

**“Winding Down and Moving Up”  
Sustaining VTSS Implementation**

**Session 3**

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## “Winding Down and Moving Up”: Sustaining VTSS Implementation

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Drawing up Our Plans for Secondary VTSS  
(continued)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Dr. Mark Shinn

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Dr. Shinn: --but, let's go back to our data. Okay so there is, I, I look at the world in terms of not right or wrong most of the time. But I look at the world in terms of advantages and disadvantages okay. My theme this morning was around some of the things we get started on, not the least of which is leadership. Leadership from our administrators, and then leadership from our special Ed. directors. Because we need leadership to be able to move the dial forward in terms of making things that are important visible, big, and bold. So Virginia is one of, one of the states we would call a permissive state for SLD identification. Which means you have a bunch of different ways of doing it. That's pretty good, I kind of like that because what that does is it gives you as local educating, LEA, local education agencies the choice about what works best for you.

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Dr. Shinn: Okay so that's a serious advantage if there is leadership, okay. If there is not leadership then we need to know what the disadvantage is, and it's called inertia. The tendency to resist change or motion. We need to be able to move the system. So local leadership is a really good thing, so lead. Okay, I gave you my ideas, which I think are pretty consistent with the Virginia Guidance Document on RTI. Okay, that we look at a performance discrepancy, lack of progress towards given appropriate intensive intervention delivered with intensity. Again, one reason I do that is one is to signal that we're doing business differently. That the dialogue is shifting to a different set of questions rather than what does the student have in terms of a disability? But instead of what does a student need in terms of instruction and behavior?

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Dr. Shinn: And until we get that dialogue in our culture we'll have a likelihood of business as usual okay. So I see who are these people? I'm not asking you to name your names, who are these people? Stop doing that, okay. There is no reason to do it, the law changed for really good reason so move on. For people who are doing both don't be so darn inefficient. You won't be good at either one okay. And, and if you're all over the map then we need some consistency. Remember my theme this morning is part of this is that no matter what special Ed. sets the tone, special Ed. sets the example, and boy when you start talking about student need first and foremost it changes out culture. Okay, changing that culture is what we're really trying to do, the

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culture is every kid that’s a little crooked is a special Ed. kid. And that gives us the capacity to say, not my problem we don’t need to improve anything that we do.

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Dr. Shinn: The status quo, we gotta change that, so the distinction, the two things if you leave here who are the kids that we treat? And who are the kids that we support? Changes in how we treat easier to do that changes in how we support. That takes some time. Although I gotta tell you Virginia is in an enviable place in terms of the supports to provide kids that are struggling in content area instruction. I only wish our state had some of the capacity of some of you in terms of being able to exploit things. That’s a really good situation you’re in. Okay, so we ended up with sort of my rules of the game as an example of how you might do business. Okay, how you can shift the focus from eligibility more towards student need in an efficient and timely manner.

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Dr. Shinn: If you don’t do this again I’m gonna argue your efforts to address the needs of kids at tier one and tier two will just be more difficult, not impossible but more difficult. So tell me at this point with all the sort of stuff we rushed through fairly quickly, what questions do you have about this? Before we dive into our ten minutes of discussion trying to get back on the track of how do you make your decisions about who is and is not eligible now. When I say why in the world wouldn’t we want to use ability achievement discrepancy to do, to identify kids what do we know about that? What do we need to learn more about? Why is that such a goofy way of doing business? What comments, what are you thinking about at this moment?...

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Dr. Shinn: ...That’s 20 seconds I can’t take it, okay so ten minutes what are you doing now for eligibility? What are those things that I’ve talked about that you agree with, disagree, things you have questions about, things that what’s in place, what do you need to do, how do you move the dial etc.? So I’ve got 1:20, let’s shoot for a little bit more than 1:30 and then I’ll kind of check in with you folks and I’ll rotate around, so ready start your, start your engines. That was way too much food....

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Dr. Shinn: You look lost. ...It’s still available, live, push, pull, squeeze, hug. So you guys are carrying tomorrow. [Tape cuts] Okay in our theme remember Virginia is a permissive state. You can do three or combinations of ways of identifying kids as eligible for SLD. So use the way that advances the agenda to shift the dialogue into evidence based practices functional assessment.

