claudine Kennicutt, Regional Literacy Coach; and Dallas Lewandowski, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Explore high-impact comprehension practices that fuel student understanding and align to the Language Comprehension strand of Scarborough’s Rope. This session provides tools and strategies for strong literacy instruction during classroom walkthroughs and supports aligned with the Science of Reading and NeMTSS, helping educators drive meaningful literacy growth across elementary classrooms.</p> 
 Silver 7	<p>Tier 2 Interventions — What’s Available Beyond Check-In/Check-Out? Anne-Marie Bixler-Funk, PBIS Coach, Olathe Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Check-In/Check-Out is a wonderful Tier 2 intervention — but it is not right for all students! This session will expand educators’ menu of evidence-based Tier 2 interventions that can be implemented within a PBIS framework. This session will highlight specific Tier 2 interventions for supporting students who avoid work, experience internalizing concerns, struggle with social skills, and even middle schoolers who don’t do their homework. While all are welcome, this session is especially appropriate for administrators, school-based mental health professionals, and others involved in prevention and intervention services.</p>
 Silver 8/9	<p>Writing to Read Pam Bazis, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; Tim Andress, Postdoctoral Scholar, University of California, Irvine; and Michael Hebert, Associate Professor, University of California, Irvine</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Unlock the power of writing to boost reading achievement! This session introduces practical, research-based strategies that integrate writing into literacy instruction to strengthen foundational skills, enhance comprehension and support struggling learners. Explore adaptable approaches like Paragraph Shrinking, Sentence Combining and Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) that fit seamlessly into schedules and across grade levels. Designed with Nebraska’s literacy goals in mind, this session equips educators with evidence-based strategies that elevate both reading and writing outcomes — without adding to their workload. Walk away inspired and prepared to transform literacy through the power of purposeful writing.</p>

 Silver 10	<p>Literacy After Hours: Leveraging After-School and Summer Programs to Support Literacy Goals</p> <p>Stephanie Vadnais, Assistant Vice President, Beyond School Bells; and Greta Carlson, Early Childhood Project Manager, Nebraska Growing Readers Initiative</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Unlock the untapped potential of after-school and summer programs to build on school-day literacy goals through creative, student-centered approaches. This session shares lessons from Beyond School Bells’ Summer of Reading Exploration pilots, highlighting strategies that boost reading engagement, promote book ownership and strengthen family involvement — supporting MTSS-aligned literacy outcomes beyond the classroom.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Rest Stops and Roadblocks to Building and Sustaining Multi-tiered Systems to Support Social, Emotional and Behavioral Development</p> <p>Mackenzie Riedel, Integrated Support Specialist (R1), NeMTSS; Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE; Jill Guenther, Regional Support Lead (R2), NeMTSS; and Sara Gentry, Integrated Support Specialist (R5), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Join NeMTSS team members and fellow educators supporting social, emotional and behavioral development. Exchange ideas and explore solutions in this discussion-based session focused on building and sustaining multi-tiered systems to support social, emotional and behavioral development.</p>
 Silver 12	<p>Using Early Childhood Data to Drive Literacy Intervention</p> <p>Kelly Jones, Carol Burk and Emly Daberkow, Early Childhood Education Specialists, NDE; and Amy Colwell Williams, Early Childhood State Lead, NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Explore how early childhood educators and administrators can effectively align and use literacy data to support an MTSS framework. By using literacy data from Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) and classroom observations, districts can make informed decisions to enhance tiered instruction and improve all levels of support for our youngest learners.</p>

