



Breakout Session Summaries

All times listed are Central Daylight Time.

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:

Sessions are organized by four key strands and are either hybrid or in-person.



School Safety



Behavior



MTSS



Foundational Literacy



Hybrid



In-Person

THURSDAY, SEP. 26

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



Silver 1

Curious NOT Furious

Liz Toruno, MTSS Coordinator and Educational Consultant, ThrivingYOUiversity

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL

Defiance and off-task behavior are some of the most challenging issues to manage. This interactive session aims to provide participants with an understanding of student behavior and how to chase the “why.” You will walk away with behavioral strategies that can be implemented the next day, and have the opportunity to see strategies modeled and experience them first hand.



Silver 2

Get Digitally Fit to Promote Safe School Communities

Jay Martin, Director of School Safety and Security, NDE

STRAND: School Safety TOPICS: SEBL, Digital: Citizenship, Literacy, Privacy and Concerns

Discover how school communities are leveraging digital tools to proactively address potential situations or issues of concern. This session will explore innovative strategies to create safer learning environments and more digitally informed students, families, teachers and school leaders.



Silver 3

De-Escalation 101

Dani Niss, Special Education Coordinator; and Cassie Houser, Behavior Specialist, ESU 4

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, School Safety, Communication & Collaboration, Trauma

Behavior happens. As educators, we have the power to impact the end result of each event. Use a hand model of the brain to understand how to keep the brain integrated in the face of adversity and apply effective strategies to intervene at each stage of the crisis cycle.



Silver 4

School Spotlight: MTSS — It’s Not Just for K-8 Anymore! Ainsworth High School’s Journey Ainsworth Community Schools

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

Ainsworth Community Schools has embarked on a unique journey, implementing MTSS concepts at the K-12 level to enhance student success. Discover how the team uses multiple forms of data, collaborative decision rules and self-identified protocols to inform decision-making at every level of the MTSS framework, including analyzing academic assessments, behavior tracking data, and attendance and discipline records. Learn how educators and administrators leverage evidence-based practices in all areas to ensure interventions are targeted, timely and responsive to student needs.



Silver 5

School Spotlight: Just Do It!: Jumping in Upstream to Begin the Work of MTSS Crete Public Schools

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Layered Continuum of Supports

Gain valuable insight into Crete Public Schools’ journey of doing the upstream work to better support students and improve student outcomes. Embarking on the journey of implementing MTSS is akin to the age-old question: How do you eat an elephant? The answer, of course, is one bite at a time. Similarly, systems change and implementation require patience, persistence and a willingness to get started and just do it! You will be encouraged to reflect on your own experiences, share insights and engage in collaborative discussions — fostering a supportive environment to learn and exchange best practices in MTSS implementation.



Silver 6

Community and Connection: Come Experience It

Ali Hearn, LCSW, National Speaker, Trainer and Coach, Ali Hearn Coaching + Consulting

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Layered Continuum of Supports, Communication & Collaboration, SEBL

Learning about Restorative Practices is important, but experiencing them firsthand is transformative. The impact of proactive community building Restorative Practices work is powerful, impactful and accessible to all educators. Successfully supporting youth needs means first supporting adults' needs. We all want to move quickly to directly supporting youth, yet slowing down enough to take care of ourselves, our staff and one another will increase our overall impact. Join us to experience the work internally, before bringing it to students in the classroom. It's heart work and it's hard work... and it starts with us.



Silver 7

Build Your MTSS Plane While You Fly It!

Aaron Bredenkamp, Assistant Superintendent of Business; and Melissa Stolley, Director of Student Services, Ralston Public Schools

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Learn how to use your current strategic plan and resources to kickstart MTSS! Implementing MTSS can be a daunting task, and not knowing where to start will often stall or even stop the work. It can also be difficult for teams to find the time to be trained and do the necessary work to implement MTSS effectively. Learn how one district team's training was designed using current priorities and resources to develop an Early Warning System and Decision Rules as outcomes of their learning, allowing them to build their MTSS plane while flying it!



Silver 8

Rooted in Wellness: Strategies for Building Trauma-Sensitive Classrooms

Jen McNally, Director of Mental Health and Wellness; and Jamie Mapp, School Psychologist, ESU 5

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports

This enlightening session focuses on building trauma-sensitive classrooms rooted in wellness. Discover practical strategies and tools to create safe, supportive learning environments for all students. Gain insights into recognizing and responding to trauma's impact, fostering resilience and promoting academic success.