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Dr. Shinn: And remember if you want to get more from your existing resources you have to do less of some other things. Let me repeat, as my own bias says, my bias as a school psychologist is I don't need to do cognitive assessment, ever, ever, for any kid. Let me repeat, ever. I don't need a cognitive assessment to identify a kid who has severe cognitive disabilities, they've typically been identified within the first three years of life. They come into school with an individual family service plan. They have long standing life long needs. Okay, okay great so I need to do that every three years, no I do not need to do that. If it were, if I need to that it would be in federal law, it's not okay. Now those are choices you make, if you want to use your psychologist to do that then don't complain about kids hurting themselves.

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Dr. Shinn: Okay, because you can't be dealing with internalizing and other issues if you're over here doing that. those are choices that leaders and teams make. But you've got great opportunity in Virginia to pick the method that meets the needs of your kids. Then do it best, my bias would be a dual discrepancy achievement, a discrepancy in progress given intensive appropriate intervention and a demonstrated need for something different and that would be clearly specified. I want to do that because I want to shift our cultural views to things that are around intervention rather than some static state of a kid and something potentially wrong with them. Especially with kids that are identified as SLD, the overwhelming amount of data is these kids primarily disabilities is ABT, ain't been taught.

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Dr. Shinn: Seriously, and that means look at your neural psychologist like Jack Fletcher and all those other people who really know what they're doing beyond me, and let's provide these kids some really intensive great instruction. Okay, now if you don't like that perspective fantastic, but don't complain about not having resources for something else. Okay, now as our second part of our leadership the most solvable problem we have in our field that will accelerate the quality of our progress monitoring across a multi-tier model is do it where progress monitoring is actually legally required. Progress monitoring is legally required as part of a kid's IEP. And we are legally required to report progress as frequently as non-disabled peers. That's in our law, and how do we do that now?

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Dr. Shinn: Poorly, people don't like how we write our IEP goals, this is a long-standing concern of almost 40 years. Wow, so our leaders go something like this, if I'm gonna be looking and I'm your worst nightmare, which I would never do work on the side of, against public schools but, but you know, I would come in and say, so let me take a look at your IEP goals and your progress monitoring data and let me see if they're aligned with the kinds of things I might see in Journal for you know, let's say Exceptional

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Children a journal of special Ed. Because you see I would like to see a goal that would look something like this, here is my timeframe. In one year John will read 150 words a minute correctly from a grade seven reading passage. I'm gonna use a basic standardized measure of general readability it's called oral reading, it's not a fluency measure. Don't have time to talk too much about that. If I saw this I'd say you're doing pretty well. If I saw a kid that was having problems in mathematics I'd like to see a mathematics goal.

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Dr. Shinn: I don't need five goals, I don't need ten goals, I don't need fifteen goals, I don't need twenty goals, I don't need a bunch of stuff I don't need. I need a few really good goals okay. If I'm looking at writing I might see a goal that might look something like this, kid will write 60 words given a randomly selected story starter. This is the gold standard for progress monitoring and this is sort of what it looks like. That black line for an IEP goal should be the same black line you would have for a kid say in tier three. That black line should be the expected rate of progress that does one fundamental thing, reduce the gap. For kids in special education it is clear and explicit that our goals need to reduce the gap. If you do not believe that special education can and should reduce the gap I'd suggest you have no need to deliver programs that you don't believe make a difference. That's a pretty strong statement, but if you don't believe your programs reduce the gap then why in the world you say the kid needs it?

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Dr. Shinn: I have a lot of people that start pushing back and say well special Ed. can't reduce the gap, well then why in the world would you say a kid needs it? Well cause other wise it'll get worse. Oh so special Ed. is a program that if deliver the kid it prevents them from getting worse not better. So this rate of progress, we need to fix this stuff fairly quickly because this is a long-standing problem in our field. So I want to collect some data. What kind of goals do you write right now? Do you write goals where people write lots of them and if you read them teachers get to pick which ones, and if you read them they'd end with a bunch of stuff that says 80 percent? Or do you have lots of goals that end with 80 percent but everybody picks from an item bank? Let's say we've got 25 objectives, you pick one of these, they all end in 80 percent, that's called a standardized process.

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Dr. Shinn: Do you write fewer goals with something like curriculum based measurement, obviously I'm tipping my hand and standardize your special education progress monitoring? Or honestly you don't know.... Baseline is about 20 some, 25. I'm seeing a predictable pattern here.