12:30-1:30 p.m. | Breakout Session B

 Gold 1	<p>Literacy Support for Students with Learning Disabilities: Evidence-Based Strategies for Dyslexia and Dysgraphia</p> <p>Pam Bazis, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; and Amanda Kern, Associate Professor, Special Education & Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska at Omaha</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, Dyslexia and Dysgraphia</i></p> <p>Unlock powerful strategies to support students with dyslexia and dysgraphia! This session builds educator expertise by exploring neurological foundations, key characteristics and evidence-based literacy instruction. Participants will explore early intervention, multimodal learning and differentiated instruction to enhance reading and writing outcomes for students with or at-risk for dyslexia and dysgraphia.</p>
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 Gold 7	<p>Designing for All: Considering Inclusive Frameworks to Plan for All Shelley Moore, Ph.D., Inclusive Educator, Storyteller and Researcher, Five Moore Minutes & Outside Pin Consulting</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Diversity</i></p> <p>Our understanding of inclusion is shifting. Rather than trying to include a few students who are different, we are striving to teach to the difference. In this session, participants will consider how to integrate multiple inclusive frameworks that can guide collaborative planning teams to design for differentiation — rather than retrofit for deficits.</p>
 Silver 1	<p>School Spotlight: Preschool Navigation — Using Data to Drive Success on the MTSS Highway Sandy Creek Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Start those engines and join a deep dive into how data can fuel preschool success within an MTSS framework. Discover how the Pyramid Model serves as a strong framework for promoting social-emotional and academic development in early childhood settings. Participants will learn how to use data from Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) and Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) to monitor implementation, inform instruction and guide program-level decision-making. Whether mapping out the journey or already cruising down the MTSS highway, this session will provide practical strategies to keep preschool programs on the path to success.</p>
 Silver 2	<p>School Spotlight: The Power of Circles — Transforming School Culture Through Restorative Practices Freeman Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Discover how the transformative power of Restorative Practices (RP) is reshaping school culture in Freeman Public Schools. Learn how teachers and administrators have embraced and implemented the use of restorative circles to build stronger relationships, enhance communication, and create a more inclusive, respectful school environment. Through RP, students and staff have grown together — building trust, empathy and accountability within their school community. Join this session to explore practical strategies, real-life examples and the impactful journey FPS educators are on to create a culture where every voice is heard and every individual feels valued.</p>
 Silver 3/4	<p>School Spotlight: Data is Our GPS — Navigating Student Needs with Heart Summerland Elementary School</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy</i></p> <p>Buckle up for a road trip through one elementary school’s journey to boost literacy success through the power of data-driven decision-making, evidence-based interventions, instructional coaching and meaningful relationships. Educators will map out how assessment data can act as a school’s GPS — guiding instruction, meeting student needs in both general education and special education classrooms, and ensuring no learner is left behind. Along the way, explore strategic stops focused on What I Need (WIN) time and targeted small-group instruction — all fueled by coaching that empowers teachers to navigate student engagement and academic data with confidence.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>Fast Lane Literacy: Accelerating Advanced Readers on the MTSS Highway Olivia Alberts, Reading Specialist; and Becky Michael, K-12 ELA Content Specialist, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports, HAL</i></p> <p>Too often, advanced readers are left idling on the shoulder of the MTSS highway. This session maps out how to navigate NeMTSS with these learners in mind — balancing access to core literacy with acceleration, extensions and differentiated pathways that fuel growth, challenge potential and support equitable literacy success.</p>

 Silver 6	<p>Using Universal Protocols to Address Severe Behaviors in School Settings: Enhancing Safety, Dignity, and Joy for Students and Staff Annette Wragge, State Coordinator; and Kara Coble, Southeast Region Behavior Specialist, Nebraska ASD Network</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, School Safety, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Looking for a more compassionate way to support students with challenging behaviors? Universal Protocols are relationship-based systems designed to prevent crises for learners with autism and others displaying severe behaviors. This session offers an overview of this evidence-based process, accompanied by data, video examples and real-life stories from the Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Network and four public schools.</p>
 Silver 7	<p>Leading with Impact: Understanding Rule 11 and Strengthening Early Childhood Programming Michele Rayburn, Director of Student Services, ESU 6; Holli Lovegrove, Student Services Supervisor, ESU 6; Amy Colwell Williams, Early Childhood State Lead, NeMTSS; and Heidi Farmer, Regional Support Lead (R1), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Effective leadership is essential for high-quality early childhood programs and long-term student success. This session will provide an overview of Nebraska's Rule 11 requirements, strategies for strengthening leadership, and connections to NeMTSS and district improvement efforts. Participants will gain practical insights to enhance early learning experiences and drive systemic impact.</p>
 Silver 8/9	<p>Fueling the Literacy Roadtrip with Integrated Supports for the Whole Child Mackenzie Riedel, Integrated Support Specialist (R1); Mary Jo McElhose, Literacy State Lead; Jill Guenther, Regional Support Lead (R2); and Sara Gentry, Integrated Support Specialist (R5), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Social and emotional well-being significantly impacts students' ability to learn and develop literacy skills, and conversely, literacy skills contribute to overall health and well-being. This presentation will review theoretical models of literacy, provide strategies to embed these skills and identify how this work is integrated within Nebraska ELA standards.</p>
 Silver 10	<p>Need an Intervention for Students with Internalizing Concerns? Look No Further! Barbara Mitchell, Associate Professor of Special Education, Kansas State University</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>An increasing number of children and youth are at risk for internalizing issues linked to anxiety and depression. This session outlines the Resilience Education Program (REP), a Tier 2 intervention for students in grades 4-8, developed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with the NeMTSS team's commitment to providing High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), the summit includes a Process and Planning Space for educators. This dedicated space allows teams to gather, debrief and develop action steps based on shared learning from summit sessions. The room will be staffed by members of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education who can assist in action planning, especially in relation to a district's Continuous Improvement process and Targeted Improvement Plans.</p>



Silver 12

Bridging the Gap: HQIM + Instructional Strategies = Student Success

Tara Gossman, Teaching and Learning Specialist, ESU 4; Julie Pierce, Title I Teacher, Pawnee City Public Schools; and Jordan Amundson, School Psychologist, Pawnee City Public Schools



LEVEL: Beginner **TOPICS:** Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making

High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) are a critical foundation for student success, but materials alone won't drive meaningful growth. This session explores how pairing HQIM with intentional instructional strategies can maximize student learning and achievement. Participants will examine practical ways to align teaching practices with HQIM, ensuring deeper engagement and stronger outcomes. By the end of the session, educators will be equipped with practical strategies to bridge the gap between curriculum and impactful instruction, and identify the roles of teachers and leaders in this process.