Silver 10

Nebraska Literacy Community of Practice

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Connect with state leaders and fellow educators to gain insights into effective literacy practices aligned with research. Learn how these practices can be utilized and integrated into your multi-tiered system of support to meet students' literacy needs. Department of Education and NeMTSS team members will be available to answer questions, facilitate discussion and provide clarity around statewide literacy support, resources and initiatives. Take this opportunity to share about your own school or district's journey in foundational literacy, as well as to connect with and learn from fellow Nebraska educators.



Silver 11

School Spotlight: The Bulldog Way: Making Connections and Building Relationships to Help Increase Attendance Alliance High School

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Layered Continuum of Supports, Communication & Collaboration, SEBL, Building Systems, Attendance

This session will highlight programs implemented by Alliance High School to help teachers and staff build relationships with students. Learn what they have done to address chronic absenteeism — not only at AHS, but district wide. Walk away with ideas to implement in your buildings or district to address absenteeism and foster positive relationships with students.



Gold 1

MTSS and Twice-Exceptionality: Identifying and Supporting Students Who Are High Ability Learners with Disabilities **Sheyanne Smith, HAL Specialist, NDE**

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Twice-exceptional (2E) students, who are both high ability learners and have a disability, have unique needs and are hard to identify because one factor may mask the other. This session provides an overview of 2E, how to identify these learners and ways to use MTSS to support their academic and affective needs.



Gold 7

Data-Informed Literacy Coaching Using the WORDS Coaching Model

Sara Wing, Lead Coach, WORDS Project, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; and Rachel Schachter, Associate Professor, University of Illinois–Chicago

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

The WORDS Project (Workshop on Reading Development Strategies) uses a data-driven coaching model to support teachers in many districts across the state. Learn about the structure of this coaching model, as well as how to use data to inform the decision-making process for both coaching and teaching.

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



Silver 1

Responsive Environments at the Tier 1 Level

Liz Toruno, MTSS Coordinator and Educational Consultant, ThrivingYOUiversity

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration

Trauma exacerbates three things the brain hates: chronic unpredictability, social isolation and physical and emotional restraint. In this experiential learning session, facilitators will focus on how to meet the brain’s need for predictability, belonging and connection, and voice and choice. Walk away with a deeper understanding of how trauma impacts student learning and behavior, as well as research-based practices and strategies to implement immediately, as part of a trauma-informed approach.



Silver 2

Integrating Supports for Success

Aly Martinez Wilkinson, Senior Professional Learning Consultant; and Cassie Seiboldt, Assistant Director of Statewide Assessment, NDE

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports

Collaborate with students to apply relevant and required supports such as accommodations, extensions and scaffolds to eliminate learning barriers.



Silver 3

Thinking Inside the Box: Using What You Have to Do What You Need

Dani Niss, Special Education Coordinator; and Cassie Houser, Behavior Specialist, ESU 4

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Schools everywhere face intense behavior needs. From coaching the classroom teacher, to using available space to form a self-contained learning environment, presenters will outline a process of thinking “inside the box.” Discover how to build solutions by enhancing district staff capacity with resources that are within reach.



Silver 4

Creating a Culture of Collaboration: The Mission IS Possible **DeJenne' Clark Jackson, President, The Center for Literacy and Learning**

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems

Explore how to build a culture of collaboration in education, focusing on the science of reading, support for struggling readers, parental involvement and systemic reform. Gain insights and strategies to empower learners by fostering partnerships, advocating for change and leveraging collective responsibility for student success.



Silver 5

School Spotlight: Omaha Tribe: Guiding Growth and Developing Dynamic Support Systems for Early Childhood Success **Omaha Tribe Head Start**

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Infrastructure & Shared Leadership

The Omaha Tribe has established an MTSS leadership team at the early childhood level focused on building a system of support using data-based decision-making to enhance children's social, emotional and behavioral learning in its Head Start program. Learn how the team uses the EC MTSS process to make connections with elementary and secondary teams, helping to ensure a seamless transition from early childhood.



Silver 6

What Does It Take to Install Restorative Practices District-Wide? **Ali Hearn, LCSW, National Speaker, Trainer and Coach, Ali Hearn Coaching + Consulting**

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, Communication & Collaboration, SEBL

Implementing Restorative Practices is about more than sitting in a circle. Successful installation starts with both systems and implementation leaders understanding the roots of the work, the principles that drive it and the practices that bring it to life. For implementation to be sustainable over time, however, it must be anchored and aligned to other work taking place and cannot exist in a silo. A MTSS framework provides the structures necessary to support the use of data for decision-making, to progress-monitor implementation over time, and to evaluate student and staff outcomes. Join us to explore critical features of Restorative Practices and MTSS, and considerations for the successful alignment of the two.