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Dr. Shinn: ...Okay pretty close, so most of your write goals like the student will cross the street with accuracy 80 percent of the time. Is that a good goal? Cross the street accuracy with 80 percent of the time? Yeah what happens on the other 20 percent, that was actually a goal for a district I was working with in Mississippi. Kid will cross the street accurately 80 percent of the time. Well what happens on the other 20 percent? They get hit by a car? District a friend of mine is director of special Ed. in Minnesota, kid walked in with an IEP. The IEP goal was the kid will not carry a gun to school 80 percent of the time.

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Dr. Shinn: Friday is gun Friday. Kid will read with 80 percent accuracy is that a good goal? No, kid will solve basic addition problems with 80 percent accuracy, good goal? Sorry, so when did we know that writing goals like this was gonna be a problem? Nineteen Seventy-eight, oh that was just last week wasn't it, 1978. So why did Mark get good at progress monitoring? Because in 1978 shortly after the first major funded special education law was funded this new thing was put in called the IEP goal okay. The IEP and a goal that would be observable and measureable and everybody knew at that time that the best available technology, this 80 percent stuff where you have a set of conditions, a time frame, a criteria, everybody knew that that was a good idea but didn't work. So the federal government invested a ton of money in a new generation of scholars and researchers to develop a technology that could be used to write IEP goals and progress monitoring.

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Dr. Shinn: Among those graduates were Lynn Fuchs, Vanderbilt University, Doug Marsten, Minneapolis Public Schools, Jerry Tindal, University of Oregon, Mark Shinn University of Oregon, National Louis University, a whole bunch of people all over the country. And now there are more than 250 referred journal articles in the area of reading alone, where progress monitoring like this is part of the United Nations initiative to improve worldwide literacy. All coming from improving the quality of our special Ed. IEP goals and frequent progress monitoring. But yet it is not widespread within the special Ed. community. It's kind of a problem because if we want schools to be good at the R part of Rtl, the question is how do you monitor progress because if you're gonna do Rtl you gotta be able to monitor progress. If you don't have a weight scale, something to stand on it's very difficult.

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Dr. Shinn: So we expedite our process by having kids read and write good goals and objectives, it's critical that we do that. Our current goals are inadequate, so guess what A special Ed. director does? Read and write a memo, if you don't know what that memo should say I'll email you one. That we will no longer write those cruddy goals, we will write good ones. We will train people how to do it and every time and IEP expires we

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will write a new goal. You will reduce the number of goals that you write for kids from, in our district to go back to Minneapolis schools almost 30 years ago we had 530 and some standard IEP goals that we were asked to write from. We moved that to eight. Eight goals, and every kid didn't have eight every kid typically had one or two, if they had concerns in math and reading they would have a math goal and a reading goal.

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Dr. Shinn: And teachers could add anything else that they wanted, teams could add anything more than that. We called it window dressing, so people like window dressing they could put more of those goals. In Illinois our goals are linked to our state standards. Our state standards, if a kid can read 150 words a minute correct on a grade seven passage in our state they have a 90 percent chance of passing our Illinois state test. Our Illinois state test measures our state standards, they're all linked up together, writing goals is fairly simple and straightforward. Progress monitoring that's different, more different, that's difficult. So one of the things we need to think about our leadership goes like this, in general Ed. our leadership teams going back we have to have a visible written plan. We need to have a team that meets regularly to do it, we need to do things like give permission from our special Ed. directors. We've gotta move the dial in terms of being efficient and effective at our eligibility process.

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Dr. Shinn: And we need to change how we write our goals and monitor progress. If we get those three things done we have a much greater likelihood of being successful at implementing middle school and high school. Now these are the variables, the most easy things to control. Some of the things that leaders can do at the administrative level in general Ed. and special Ed. and now if we really want to get serious we model what an intensive intervention actually looks like. Okay, so what does an intensive intervention actually look like? It doesn't look like these things. Lowering expectations, alternative assessments, modified grades, alternative courses, again coming back from some of my heroes Don Deshler and Keith, Keith Lens and others that what we end up tending to do is a whole bunch of re-teaching content area courses. Help with homework. It's called the tutoring trap.