1:45-2:45 p.m. | Breakout Session C



Gold 1

Beyond Alignment: Delivering Effective Student Supports Through MTSS

Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE; and Heidi Farmer, Regional Support Lead (R1), NeMTSS

LEVEL: Intermediate **TOPICS:** Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Move beyond simply "aligning" with MTSS — learn how to use the NeMTSS Essential Elements to deliver effective literacy, behavior and attendance supports. This session offers practical strategies for building a systematic, sustainable system of support that ensures student needs drive decision-making, not compliance.



Gold 7

Effective Tiered Support Through Data

Katie Novak, Ed.D., Founder and Executive Director, Novak Education

LEVEL: Intermediate **TOPICS:** Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

A strong MTSS framework relies on a culture of data use that is intentional, collaborative and focused on improving outcomes for all learners. This session explores essential components of a healthy data culture and provides tools to self-assess current data practices. Participants will also examine what makes a tiered intervention truly effective — reviewing key criteria from the research base and reflecting on how current supports align to student needs, data and desired outcomes.









Silver 1





School Spotlight: Buckle Up for Connection — Building Literacy Through Relationships on the Road to Student Success

Summerland Public Schools

LEVEL: Beginner **TOPICS:** Literacy

Like every great road trip, the journey to literacy success starts with the right map — and the right people in the passenger seat. Now in its fourth year of the journey, the Summerland team is continuing to pave a strong 7–12 system focused on building meaningful relationships and meeting student needs with care and purpose. Using data as its GPS and student voice as a co-pilot, the team thoughtfully introduces new programs and supports to guide learners forward. Through every twist and turn, relationships and social, emotional and behavioral learning prove essential — forming the foundation for student growth and literacy gains. Discover the milestones, scenic routes and wrong turns that have shaped Summerland's roadmap toward deeper connection and stronger learning.

 Silver 2	<p>School Spotlight: Mapping the Miles — Our MTSS Route from Intention to Impact Conestoga Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Building Systems</i></p> <p>Explore how Conestoga Jr.-Sr. High built a more intentional MTSS structure over time by aligning teams, routines and interventions around student needs. Rather than overhaul everything at once, the team focused on building clarity, consistency and collaboration into existing structures — one layer at a time. MTSS can grow through strategic adjustments, not major reinvention. Learn how CPS designed a more responsive system by clearly defining team roles, embedding progress monitoring, using data to guide decision-making and creating a culture of student accountability and ownership. This presentation is tailored for schools in the early or rebuilding stages — those looking to connect the dots between good intentions and lasting systems.</p>
 Silver 3/4	<p>Supportive and Assistive Technology to Engage Literacy Skill Development Brian Wojcik, Education Program Supervisor, Assistive Technology Partnership; and Kelly Wojcik, State Systemic Improvement Plan Coordinator, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Literacy, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, Supportive & Assistive Technologies</i></p> <p>Gain practical knowledge of supportive and assistive technologies that can boost literacy for all learners. Presenters will highlight specific tools for reading and writing, illustrating their use as universal, targeted and individualized supports within an MTSS framework. Participants will leave with concrete strategies to effectively integrate technology and empower diverse learners' literacy skill development.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>Sharing the Road: Building MTSS System Drivers Through Collaborative Leadership Angela Plugge, Director of Learning, Waverly District 145</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Explore how collaborative leadership can transform an MTSS approach. This session offers practical strategies and real-world examples from Nebraska schools to help strengthen professional learning, streamline decision-making and build systems that support literacy and academic success. Educators will leave with tools to empower their teams and enhance outcomes for all learners.</p>
 Silver 6	<p>Syntax Matters Crystal Ernst, Teaching and Learning Specialist, ESU 2</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy</i></p> <p>Syntax is an essential component of supporting students in their comprehension of complex, rigorous text. Dive into practical strategies based on the Hochman Method principles and the Science of Reading. Educators of all content areas and grade levels will leave this session with tools to increase literacy skills through syntax.</p>
 Silver 7	<p>Empowering ELL Students: Harnessing AI and Social Stories for Enhanced Learning Catherine Niedermeyer, School Psychologist, ESU 4; and Megan Orchard, English Language Teacher, Ralston Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Explore the use of AI to create personalized social stories for English Language Learners! This presentation will highlight how these narratives enhance students' social skills, emotional intelligence and confidence in navigating social situations, particularly for a second grader receiving ELL services, along with academic and behavioral support through MTSS.</p> 