Silver 7

Maximizing the Superpowers of Your Mental Health Professionals **Sara Gentry, NeMTSS SEBL Specialist, Region 5; and Emily Arkfeld, School Social Worker, Papillion La Vista Community Schools**

STRAND: School Safety TOPICS: SEBL, Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports, Mental Health

School-based mental health professionals play a pivotal role in fostering student well-being and academic success. Their super power is reducing student/family, staff and community barriers, while enhancing student outcomes. Unfortunately, their impact is often limited by a lack of understanding. Gain knowledge of how to best support these superheroes!





Silver 8


Empowering Educators: Supporting Teacher Leadership **Julie Downing, Professional Development Specialist/Educator Effectiveness Specialist, ESU 13/NDE SEED Team; Ryan Ricenbaw, Director of Statewide Teacher and Principal Support; and Jeff Gilbertson, School Leadership Specialist, NDE**

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership

Explore competencies, strategies and the impact of teacher leaders beyond the classroom. Discover how these leaders motivate, set high expectations, foster communication, use resources effectively and drive continuous improvement. Gain insights into the Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards and practical tools to support teacher leaders in their pivotal roles within schools and districts. Don't miss this opportunity to learn and grow in the realm of educational leadership!

 Silver 10	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with our commitment to offer High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), we are offering a “Process and Planning Space” for teams to gather, debrief and action plan around the shared learning from summit sessions.</p>
 Silver 11	<p>School Spotlight: Intervention and Enrichment Systems – When, How and What We Do Superior Public Schools</p> <p><i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>Intervention and Enrichment (WIN) time sounds great, but how do we make it work? Teachers from Superior Elementary will share when they provide these supports within their daily schedule, how those data-based decisions are made and what students do during these times. Hear examples and gain ideas you can implement in your own buildings.</p>
 Gold 1	<p>Becoming Behavior Bilingual: Understanding What Behaviors Are Communicating LaRaesha Kugel, Professional Learning Specialist and Instructional Coach, ESU 9</p> <p><i>STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>All behavior is a form of communication. This session focuses on two areas that can directly influence behavior: sensory regulation and executive functioning. By expanding on how these systems directly affect everyone in a classroom or school community, you will be able to understand your students’ needs and how to support them. When we better understand what behaviors are communicating, we can become behavior bilingual.</p>
 Gold 7	<p>Mastering Instructional Leadership to Enhance Structured Literacy Heidi Farmer, NeMTSS Regional Support Lead, Region 1; Dallas Lewandowski, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10; Claudine Kennicutt, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10; and Megan Hammer, Professional Development Consultant, ESU 6</p> <p><i>STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>How do leaders begin to implement a school-wide literacy model? This session examines key components of effective instructional leadership that will build your capacity to improve students’ literacy outcomes, as well as teachers’ success.</p>

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

 Silver 1	<p>Building Super Systems for Educator Wellness NeMTSS SEBL Specialists: Chandra Essex, Region 4; Sara Gentry, Region 5; Jill Guenther, Region 2; and Mackenzie Riedel, Region 1</p> <p><i>STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL</i></p> <p>We believe it is vital for teachers to embed wellness practices into everyday routines to stay healthy and prevent burnout. Explore the importance of creating and sustaining an environment that promotes educator well-being. Participants will learn a variety of strategies to strengthen their own social, emotional and behavioral learning skills, and improve their well-being, both in and out of the classroom.</p>
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Silver 2

Building a Super System for Foundational Literacy: The Power of Instructional Leadership

Kala Peyton, Region 2 Support Lead, NeMTSS; Olivia Alberts, Reading Specialist, NDE; Dallas Lewandowski, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10; Claudine Kennicutt, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, ESU 10; Arnold Public School Teachers

STRAND: Foundational Literacy

Explore, through theoretical models, the importance of consistent, systematic and explicit instructional routines in literacy that align with Nebraska State Standards, the High-Quality Instructional Materials Initiative, elements of NeMTSS, strong Tier 1 Core instruction and the Science of Reading teaching practices. Hear how teachers use Foundational Literacy Instructional Routines, using a guide developed by NeMTSS, NDE and ESU 10, to improve Tier 1 literacy instruction and apply the research in practice. This guide provides multiple ways to support Tier 1 Core instruction, as well as strategies to support intensification in foundational skills and comprehension to enhance literacy skills promoting skilled reading.