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Dr. Shinn: Now again when you look at some of our data from what we've been able to see the interventions that are being provided here you are providing more explicit and direct instruction. Treatment seems to be a solved problem in at least half of the respondents, that's really good news. But what do we really want to be able to do is shift over to what we know are the effective practices. Now this is not from data around here. This is what happens if you go into a special Ed. classroom, this is a study done by Don Deshler and others, and they looked at teaching practices in special education that made a difference. And these would be things that we'd really like to see that would be

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classified as red stuff. Okay, they looked at a bunch of different teaching behaviors, they looked at how frequently they occurred, red things would be really good. These are things that are clearly above and beyond practices that make a difference. Blue things are things that people might call, and I don't want to be a, a, discounting just plain good teaching.

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Dr. Shinn: And green things are things that people do that don't make much of a difference, so let's take a look at green things. The most frequently observed thing that happened in special education was in this study by Deshler was that people didn't teach. They did a fair amount of okay lecturing not big effect size, giving directions, not a big effect size, and then how to do stuff, not a big effect size. Blue things, not much blue things and a lot of blue things not done at all. How about red things? The biggest single thing that red thing that was done would be feedback, but you see among the most positive things like concept mapping, use of advanced organizers, frequent progress monitoring, metacognitive strategies hardly at all. So let's increase the intensive of our special Ed. interventions. And so I have my biases, I've got a kid that's significantly discrepant what would be on your toolbox?

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Dr. Shinn: What would be the tools in your toolbox? What would be the things that you would like to see people use? I'm a big fan of teaching people to use a few good tools really really really well. To me part of my Rtl plan says what are the tools in the toolbox that we're going to get our staff really good at, at tier three? Because I want to have some similarity between my tier three interventions and my special education programs. What would be some of the things I might put on Mark's list? Well my bias is gonna be wow, if I had my druthers I might think about a program called Reach. Reach is an SRA program that combines corrective reading, spelling through [morphographs ?] and writing through reasoning. It has a language arts focus. Or my bias might be corrective reading, or my bias might be Language!, or if I've got relatively higher performing kids I might use Read180 the new, new one I say new it's seven years old, the new Read180 program is much better than the original one.

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Dr. Shinn: But I want to be really careful about not relying too heavily on computer based programs for the kids that are far, far behind. I want to be kind of careful about that, now the point is not that this becomes your list. The point is that if you don't have a list you're putting a lot of pressure on an individual teacher to figure it out. So one of our neighbors, her, her niece just moved to our neighborhood. She's living in the basement, hope to have her meet my son, they can hang out in each other's basements. That might not be a good thing. But she's a graduate of the University of Kentucky, okay special Ed. program. They've got a pretty good special Ed. program, you know how

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much she knows about school and schooling? Nine weeks of student teaching. Okay, what has she learned how to deliver? She cares deeply about kids but her experience in classroom management, behavior support and teaching kids how to read, not much.

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Dr. Shinn: If I put the pressure on her to figure out what to do with kids that are significantly behind that doesn't seem like a really good prescription. But what would be the tools in your toolbox and why would you pick them, that's an important role that your leadership team engages in. Okay, it cannot, cannot be what we call independent contracting. Okay, so what do you do right now? I wanted to give a sense as to how confident you think your programs are in reducing the gap, let's just take kids specific learning disabilities, let's just take reading, and I want you to give me a judgment as to how well things are working for you right now. Our special Ed. program for reading, okay reducing the gap for pretty much everybody, most of our kids, some of our kids, a few, hardly any, or I don't know.

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Dr. Shinn: Are your programs reducing the gap? Kids with mild disabilities, think SLD.... Are we getting a picture here? We're close to our baseline of about 25 respondents, you know what these data tell me? Special Ed. needs special ed.

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Dr. Shinn: So for those of you that are heavily invested in testing kids for special education eligibility why would you spend a lot of time and money investing kids' eligibility when the programs don't reduce the gap? And here is the other one, what are we doing to strengthen the quality of our programs not just at tier one, tier two, tier three but also special Ed.? This goes back into our leadership is required, okay. Look there is not even like one person that thinks more than half your kids are reducing the gap, not, not one of you. And again we're sort of preaching the choir. Now many of you feel like you don't have the capacity to change this. You could be in a situation like I was in working with a suburb district, western suburb of Chicago, middle school, high performing middle school, meeting with all the seventh grade special Ed. teacher on writing goals, monitoring progress. Most of the kids are not reducing the gap.