 Silver 8/9	<p>Using AI and Layered Continuum of Supports to Assist Dyslexic Learners and Educators Tristan Curd, Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer; and Bill Anderson, Chief Engagement Officer, Dyslexico</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, AI, Performance Monitoring, Research</i></p> <p>Take a peek at groundbreaking work at the intersection of artificial intelligence and dyslexia! This session introduces Dyslexico, an AI-based writing assistant designed for dyslexics. Attendees will also hear about how the use of Dyslexico would come into play within the problem solving process and how it fits into essential MTSS elements such as Data-Based Decision Making and Layered Continuum of Support. Attendees will also hear details about the Nebraska Dyslexia Research Grant and how to take part in this research happening right here in Nebraska.</p>
 Silver 10	<p>Teachers and Parents as Partners: Supporting Rural Student Positive Behavior Amanda Witte, Research Associate Professor, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools, University of Nebraska–Lincoln</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: SEBL, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Home-School Partnerships</i></p> <p>When parents and educators engage with one another, students benefit. This session will describe an individualized family-school partnership intervention — Teachers and Parents as Partners — which has been shown to improve student behavior, positive parenting, teacher problem-solving skills and parent-teacher relationships. Participants will learn research-based strategies for building and strengthening home-school partnerships.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with the NeMTSS team’s commitment to providing High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), the summit includes a Process and Planning Space for educators. This dedicated space allows teams to gather, debrief and develop action steps based on shared learning from summit sessions. The room will be staffed by members of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education who can assist in action planning, especially in relation to a district’s Continuous Improvement process and Targeted Improvement Plans.</p>
 Silver 12	<p>Nebraska Literacy Project: Statewide Coaching Journey Phase I Regional Literacy Coaches: Tricia Hintz, Region 1; Caryn Zietlow, Region 2; Amy Mundil, Region 3; Claudine Kennicutt, Region 4; Angie Dickey, Region 5; Lisa Oltman, Lincoln Public Schools; and Miki Holbeck, Omaha Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, Coaching</i></p> <p>Follow educators on their Phase I journey through the Nebraska Literacy Project, with a focus on Tenet 3: Regional Literacy Coaches. Nebraska regional literacy coaches will reflect on their Regional Roadshow 5-Day series, highlighting key milestones, lessons learned and the impact of their work to date. Learn about and ask questions around the statewide Literacy Coaching initiative, which is grounded in evidence-based practices and aligned with Nebraska’s literacy goals.</p>

3:00-4:00 p.m. | Breakout Session D



Gold 1

The Literacy Road Trip: Navigating Tiered Instruction and the role of Small Groups to Drive Success

Mary Jo McElhose, Literacy State Lead, NeMTSS; and Joni Runge, Professional Development Consultant, ESU 5

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

This session explores the tiered framework as a vehicle by which aligned delivery of evidence-based literacy practices are implemented. The role of small groups within the framework will be prioritized. Participants will gain practical strategies and receive specific guidance on differentiating instruction and providing targeted support to meet the varying needs of all learners in small groups.



Gold 7

From Vision to Impact: Driving Coherent MTSS and UDL Systems

Katie Novak, Ed.D., Founder and Executive Director, Novak Education

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

For MTSS and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to take hold, they must move beyond isolated initiatives and become embedded in how a system functions. This leadership session focuses on what it takes to implement these frameworks in ways that build coherence, shift practice and sustain progress over time. Leaders will analyze common implementation challenges, work through case-based scenarios to identify breakdowns and set a strategic focus aligned to their current stage of implementation.



Silver 1

School Spotlight: Navigating Tier 2 Success — A Roadmap to Effective Instructional Supports in Junior High **Leigh Community Schools**

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

In spring 2023, Leigh Community Schools implemented a math and reading intervention and enrichment program in grades 7–8. The program expanded to grade 9 in the 2024-25 school year, and there are plans to add grade 10 this year. Through data analysis and collaboration, the team continues to refine its processes — and the results show that students are benefiting. LCS has found success by building a common-sense approach that targets each individual student. Hear about the team's journey — successes and roadblocks alike. This session aims to inspire districts that may feel overwhelmed by the prospect of implementing MTSS in middle and upper grades.








Silver 2





School Spotlight: Building Success Together — West Point Elementary's MTSS Journey **West Point Elementary**


LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

In just a decade, West Point Elementary rose from being designated as a Persistently Low Achieving School to achieving an Excellent rating in 2023 and receiving the prestigious Blue Ribbon Award in 2024. A key factor in its success has been the implementation of a comprehensive and robust MTSS plan. Explore how West Point's strategic scheduling, targeted interventions and effective teaching strategies played a crucial role in driving this transformation.