Silver 3

Rethinking Walkthrough Models – Differentiating Support for Educators

Julie Downing, Professional Development Specialist/Educator Effectiveness Specialist, ESU 13/NDE SEED Team; and Ryan Ricenbaw, Director of Statewide Teacher and Principal Support, NDE

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

This session delves into the SEED (Supporting Educator Effectiveness through Development) perspective on walkthroughs and supervision, offering insights on tailoring support for educators. Explore various walkthrough tools and types, such as district-wide, building, focused and individual walkthroughs. By aligning teacher goals with professional development, this approach enhances supervision practices, supports teacher growth and improves student outcomes. The presentation advocates for a supervision model that prioritizes teacher development and student impact, emphasizing support, engagement, alignment with school objectives, measurable goals, regular feedback and growth. A project tracker will be provided to assist district teams in planning a cohesive supervision system.



Silver 4

Fostering Accessible Literacy Instruction for All: The Intersection of the Science of Reading and Dyslexia

DeJenne' Clark Jackson, President, The Center for Literacy and Learning

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Building Systems

Examine evidence-based strategies for inclusive literacy instruction. This session emphasizes the role of stakeholders in supporting students with dyslexia through professional development and parent engagement, ensuring equitable access to effective reading methods and fostering student success.



Silver 5

School Spotlight: A K-5 MTSS Reading Journey

Waverly Public Schools

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

In this session, you will learn how teachers, interventionists and administrators worked collaboratively to establish a systematic K-5 MTSS ELA process, leveraging core practices (guaranteed and viable curriculum, effective instruction, and balanced assessment), collaboration, professional learning and continuous improvement. Presenters will share important lessons learned along the way, leading to a 23% improvement in student outcomes and increased teacher efficacy.









Silver 6

Tier 2 Interventions: Before, During... But Not After

Allison Bruhn, Executive Director & Professor, Scanlan Center for School Mental Health, University of Iowa

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

All Tier 2 interventions have core components that are critical to student outcomes. But features related to student characteristics, classroom context and student responsiveness may be adapted. Learn the core components of Tier 2 interventions and how to make adaptations before and during intervention to enhance student success.

 <p>Silver 7</p>	<p>Resilient School Communities Liz Toruno, MTSS Coordinator and Educational Consultant, ThrivingYOUiversity <i>STRAND: School Safety</i></p> <p>The adolescent brain is immature and can lead to poor decision-making. Research shows school-based programs can reduce substance use among youth. This session is designed to help educators advocate effectively for a substance-free lifestyle using Tier 1 and Tier 2 Interventions. Don't miss the opportunity to gain insights on how to equip youth with the knowledge and tools needed to make positive choices, an important part of building resilient school communities.</p>
 <p>Silver 8</p>	<p>School Spotlight: Cleaning Up Our Plate: Embedding SEBL Into Our Continuous Improvement Goals Stanton Community Schools <i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Layered Continuum of Supports, Communication & Collaboration, SEBL, Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making</i></p> <p>To avoid it being perceived as "one more thing" on its already full plate, Stanton Community Schools began finding ways to embed social, emotional and behavioral learning (SEBL) into existing practices. With so many great things happening every day in classrooms, the team wanted staff to see that integrating SEBL into daily activities, lesson plans and more doesn't have to be an overwhelming process. Hear firsthand how the district's plate became much more manageable by focusing on evidence-based practices and adopting a whole child approach.</p>
 <p>Silver 10</p>	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with our commitment to offer High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), we are offering a "Process and Planning Space" for teams to gather, debrief and action plan around the shared learning from summit sessions.</p>
 <p>Silver 11</p>	<p>Creating Cohesion in the Midst of Conflict Abbey Cron, Special Education Specialist, NDE; Jordyn Brummund, IDEA Part B Program Specialist, Autism State Lead, NDE; and Chantelle Nelsen, Program Coordinator, ESU 1 <i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Explore the art of Individualized Education Program (IEP) facilitation in this dynamic session. Learn effective strategies to foster collaboration among educators, parents and students with diverse needs. Discover innovative approaches to empower every participant, ensuring the IEP process promotes inclusivity, equity and student success.</p>
 <p>Gold 1</p>	<p>Promoting Powerful Practices in the Classroom Heather Robbins, NeMTSS System Consultant; and Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE <i>STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL</i></p> <p>Back by popular demand, this session is a repeat from last year's summit. Powerful teaching practices for the classroom! We learn them, we understand them, but how do we promote their use? This session examines four powerful practices teachers can use and provide examples of promotion activities implemented by schools. This is also an opportunity to share promotion strategies with each other.</p>
 <p>Gold 7</p>	<p>Build Me Up, Buttercup! Leveraging the "It" Factor to Support Tier 1 Practices for Comprehensive Well-Being Jen Pollock, School Mental Health Program Coordinator, ESU 3 <i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session explores a train-the-trainer model to support students' social, emotional and mental well-being in the classroom. Exemplary teachers share their expertise to help colleagues create more inclusive and supportive learning environments. Leave with practical strategies to build positive relationships, foster student connections and prioritize overall student well-being.</p>