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Dr. Shinn: And the teachers say well how are we supposed to reduce the gap in 35 minutes? I said, well what do you mean how, what does 35 minutes have to do with it? Well if a kid has an IEP and they're in seventh grade they get 35 minutes special Ed. program, I'm going like a kid who is discrepant like this, they get 35 minutes? Yeah, kid who is discrepant 35 minutes, every kid got exactly the same special Ed. program driven by the middle school schedule. How many of you feel like you are limited in terms of the outcomes you produce by something like your schedule? Raise your hand. Look

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around. The schedule does not dictate the special education program. The severity of needs of the kids dictate the programs, and here is the unintended consequences of us not talking, our administrators don't realize the constraints that somebody has inadvertently put us under. We need to be sort of public about what some of these constraints are. My wife is the master school scheduler, she's the master master school scheduler.

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Dr. Shinn: People come to her from other schools to help with their master schedule. There is cleverness involved in terms of how do you fit all the stuff in. But leadership is required if we're going to change this okay. Nobody talks about well everybody has got to get the same program, it just sort of happens that way. And by the time you get into high school the quest to get kids to graduate severely diminishes our capacity to reduce the gap. So I have a belief like this, kids get the program they need regardless of the consequences for graduation, easy for me to say right. I don't have to deal with parents. But what we need to have is a clear, what we call credit recovery prescription. That if a kid in ninth grade has a two to three hour a day intensive intervention program and they're not getting some of those credits to graduation you cannot leave it to families to figure it out.

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Dr. Shinn: You gotta tell them, give them a plan that says here is how you're gonna recover those credits if you want to graduate by 2015 or 2016 depending, I get my years all goofed up. And you can't leave it ambiguous, and that means okay during the summertime here are two courses that you can take. Here is an online class. Here is a community college, and you spend some time developing clear pathways towards credit recovery. And there is a way that you can increase the intensity of your program if time is an issue. And you can have your school counselor do it, you can have you school team do it, but you figure out plan A, plan B, plan C and make it really easy. And by the way we were having this discussion this morning, where, let's see so, four and we pay for four on your own with what was that you were, what was your kid's plan? Okay, we pay four we play more, I wish I would have met you about six years ago, seven years ago my son, what's worse than four years at a small private college?

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Dr. Shinn: Five, and he had some health issues so that part is kind of explains part of it, but you know what we never in the transition from middle school to high school yet that I know of lay out what we think is the best special Ed. program for you in your program. So we actually think your high school program would be best served if we thought five years versus four. Did you know that in Virginia for sure you can go to school until you're age 21 free and appropriate education. In Michigan you can go to school free and appropriate education age 26. It's pretty interesting to me, nobody ever does it of

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course. But you see what if we laid out what we thought would be the best program for your kids in terms of a four year plan, five year plan, six year plan? And laid that out at the entry transition from middle school to high school, how many of you have had in-service training on the changes in idea on developing transition plans beginning at age 14?

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Dr. Shinn: That transition plan is part of your Rtl or MTSS, VTMS, LSMFT implementation plan. All of those things can impact this, okay. Now here is your next opportunity, it's part of your implementation plan where are you in your IEP goals? Where are you in terms of expediting quality of progress monitoring for kids who get special Ed.? Where are you in your implementation of evidence based practices? Leadership starts by general Ed. what we can control, leadership starts by special Ed. what we can influence and control. Where are you, take ten minutes, touch base and see what those are in terms of your overall priorities for implementation. Start your clocks. I've got about 1:10. [Tape cuts]

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Dr. Shinn: Seventh grade science teacher maybe the implicit leader of a middle school. A special Ed. teacher in eleventh grade maybe the implicit leader of a group of people that are addressing the needs of all at risk kids in a high school. But until we make the leadership expectations around what we do in our general Ed. programs and in particular our special Ed. programs more visible and obvious on some important things the harder it is to implement. Now I picked some areas here, not as the only areas but ones in which I have experience in 30 some years the areas where people get the most bang for the buck okay. That one of these things around eligibility or IEP goals, or our capacity to monitor for kids when we are legally required to do so accelerates. It's like putting gasoline on a fire, it makes progress monitoring valuable to everyone.

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Dr. Shinn: So what are some of these other things that we need to be thinking about? The next related topic is gonna be more specific, and it has to do with our language arts curriculum. We're now moving out of this leadership area into some specific things that we should or could tackle. They are definitely related, okay. So what we want to be able to do is think about our timeframe, about does our language arts program work for us? What is our gauge of scale to judge it? And if it needs strengthening and I'm gonna argue pretty much everywhere it does, how do we strength it? Our goal is to start to be thinking now to be able to read and prepare for some changes that might occur fall of 2014. This is a thinking and reading year, it's a discussion year, and I want us to take this as our baseline.