 Silver 3/4	<p>Fostering Emotional Literacy with Restorative Practices: A Proactive Path Forward Chantelle Nelsen, Program Coordinator, ESU 1; Amber Daffer, Jessica Henrich and Rebecca Jepsen, Teachers, Tower School, Wayne, NE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Literacy, Building Systems, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session explores integrating proactive Restorative Practices (RP) within a Level 3 setting using MTSS. Participants will learn strategies for building community, fostering relationships and promoting social-emotional growth through community-building circles. The session will also examine current data on the positive impact of RP on literacy outcomes and student success.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>Creating a Behavior Intervention Plan to “Wow” Your Friends on Monday Morning Matt McNiff, Behavior Consultant, ESU 5</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Tier III</i></p> <p>Dreaming of a behavior intervention plan (BIP) that actually works? This presentation will guide teams in creating a solid, evidence-based BIP that can support students with the most significant behavior needs. Hear many examples of how to implement plans and leave with free templates to support meaningful change.</p>
 Silver 6	<p>Road Trip! Mapping Behavior Interventions Through Tiered Resources Dani Niss, Special Education Coordinator; and Cassie Houser, Behavior Specialist, ESU 4</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Dani and Cassie will bring the snacks and music — all that’s needed is the (figurative) luggage! Join a guided tour through three tiers of behavior interventions, from classroom-wide strategies to individualized plans. Expect high-leverage practices, Check-In/Check-Out, data collection and action planning tools to help teams confidently navigate behavior challenges. Let’s get packing!</p>
 Silver 7	<p>The Secret Weapon to Increase Literacy Outcomes: Comprehensive Special Education Teacher Induction and Mentorship Pamela Brezenski, Project Manager, Get SET Nebraska; and Amanda Witte, Research Associate Professor, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools, University of Nebraska–Lincoln</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Explore the lesser-known systemic enemy limiting student literacy and math achievement: special education teacher retention! In this session, participants will examine how teacher turnover impacts student academic outcomes, discover how comprehensive mentoring can help and come away with powerful tools to defeat the enemy.</p>
 Silver 8/9	<p>The NRS 79-11,157.01 Collection: Foundational Data on the Literacy Road Tara Korshoj, IDEA Part B Specialist; and Olivia Alberts, Reading Specialist, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session will help K–3 educators better understand the reporting requirements of Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) 79-11,157.01. Presenters will explore data trends in this collection and connect findings to instruction and intervention. Participants will also learn about potential collection updates and research related to the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act.</p>



 Silver 10	<p>Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction in Written Expression</p> <p>Jessica Hagaman, Consultant, High Leverage Education Group; Torri Ortiz Lienemann, Consultant, High Leverage Education Group; and Kara Boyer, Teaching and Learning Consultant, Omaha Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session will provide K–12 educators with a highly practical, step-by-step guide to cognitive strategy instruction, an effective framework for writing instruction. Educators will learn well-validated strategies that include the development of self-regulation to improve written expression. Detailed classroom examples will illustrate how to teach the strategies systematically and monitor student outcomes.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with the NeMTSS team’s commitment to providing High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), the summit includes a Process and Planning Space for educators. This dedicated space allows teams to gather, debrief and develop action steps based on shared learning from summit sessions. The room will be staffed by members of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education who can assist in action planning, especially in relation to a district’s Continuous Improvement process and Targeted Improvement Plans.</p>
 Silver 12	<p>Navigating Our Non-Verbals</p> <p>Heather Robbins, NeMTSS System Consultant; and Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL</i></p> <p>Students are always watching — often more than they are listening. This fast-paced, interactive session will explore the power of non-verbal communication in shaping classroom climate and supporting learning and behavior. Participants will observe, discuss and try out subtle yet powerful non-verbal strategies to elevate instruction, reduce disruptions and build trust. Whether signaling transitions or reinforcing expectations, the way teachers move, look and use space can speak volumes. Walk away with tools to use the very next day.</p> 

4:00-5:30 p.m. Networking	
Pre-Function Area	<p>Connect with NeMTSS team members and find out more about their roles throughout the state. Network with colleagues in similar roles from different ESUs and districts, or meet up with your team after breakouts conclude. Appetizers and a cash bar will be available from 4-5:30 p.m. (Separate registration required.)</p> 

FRIDAY, OCT. 10

10:15-11:15 a.m. | Breakout Session E



Gold 1

The Science of Reading with Multilingual Learners

Anne Hubbell, English Learning Specialist, NDE; Mary Jo McElhose, Literacy State Lead, NeMTSS; Heidi Farmer, Regional Support Lead (R1), NeMTSS; Olivia Alberts, Reading Specialist, NDE; Becky Michael, English Language Arts Specialist, NDE; Mark Brady, Professional Development Coordinator, ESU 7; and Dawn Ferreyra, Professional Learning Consultant, ESU 3

LEVEL: *Beginner* **TOPICS:** *Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Layered Continuum of Supports*

Participants will gain an understanding of the specific linguistic needs of multilingual students and explore resources to support them. Presenters will highlight the additions of multilingual perspectives in the Foundational Literacy Instructional Routines document and the alignment of English Language Proficiency standards with ELA, math and science standards and practices. The session will also connect to NSCAS assessments through the lens of multilingual learners.