2:45-6:00 p.m. | Summit Learning Space

Pre-Function Area

The Summit Learning Space is a special space set aside for the exchange of ideas, research, programs, products, services and other related content. Everyone is invited to attend and network with educators from around Nebraska. Meet with NeMTSS team members and find out more about their roles throughout the state, talk to others in your role within different ESUs and districts or meet up with your team after breakouts are over for the day. Appetizers and a cash bar will be available from 5-6 p.m. (Separate registration required).

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



Silver 1

Building Belonging and Cultivating Connections

Liz Toruno, MTSS Coordinator and Educational Consultant, ThrivingYOUiversity

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Layered Continuum of Supports, Behavior, Strategies

Strong social connections strengthen our immune system, lower anxiety and depression, and even help us live longer. Additionally, people who feel connected are more empathetic, trusting and cooperative. This engaging and interactive session provides participants with research, strategies and structures for building belonging and cultivating connections in the classroom, the staff room, at home and in the community.



Silver 2

Nebraska Early Reading Assessments: Making Informed Decisions About Assessments

Rachel Schachter, Associate Professor, University of Illinois–Chicago; Nathan Speer, Doctoral Student, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; and Michael Hebert, Associate Professor, University of California, Irvine

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Literacy, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

The Nebraska Department of Education has approved several assessments for use in accordance with the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act. This session summarizes components of these assessments to help schools and administrators make decisions regarding the selection and use of assessments to meet the state requirements.



Silver 3

Know When to Fold 'Em: A De-Implementation Overview

Kate Carlson, Educational Consultant; Laurie Kerr, Educational Consultant; McKayla LaBorde, Executive Director of Student Services; Jen Pollock, School Mental Health Program Coordinator; and Christine Qualman, Educational Consultant, ESU 3

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making

Are ineffective practices, policies and strategies bluffing their way into your systems? This session explores de-implementation as a way to identify and discard what doesn't truly serve your goals to create space to double down on what does. So, fold the flops and go all in on enhancing well-being and maximizing effectiveness!



Silver 4

Collaboration as a Super-Power: Universal Design for Transition is for Everyone

Michalla Schartz, Southeast Region Transition Facilitator; Heidi Farmer, NeMTSS Regional Support Lead, Region 1; and Michele Rayburn, Director of Student Services, ESU 6

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports, Transition, Improved Outcomes, Self-Advocacy Skills

This session explores how Universal Design for transition can guide educators and administrators to create more inclusive learning environments, identify and use proactive practices to provide transition support for students with disabilities, and explore best practices for student independence and self-advocacy skills.



Silver 5

School Spotlight: Embracing Vulnerability and Building an MTSS

Bellevue Public Schools

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Layered Continuum of Supports, Strategic Plan & Continuous Improvement, Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Data-Based Decision-Making, Communication & Collaboration

Bellevue Public Schools embraced the framework of NeMTSS, the blueprint from the Center on PBIS and the strategies of the Boys Town Education Model to build a system based on shared leadership, collaboration and data-based decision-making. Join #teamBPS on its journey from needing something to support teachers, to the buy-in and adoption process across all buildings, to fidelity checks that ensure continuity and accountability, to sustaining an MTSS system through strategic planning and continuous improvement efforts. BPS's team approach at the district and building levels ensures attention to detail, refinement at all levels, and the ability to sustain and progress through the ever-changing world of education. It's not rocket science...It's simply placing an emphasis on the CORE in academics and SEBL, and using a layered approach.



Silver 6

Understanding Data-Based Individualization

Allison Bruhn, Executive Director and Professor, Scanlan Center for School Mental Health, University of Iowa

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Data-based individualization, or DBI, requires student data to be monitored on an ongoing basis to determine if intervention should continue in the same fashion, be discontinued or be adapted to better fit the student's needs. Gain an understanding about how to collect and use data to evaluate student progress within behavioral interventions, and use the data to make systematic decisions to increase the likelihood of student success.



Silver 7

Student Self-Sabotage and Disengagement: Helping Students Get Out of Their Own Way!