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Dr. Shinn: Maybe, does our secondary language arts program right now, what do we think about its capacity regardless of our state test scores in terms of meeting the kids needs of being able to read and understand narrative and informational and expository test? Is what we're doing now getting our kids 90 percent of them are darn good at reading narrative and expository text, the stuff they need to read and write about it? Most of our kids, some of our kids, or are we failing sizeable proportions. To me anything less than 60 percent means we're really not meeting the needs of large numbers.

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Dr. Shinn: ...There's our baseline. So if indeed we're recognizing that at least I'm gonna say what is that? That's about 75 percent of you are saying there is at least a quarter of your kids minimum that are not adept at being able to navigate narrative and expository text.

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Dr. Shinn: In an increasingly competitive world, wow, what's our plan? My wife's district, did you know that my wife's district like 99.9 percent of kids including those in special education make AYP, but they're poorly prepared because we've got an easy state test. A lot of the high school teachers at Lake Forest High School say these kids really struggle with navigating informational text. These kids are not prepared. They can pass our state test, and that lets people off the political hook but they can't do things that are really important to be able to navigate. What's our plan? What can we do about this? What's your language arts curriculum? Why is that not showing up? See if this sounds like you.

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Dr. Shinn: Your language arts curriculum, let's just take grade six through nine, is a single period where the teachers pick their favorite novels. That sound familiar? If this is what you do then here is what you will get, if you got a good teacher you'll get lucky. If you didn't have a good teacher you won't be so lucky. You think such an important thin like being able to read and understand narrative informational text you should be getting lucky in our public school system? You will get little instruction about how to navigate and understand narrative and context text and writing instruction will be idiosyncratic. That means, some teachers will be good at teaching writing and others will not. My son's seventh grade teacher was pretty good at teaching writing. My son's eighth grade teacher we saw the first evidence of him writing in May.

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Dr. Shinn: So I'd always say so Dominic what are you writing? We're not writing. Dominic what are you writing? We're not writing. Dominic you gotta be writing something. No dad we're really not writing, May he writes something. The good news

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was he gave it to me to edit. After his teacher said have your parents edit before you turn it in, okay so I tried to put on my dad editing hat rather than my editing editing hat. And I tried to talk about really like the way you communicate ideas, they go in, in from a beginning to end, this is really great. But you know what there is no evidence of things like capitalization, punctuation, where, and he's in eighth grade and he's a voracious reader. So we worked on it, worked on it, worked on it, worked on it you know, without being too oppressive, turned it in, finally got some feedback. Feedback was two words, do over. Eighth grade was not a year of writing improvement, that's really too bad because he's going into a high performing ninth grade classroom. Now if he would have been in the other section of English he would have been writing a lot and getting corrective feedback.

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Dr. Shinn: We didn't get lucky this year, we got lucky in seventh grade. If this is what your model is here is what tier two looks like, it doesn't exist. Almost always if you have this you will not have tier two, and if you do not have tier two that puts pressure on special Ed. to take all of the kids that are struggling. And we can't do that anymore because special Ed. gets watered down, limited by scheduled or caseload, we have to fix that. Now I'm gonna take as a priority what if you can only do it at grade six what it would look like? Well good if you do it at grades six or seven what would it look like? Grades six, seven and eight, what if you get a grades six through nine, would it make a big difference? And I'm gonna lay out some choices, but first I need to know what you're doing right now. Let's take the length of your language arts block, how long is it? Does time matter?

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Dr. Shinn: ...All right I'm seeing a pattern. Now my bias is gonna be minimum 70 to 80 minutes, okay six through nine. Why would I like a double period, double block?

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Dr. Shinn: Okay even if they're not consecutive? Because I can deliver intervention within a block. If I can't deliver intervention within the block I have to deliver intervention outside of the block. And that means kids are gonna miss something else okay. And here is what we tend to do, well intentioned but undesirable consequences, we might take that kid out of a class he enjoys the most to give them intervention. So they won't be able to take music, they'll have to, they'll have to, have to do reading. Now think about the consequences of that in terms of motivation and interest, and think about the potential pushback from parents okay. Now whether a kid is motivated or not, whether a parent is interested or not I will try to do the right thing for that kid, okay. But wouldn't it be great if I didn't have to have that as such a big barrier?