Gold 7

Literacy Data: A Powerful Tool to Drive Change and Close Student Gaps

Brent Conway, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Pentucket Regional School District, West Newbury, MA

LEVEL: *Intermediate* **TOPICS:** *Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making*

Famed author and consultant Peter Drucker once said, “What gets measured, gets managed.” In the literacy world, what gets measured often gets prioritized — and gets done. This session will empower educators to use valid and reliable literacy data tools to predict future reading success and evaluate schoolwide performance. These same tools can also help identify where individual students are struggling, supporting the development of targeted intervention plans. With decades of experience leading teams through this process, Dr. Brent Conway will share practical strategies for using literacy data to drive meaningful change at both the classroom and school levels.



Silver 1

School Spotlight: Unlocking Success — ELA and Math MTSS Interventions for Middle School Scottsbluff Public Schools

LEVEL: *Intermediate* **TOPICS:** *Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports*

Scottsbluff Middle School is using data in innovative ways to enhance educational outcomes through MTSS. The school offers leveled ELA and math courses designed to meet diverse learning needs, including Core instruction, quarterly support classes, study strategies, special education and English Learner specialized courses. A unique feature of the program is the WIN (What I Need) period, which redefines how middle school students engage with learning. Designed to excite and motivate, the model helps ensure students are eager to participate in these end-of-day sessions. By fostering enthusiasm and a growth mindset, SPS is paving the way for students to thrive and making learning a rewarding, dynamic experience.








Silver 2

School Spotlight: Everybody Focus! One District’s Approach to Aligning MTSS, School Improvement and Strategic Planning





Norris School District 160

LEVEL: *Intermediate* **TOPICS:** *Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports*

Find your focus! Learn how the Norris School District used multiple pieces of data and information to create a cohesive school improvement plan with clear action steps focused on improving student outcomes. Educators will demonstrate how MTSS and school improvement processes can work together to create a cohesive, strategic system for supporting student success — helping schools stay on course throughout the journey.

 Silver 3/4	<p>Group Contingencies: Enhancing Classroom Dynamics and Learning Outcomes Anne-Marie Bixler-Funk, PBIS Coach, Olathe Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: SEBL, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Curious about table points or group contingencies that are research-based and effective? If yes, come learn about various group contingencies, including CW-Fit. CW-Fit is grounded in key behavioral principles: classroom behaviors can be taught; ignoring inappropriate behavior can reduce it; and reinforcement through class teams and points can improve student performance. A coach with classroom implementation experience will share how CW-Fit works, along with teacher and student perspectives on its success and challenges. Participants will leave with materials to create a group contingency tailored for their students and setting.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>Mile Markers for Foundational Literacy: What to Look for in K-3 Classroom Walkthroughs Claudine Kennicutt, Regional Literacy Coach; and Dallas Lewandowski, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>This session equips educators, both in the classroom and administrators, with a clear framework aligned with the Science of Reading and MTSS to guide observations, support teacher growth and strengthen early literacy outcomes. Participants will walk through the key components of the Foundational IPG and learn how to identify these mile markers for success during classroom visits. With a clear roadmap in hand, participants will leave better equipped to support classroom instruction, spark reflective conversations, and ensure that all students are on the path toward reading success.</p>
 Silver 6	<p>Roadmap for All: Navigating UDL, CTE and Special Education Toward Student Success Michalla Schartz, Southeast Region Transition Facilitator; Amber Vlasnik, Professional Development Specialist, ESU 6; and Nichole Wetjen, Transition Specialist, ESU 6</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Buckle up for an inclusive journey to future-ready learning! This session brings together Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Career and Technical Education (CTE) and special education to chart accessible and equitable routes from school to career. By mapping out essential learning outcomes in both the classroom and the workplace, Nebraska educators will be equipped to guide every learner — especially those with disabilities — toward meaningful employment, independence and lifelong success.</p>
 Silver 7	<p>Marco! Polo! Supporting Students and Complying with Child Find in 2025 Amy Colwell Williams, Early Childhood State Lead, NeMTSS; Steve Williams, Esq., KSB School Law; and Jordan Johnson, Esq., KSB School Law</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, School Law</i></p> <p>Are systems designed to truly “find” every student who needs support? This session offers an essential refresher on Child Find responsibilities for all school staff, highlighting legal obligations and practical strategies for compliance in 2025. Explore how building a strong, proactive MTSS can enhance early identification, streamline intervention pathways and reduce missteps that stem from misinformation or weak infrastructure. Leave with greater clarity, confidence and tools to ensure your team is both responsive and compliant.</p>
 Silver 8/9	<p>Fuel Efficiency and Coherence! Streamlining Your SSIP, CIP, TIP and PEaK for Literacy Success Micki Charf, Assistant Administrator for Special Education, NDE; and Tessa Fraass, Regional Support Lead (R5), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>This session invites participants to visualize “plans” as different roads leading to the same destination: student success! This presentation will underscore how each road serves a unique purpose and provides a resource roadmap, so drivers can be confident navigating their route to improvement.</p>