Carrie Fairbairn, Elementary Special Education Teacher (3-5); and Sallye Lee, Elementary Special Education Teacher (K-2), ESU 3

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Layered Continuum of Supports, Behavior, Strategies, Interventions, Self-Advocacy Skills

This session examines and defines student self-sabotage and disengagement. Explore several factors that predict these problematic behaviors, along with examples of self-sabotage in students' lives. Walk away with practical strategies to reduce these behaviors and boost student motivation, plus tons of "freebies" and links!



Silver 8

I Don't Need an Emergency Operations Plan — Say What?

Scott Stemper, Emergency Operations Planning Specialist, NDE

STRAND: School Safety

School safety is one of the most vital functions for students, staff, parents and communities. This session provides the tools needed to meet the needs of these populations and also to promote a sense of security for students to learn in a safe environment. Parents won't trust or send their child to a school if they don't feel they are protected. Students won't learn if they feel unsafe. Patrons won't live in a community where they feel unsafe. These are just some reasons why prevention, preparedness, response and recovery are crucial for all of us.



Silver 10

Process and Planning Space

In alignment with our commitment to offer High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), we are offering a "Process and Planning Space" for teams to gather, debrief and action plan around the shared learning from summit sessions.



Silver 11

School Spotlight: Who Loves Data? We Do!

Norris School District 160

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Data-Based Decision-Making, SEBL, Building Systems, Layered Continuum of Supports

Learn how educators from Norris School District 160 use a variety of tools to triangulate data to make informed student decisions! Classroom-managed behaviors, absence rates, pass usage, counselor and nurse office visits, missing assignments and failing grades are all tabulated to create buckets of data to facilitate the MTSS process. Hear their story, ask questions and gain insights into their experience of striving to make more data-informed student decisions.



Gold 1

Statewide Literacy Plan Power

Becky Michael, K-12 ELA Content Specialist, NDE

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

Nebraska has been working concertedly on a Statewide Literacy Plan by revising its 2011 plan to reflect an effective, evidence-based framework for literacy instruction – ready to meet the needs of today’s learners. Discover multiple components that will guide your classroom, building or district in supporting successful readers, writers, speakers and listeners.



Gold 7

Leveling Up: MTSS in a Level 3 Alternative Program

Chantelle Nelsen, Program Coordinator, ESU 1; Rebecca Jepsen, Teacher, Tower School; Daphne Darter, School Psychologist, ESU 1; Alecia Heimes, School Psychologist, ESU 1

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL, Building Systems, Layered Continuum of Supports, Infrastructure & Shared Leadership

Learn how a Level 3 alternative program recognized the need for a multi-tiered systematic approach to support students with complex needs and successfully implemented this change. In partnership with NeMTSS, Nebraska PBIS and the Nebraska School Mental Health Institute, the Tower School identified opportunities to expand core practices. As a result of partnerships, teaming and professional learning through a systems-change lens, the team established and expanded practices at the universal level. Hear about the team’s implementation process, positive effects seen in their school and plans to expand MTSS.

FRIDAY, SEP. 27

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



Silver 1

Connecting UDL: Inclusive Practice and Equitable Access

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

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: SEBL

Many students face barriers that prevent them from accessing grade-level instruction and opportunities to learn with their peers. To ensure classrooms are more equitable and inclusive, districts must build educators' skillset in inclusive practices. Too often, inclusive practices are seen as competing initiatives. Districts may focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), social-emotional learning, trauma-informed instruction, culturally responsive pedagogy and differentiated instruction. If educators see these as separate initiatives, they are right to feel overwhelmed. In this session, learn how to share that these practices all fall under the umbrella of inclusive practice, ensuring the best instruction for all learners.



Silver 2

The Power of Transcription Skills in Proficient Writing and Reading

Pam Bazis, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; and Tim Andress, Postdoctoral Scholar, University of California, Irvine

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Literacy

Do you have students whose handwriting and spelling skills impact their writing? Learn about the power of transcription skills in writing success. Discover how and why targeted instruction in these skills can positively impact overall writing performance. The session also includes opportunities for hands-on application.



Silver 3

Tired? Hungry? Overworked? Unsure? Identify Your Vulnerable Decision Points for Behavior

Heather Robbins, NeMTSS System Consultant; and Scott Eckman, State Personnel Development Grant Coordinator, NDE

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL

Decisions, decisions, decisions... educators face as many as 1,500 per day! Discover how your subconscious or your state of being may make you vulnerable to reacting versus responding when presented with a decision related to unwanted behavior. Learn how to identify your own Vulnerable Decision Points (VDPs) and develop neutralizing routines to ensure your responses align with your values as an educator.