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Dr. Shinn: If I have, if I have a lengthy enough period I could actually do differentiated instruction within a block and meet many of the needs of my kids at tier two and sometimes tier three. If I have, if I have language arts every other day I'm sort of compromise especially if it's a single period. To me it's saying either my kids are unbelievably brilliant, or we're doing something that might actually make the job of teaching more difficult, okay. These are things we start as a baseline, because if we want to deliver intervention within a block and reduce some of the scheduling on pressure wouldn't it be nice if we had longer periods of time to work with? Oh yes some of our other courses might be shorter, but you know what? If I can't do this at grade seven I can do it at grade six, what a difference that might make if they're stronger readers and writers okay. If I can't do it at grade eight or nine what if I did grades six and seven?

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Dr. Shinn: Everybody doesn't always have to do it the same way, but my bias is do something early as long as you need to okay. Now the other part of this is how do you deliver it? What do you do? Is it a scientifically based language arts program? Okay, plus literature, okay that could be novel study, plus novel study, but it's heavily weighted towards non-fiction. Or is it your teacher's favorite literature non-fiction weighted? Is it teacher's favorite literature fiction weighted? Is it teachers' favorite literature or is it, it varies a lot teacher to teacher? These are the variables that we need to know something about, this is taking inventory. What's in place? How's it working?

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Dr. Shinn: Data-based decision making.... We're either getting slower responding or fewer responding as people move on in the day....

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Dr. Shinn: A few more to get our baseline, I'm guessing there might be a few more I don't know or slower responding, oh who are you guys? Who are you guys huh? Close to our baseline, see a pattern? Looks like what we call a lot of independent contracting. Any of you have a year where you got lucky? Anybody have a year where you didn't get lucky? What can we do about this? If we are serious that many of our kids language arts needs are not being met we want to implement Virginia Tiered System of Supports at middle school in particular if not the first year of high school how do we strengthen our language arts curriculum. You're telling me that sizeable proportions of kids are not good at what they need to do, and yet the mechanisms to be able to do that may not be there.

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Dr. Shinn: Okay, now my passion I should tell you is reading novels. [Mr. Lenay ?] probably my second favorite teacher, high school, I read literature that I read still today.

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Talk about lifelong impact, how can a guy you know, 40 years later have an impact on your life? By turning me on to novels and literature, particularly modern American fiction. Whoa and including a guy from like Maryland on the eastern shore, a guy named John Barth, okay. So for those of you who live on the eastern shore we know who you are, we can have that stuff influence us for life. But it can't be the basis, sole basis for a curriculum grade six through nine. What can we do about some of this stuff? Well let's see how you might compare to a high performing community with people saying they have lots of kids not meeting standards.

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Dr. Shinn: This is their results of 84 teachers, look at this, more than half of them reported it's teacher to teacher variability. If we want to increase the outcomes for kids in such an important area, if we do this only at grade six that's a big improvement. What about grade six or seven, that's a really big improvement. What about grades six, seven or eight, you choose in your community where you believe you no longer need to strengthen your language arts program. But I believe your data says you need to, how can you do that? Well how about this? Let's take a look at the needs of our kids, and let's take a look at a minimum length and period of time and figure out how we can deliver that as long as we need to. Okay, I really start to think let's start with a utopian dream of being able to provide 80 to 90 minutes, double periods or longer blocks every day, and then decide how long do we need to do this?

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Dr. Shinn: In my wife's community, in Lala-Land, okay Lake Forest is like really Lala-Land. It's old Chicago money, really old and really really really big Chicago money. In a single day they charge people to walk through peoples' houses, it's an interesting concept to me that you pay somebody to walk through their house, and they raise \$50,000 for schools in a single day. It's that kind of community, okay, every elementary school has around something like \$70,000 a year to spend on their own building greens. It's that kind of a district, they have a double period through sixth, through seventh grade. High performing community, they have a double period, wow. So here is what else we need to do, if you've got the time adjust the intensity and the explicitness of your language arts program.

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Dr. Shinn: And find one that meets the needs of your kids, what are some choices we could have if we do this to be able to deliver intervention within the block what could we do? Oh I don't know, this could be a Virginia solution. My goodness, do we have anybody from this group here in this room? Who are you people in this room and what do you do, stand up and tell us who you are and what do you do? Do you provide services to schools in Virginia? Okay well you tell, you tell them don't, don't let me tell them, stand up.