 Silver 10	<p>Blending UDL and Leadership: How Designing for All Can Empower Educators</p> <p>Amy Rhone, Office of Special Education Administrator/State Director, Nebraska Department of Education; Brooke Gebers, Regional Support Lead (R3), NeMTSS; and Jill Guenther, Regional Support Lead (R2), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Is Universal Design for Learning (UDL) a hot topic at your school? Are you wondering how it can apply to you as a leader? This session will explore how leaders can model universal design in their own practices to encourage stronger implementation of UDL in classrooms and improve literacy outcomes. Participants will identify strategies to engage teachers, provide feedback, and seek input in ways that honor staff variability and enhance school culture. After all, the best way to lead is by example.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with the NeMTSS team’s commitment to providing High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), the summit includes a Process and Planning Space for educators. This dedicated space allows teams to gather, debrief and develop action steps based on shared learning from summit sessions. The room will be staffed by members of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education who can assist in action planning, especially in relation to a district’s Continuous Improvement process and Targeted Improvement Plans.</p>
 Silver 12	<p>Early Childhood Literacy and Special Education in Nebraska</p> <p>Kristine Ray, Preschool Special Education Specialist, 619 Coordinator; and Ginny Howard, Early Childhood Education Specialist, NDE</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>GOLDilocks and NDE — a children’s literature classic with an NDE spin! Come see what is “not too small” and “not too big” in a session exploring blended practices in early childhood classrooms. Presenters will also check the temperature of statewide literacy data from Teaching Strategies GOLD to find out whether early learning outcomes are too hot, too cold or just right.</p> 

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. | Breakout Session F



Gold 1

Pit Stops with Purpose: Using Instructional Rounds to Tune Up Literacy and Inclusion Practices

LaRaesha Kugel, Professional Learning Specialist and Instructional Coach, ESU 9

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports, Inclusion

Discover how Instructional Rounds can serve as powerful tools to strengthen literacy and inclusion. This session offers practical strategies and a clear process for using observation data to guide improvement within an MTSS framework — all in one purposeful “pit stop.”



Gold 7

Teachers Lead the Way: A Roadmap for Schoolwide Literacy Leadership

Brent Conway, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Pentucket Regional School District, West Newbury, MA

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration

Leadership is not defined by a title, but by a commitment to a goal — and an understanding that collaboration with others is essential to achieving it. While administrators may hold the keys to certain aspects of school change, teachers keep the gears turning and provide valuable insight into the day-to-day impact of decisions. Changing literacy systems can feel like an uphill climb, but with the right approach — and by leveraging the right data at the right time — teachers can move beyond the walls of their classroom to help build a school where every student learns to read, year after year. Dr. Brent Conway will outline a practical roadmap for schoolwide literacy leadership. Explore how to lead from any position — with the willingness to act, the humility to include others and the passion to persist.



Silver 1

School Spotlight: Systems That Grow with Students — Designing a PK–12 MTSS Framework for SEBL Success **Bellevue Public Schools**

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Building Systems

What happens when a district commits to coherence across the entire PK–12 continuum? Discover Bellevue Public Schools’ transformative journey focused on aligning the Pyramid Model framework and Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children process with its existing K–12 MTSS for social, emotional and behavioral learning (SEBL). This session highlights the team’s leadership-driven process, commitment to developmentally appropriate practices and lessons learned through continuous improvement. Ideal for school leaders and early childhood educators seeking practical strategies for building systems that grow with students.













Silver 2

School Spotlight: Beyond the Numbers — Root Cause Analysis to Action Planning **Valentine Community Schools**

LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Discover how Valentine Community Schools turned a compliance requirement into an opportunity for meaningful change. As part of the SPED Determination Process, cross-level teams of educators — supported by the NeMTSS Regional Support team — analyzed eight key indicators for students with disabilities. What followed was a yearlong, collaborative effort to analyze root causes. The process sparked district-wide conversations and led to targeted action plans for each area. Learn how this process is shaping VCS’s future priorities, aligning efforts with district goals and embedding continuous improvement into everyday practice. This session offers practical takeaways for any district looking to strengthen outcomes for all learners through thoughtful, team-driven systems change.