Silver 4

Cavities vs. Root Canals: What's the Difference Between Tier 2 Targeted and Tier 3 Intensified Supports?

NeMTSS Regional Support Team, Region 3: Brooke Gebers, Regional Support Lead; Mattaya Addison, Early Childhood Implementation Facilitator; Jill Guenther, SEBL Specialist; and Mary Osterloh, PBIS Coach

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Data-Based Decision-Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Schools understand the need to layer additional support for some students when universal screening data indicates unfinished learning – but are we layering the right support based on the data? More often than not, the supports students receive beyond Tier 1 Core fall within the realm of standardized, Tier 2 Targeted supports, and rarely reach the level of individualization required by Tier 3 Intensified supports. Explore the differences between Tier 2 Targeted and Tier 3 Intensified supports with examples that apply to early childhood through graduation, covering academics and social, emotional, and behavioral learning.

 <p>Silver 5</p>	<p>School Spotlight: Westside’s Transition to Skill-Based Treatment ABA Approach Westside Community Schools</p> <p><i>STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>A shift is occurring in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) approaches for addressing severe, challenging behaviors to skill-based treatment (SBT). SBT is a trauma-informed approach aimed at preserving a student’s safety, dignity and rapport with staff. Participants will learn how Westside Community Schools has embraced this shift as a district and review a case study. Success in captivating a student’s “happy, relaxed and engaged” best self is key to transforming dangerous behaviors into safe, manageable behaviors and positive outcomes. This is what we all strive to understand and accomplish. Educators will benefit from learning about this successful Tier 3 approach to significantly improving behaviors.</p>
 <p>Silver 6</p>	<p>Playful Pathways to Literacy Emly Daberkow, Carol Burk and Kelly Jones, Early Childhood Education Specialists, NDE</p> <p><i>STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Literacy</i></p> <p>Explore the connection between play and literacy development in young children. From imaginative storytelling and dramatic play to sensory exploration and games, you will learn how play-based, literacy-rich environments inspire creativity, collaboration and critical thinking — all essential to literacy development.</p>
 <p>Silver 7</p>	<p>Unifying Commitment: Cultivating “All In” Culture for Sustainable Success Ann Foster, Superintendent, Brady Public Schools</p> <p><i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration</i></p> <p>Attention, school leaders! Are you ready to revolutionize your school’s culture? Explore Brady Public Schools’ rural education success story, leveraging collective efficacy to foster an “all in” culture within an MTSS framework. Embrace collaborative efforts to address student needs comprehensively, empowering staff and students alike. Discover the transformative power of shared goals in rural education for lasting student success.</p>
 <p>Silver 8</p>	<p>From Sidekick to Superhero: Leveling Up with Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems for Student Success Jen Pollock, School Mental Health Program Coordinator, ESU 3</p> <p><i>STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, SEBL, Communication & Collaboration, Layered Continuum of Supports</i></p> <p>This session explores rural Nebraska’s school mental health innovations, including integrating licensed professionals into MTSS, developing insurance billing and providing ongoing training. Highlights include progress, practices and outcomes to ensure high-quality mental health services for all students. Gain knowledge on building comprehensive systems, as well as funding/sustainability strategies.</p>
 <p>Silver 10</p>	<p>Process and Planning Space</p> <p>In alignment with our commitment to offer High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), we are offering a “Process and Planning Space” for teams to gather, debrief and action plan around the shared learning from summit sessions.</p>
 <p>Gold 1</p>	<p>Hands on Exploration of Assistive Technology for Literacy Brian Wojcik, Education Program Supervisor, Assistive Technology Partnership, NDE</p> <p><i>STRAND: Foundational Literacy</i></p> <p>Join the Assistive Technology Partnership team within NDE to learn about and get hands-on experience with teaching and literacy supports. After a 30-minute demonstration of several literacy supports, there will be time to work with them and ask questions.</p>



Silver 1

Mythbusters: UDL Misconceptions to be Unlearned

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

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Behavior

There are many misconceptions about Universal Design for Learning: It's all about fun! All choices are UDL! There is no place for direct instruction in UDL! Differentiated instruction and UDL are the same! These, and other statements like them, are simply not true. This session busts common myths about UDL and explores how to move UDL implementation forward while overcoming barriers.