 Silver 3/4	<p>School Spotlight: Building Behavior Systems That Work — A Data-Driven Approach Norfolk Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, School Safety, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session will focus on how Jefferson Elementary has used behavior data to build a stronger, more effective PBIS system. Participants will learn how to collect and document data in meaningful ways, use that data to guide decisions, and create consistent systems that support positive student behavior across the school. We will illustrate what a data-driven PBIS system looks like in action — and how it can lead to measurable improvements in both student outcomes and school culture. By creating a positive learning environment where students can focus on academics and develop appropriate behaviors, we see increases in on-task behavior, greater engagement with instruction and improved academic performance. These outcomes are especially critical as we continue to prioritize literacy growth across all grade levels.</p>
 Silver 5	<p>The Collaborative Garden: Growing Culture Through Communication Leslie Hooper and Courtney Niedert, Teachers, Bellevue Public Schools</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Communication & Collaboration, Staff Retention & Support</i></p> <p>This session explores revitalizing workplace culture among peers by fostering connections and understanding. Participants will learn practical strategies to address values, boundaries and points of contention in initial meetings, followed by techniques for maintaining relationships through bids for connection and team-building activities.</p>
 Silver 6	<p>Detours to Destinations: Overcoming Literacy Barriers with UDL and Integrated Support Brooke Gebers, Regional Support Lead (R3); and Jill Guenther, Regional Support Lead (R2), NeMTSS</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Intermediate TOPICS: SEBL, Literacy, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>The journey to literacy isn't always a straight road — barriers in lesson design, instruction and materials present a need for educators to take a detour and make Tier 1 Core more accessible. This session invites all educators, from any content area or grade level, on a road trip that recognizes every student as a unique traveler with different needs, speeds and scenic routes to success. Explore how Universal Design for Learning and social, emotional and behavioral learning can pave the way for all students to reach their literacy destinations through flexible strategies, integrated supports and inclusive practices. Identify tools and strategies to navigate challenges, fuel engagement and ensure every learner stays on track. Pack your bags and grab your map — every stop brings new opportunities for literacy growth!</p> 
 Silver 7	<p>Core Plus More: Layering Supports for Tier 2 Heather Stukey, Teaching and Learning Coordinator; and Amy Walters, MTSS Facilitator, ESU 10</p> <p><i>LEVEL: Beginner TOPICS: Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session explores practical strategies for implementing Tier 2 supports within an MTSS framework. Participants will learn how to deliver “Core Plus More” by layering targeted academic and behavioral supports on top of high-quality core instruction.</p> 

 Silver 8/9	<p>School-Based Projects Developed and Implemented by WORDS Project Literacy Leaders Kylee Rhamy, Reading Teacher Coach Specialist, WORDS Project; Pam Bazis, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; Marc Goodrich, Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University; Michael Hebert, Associate Professor, University of California, Irvine; and Literacy Leaders: Carey Tritle, Jessica Nesbitt, Kendra Ross, Melissa Hawley, Nicolette Koch, Stanna Funk, Stephanie Ware, Shelby Crowe</p> <p>LEVEL: <i>Advanced</i> TOPICS: <i>Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>Literacy leaders from schools engaged in the WORDS Project will share results from their reading improvement efforts, which included paraprofessional training, data team development and reading intervention implementation. Discover how teachers developed project ideas for their specific school contexts, selected measurable outcomes, gained buy-in and evaluated the impacts of their projects.</p>
 Silver 10	<p>Beyond Alignment: Delivering Effective Student Supports Through MTSS Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE; and Heidi Farmer, Regional Support Lead (R1), NeMTSS</p> <p>LEVEL: <i>Intermediate</i> TOPICS: <i>Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Move beyond simply “aligning” with MTSS — learn how to use the NeMTSS Essential Elements to deliver effective literacy, behavior and attendance supports. This session offers practical strategies for building a systematic, sustainable system of support that ensures student needs drive decision-making, not compliance.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with the NeMTSS team’s commitment to providing High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), the summit includes a Process and Planning Space for educators. This dedicated space allows teams to gather, debrief and develop action steps based on shared learning from summit sessions. The room will be staffed by members of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Special Education who can assist in action planning, especially in relation to a district’s Continuous Improvement process and Targeted Improvement Plans.</p>
 Silver 12	<p>Off to an Early Start in Language and Literacy: Routines-Based Early Intervention Tina Kilgore, RBEI Technical Assistant, Nebraska Early Development Network; and Lisa Duranski, ECSE Coordinator and Getting Ready Internal Coach, ESU 7</p> <p>LEVEL: <i>Beginner</i> TOPICS: <i>Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports, Early Intervention</i></p> <p>This session will highlight the profound effects of routines-based early intervention (RBEI) on language and literacy in young children. Research points to the need to target parent-child and parent-professional relationships as key strategies to improve children’s developmental outcomes. Discover why the most meaningful learning happens between provider visits — and how effective early intervention empowers parents with the confidence and skills to support their child’s growth. Gain insights and strategies for delivering services that make a difference.</p>