Silver 2

School-Based Projects Developed and Implemented by WORDS Project Literacy Leaders

Pam Bazis, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders, University of Nebraska–Lincoln; and Literacy Leaders: Kelly Beveridge (North Platte), Missy Hopping (North Platte), Megan Janssen (Gordon-Rushville), Cassidy Malm (Kimball) and Jenny Utecht (Superior)

STRAND: Foundational Literacy TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Literacy, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making

Literacy leaders from schools engaged in the WORDS Project (Workshops on Reading Development Strategies) share results of their reading improvement projects, which included paraprofessional training, data-team development and implementing reading interventions. Learn how teachers developed project ideas for their specific school contexts, selected measurable outcomes, gained buy-in and evaluated the impacts of their projects.



Silver 3

Nebraska Special Education Law and MTSS: Working Together

Amy Colwell-Williams, Early Childhood Implementation Facilitator, NeMTSS; Steve Williams, Esq., KSB School Law; and Jordan Johnson, Esq., KSB School Law

STRAND: School Safety TOPICS: Communication & Collaboration

Join this informative session designed to empower school administrators and leadership teams with a comprehensive understanding of special education legal requirements and best practices. KSB School Law will delve into critical areas of parental communication, risk/threat assessment and procedural timelines. NeMTSS will then provide tools and knowledge to implement robust, school-wide systems that ensure compliance and foster a supportive educational environment.



Silver 5

School Spotlight: Transforming SEBL: Ainsworth School's Journey with K-12 Tiered Supports

Ainsworth Community Schools

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Layered Continuum of Supports, Data-Based Decision-Making, Communication & Collaboration, SEBL

Discover Ainsworth Community Schools' transformative journey in modifying its tiered support system for social, emotional and behavioral learning (SEBL) school wide, targeting Tier 2 interventions. With the recent K-12 integration of Check-In Check-Out, the district experienced a remarkable shift toward holistic student support. Explore the meticulous process behind ACS's SEBL enhancement initiative, including implementation challenges, sustainable practices and effective data management. Leave with actionable knowledge on replicating similar initiatives within your own educational contexts.



Silver 6

Early Childhood District Support Plan - Systems of Support

Emly Daberkow, Carol Burk, and Kelly Jones, Early Childhood Education Specialists, NDE

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration, Data-Based Decision-Making

Join the Nebraska Department of Education’s Office of Early Childhood as we dive into District Support Plans, emphasizing data-driven decision-making, collaboration and program accountability. Discover ways to analyze current systems and policies, while gaining insight from other early childhood educators from around the state.



Silver 7

Embracing Shared Leadership: Overcoming Challenges and Fostering Sustainable Change in Schools

Ryan Ricenbaw, Director of Statewide Teacher and Principal Support, NDE; Julie Downing, Professional Development Specialist/ Educator Effectiveness Specialist, ESU 13/NDE SEED Team; Jeff Gilbertson, School Leadership Specialist, NDE; and Tessa Fraass, NeMTSS Regional Support Lead, Region 5

STRAND: MTSS TOPICS: Infrastructure & Shared Leadership, Building Systems, Communication & Collaboration

Shared leadership in MTSS fosters a cohesive team environment and enhances our ability to meet the needs of all students. Strengthen your understanding of shared leadership in educational settings and walk away with actionable steps for sustaining shared leadership practices in schools. Learn strategies for overcoming challenges and barriers to shared leadership and techniques for empowering stakeholders and distributing leadership responsibilities.



Silver 8

Tell Me What You Want, What You Really, Really Want: Teaching Self-Advocacy Skills

Carrie Fairbairn, Elementary Special Education Teacher (3-5); and Sallye Lee, Elementary Special Education Teacher (K-2), ESU 3

STRAND: Behavior TOPICS: SEBL, Communication & Collaboration, Self-Advocacy Skills

Explore tools and strategies to promote self-advocacy among students with challenging behaviors. Uncover barriers and attributes for self-advocacy, along with skills to promote independence. Learn tips on how to teach students to better understand themselves, what they need and how to get it. Receive links to resources, activities and other “freebies” associated with self-advocacy and self-determination.



Silver 10

Process and Planning Space

In alignment with our commitment to offer High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), we are offering a “Process and Planning Space” for teams to gather, debrief and action plan around the shared learning from summit sessions.



Gold 1

Hands on Exploration of Assistive Technology for Literacy

Brian Wojcik, Education Program Supervisor, Assistive Technology Partnership, NDE

STRAND: Foundational Literacy

Join the Assistive Technology Partnership team within NDE to learn about and get hands-on experience with teaching and literacy supports. After a 30-minute demonstration of several literacy supports, there will be time to work with them and ask questions.