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Respondent: --looked at the whole framework of making SIM and other evidence based practices division wide or school wide.

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Respondent: And we have demonstration sites across the, the state now, so as we move into this Virginia Tiered System of Support we will have those resources available.

Dr. Shinn: So schools could strengthen their language arts curriculum at tier one by using your services?

Respondent: Correct.

Dr. Shinn: We can't get that in Illinois, would anybody want to use your services here in the room? These are evidence-based practices that kind of make a difference, wow. Doesn't mean you have to go out and buy a new curriculum but you'd be changing your teaching practices to deliver your existing curriculum more effectively. That seems like a good deal doesn't it? I think my movie didn't play, there is actually a little movie of some of the demonstration sites in, do you remember which, how come it didn't load? That's kind of odd.

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Dr. Shinn: And there is even specific targets, and here is the pitch on this part. One is if you've got an existing curriculum, whether it's novel study or not, you can make it better by the teaching practices used to deliver it. Here is the things that go into it, the things that go into it are field tested, 35 years plus of real work with real kids. The results are published in peer-reviewed journals. It emphasizes instructional practices independent of the curriculum that are being used, okay. So it increases the explicitness of instruction and you've got your program, it just makes whatever you do better. Here is what else is really nice, it practices stuff that's independent of a particular program. Okay some things that you can use in just about anything you read across content areas.

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Dr. Shinn: So by strengthening your language arts curriculum you're strengthening kids' reading skills in every subject area. That's a really good thing. And here is the other really cool thing, you're teaching kids lifelong learning strategies. Wow, you can actually get that from resources available within your own state? That's a cool thing for you to take advantage of. So these are people you can find, you can go to this literacy in the content area stuff, this is the folks at the University of Kansas. This is aligned with the strategic instruction model. It's got really good people, they train their people super rigorously if almost not to the fingers bones and all the other sort of stuff that drives people crazy. They're really good at what they do. Take advantage of it. It's in your state, now what about time? Time sort of matters right?

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Dr. Shinn: So you know what I said have a double period, and by the way I'd encourage you to do that in reading and math. Okay, so double period reading and math, sixth grade how much time is left over for other stuff? Not a lot, but kids will get off to a healthy start. You can schedule your tier two classes, just like any other and you will re-allocate your staff and say, yes you're using to teaching seventh grade English but you're also gonna do another period of remedial seventh grade English. So yes in middle school we don't typically have title one, we may not typically have reading specialists. We often don't have English language learners, but we shift peoples' roles so everybody can't do whatever they want all the time. It's part of a team to meet the needs of our kids, and by the way you don't just assign them you train them. And here is another option.

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Dr. Shinn: Again coming from some work by my colleague Wayne Calendar, you create an intervention period at middle school for everyone. But it's not intervention it's intervention and remediation. Cascade Middle School and you can find out more about it if you contact Wayne, Cascade Middle School did this a couple of years ago cause they had large numbers of kids failing content area classrooms. So they created something like a 40 minute intervention and remediation block, they have a cute little name for it which I can't remember this afternoon. The intervention period goes something like this, you're either scheduled for remediation, that's required. You have options for enrichment. If you choose not to do enrichment you don't need remediation, you can have choice, choice number one choice is walking club. Why in the world would middle school kids choose to walk? So they can talk to each other, that wouldn't be good would it?

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Dr. Shinn: Guess what number two choice is? Bead stringing, why would kids in middle school choose to walk or string beads? Because you can talk and socialize. So here is what happened on the affects of achievement, the number of kids pass, not failing decreased by 50 percent. Dramatic decrease in the number of kids not failing, here is what else happened which they didn't take into account in their planning. It's a PBIS school, the number of kids being sent to the office decreased already in a school that had low numbers, and the number of kids coming to school increased. Like why would kids want to come to school more? Maybe because school sometimes is more fun. So killing two birds with one stone, is it my first choice for intervention? Nope, but it's something I would consider, I'm gonna take a little bit of every period so kids get off to that healthy start in middle school.

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Dr. Shinn: When I move into high school at the very least I'd like to make this transition from middle school to high school, this grade nine where kids are really getting a lot of informational text, I'd really like them to be good at being able to navigate that, to do it and to write about it. It's really important. It'll make everybody in your building happier if you do cause your students will be better prepared for content area instruction. I'm gonna schedule my tier two classes for additional credit, and I'm gonna commit to tier three regardless of the consequences. And that's a tough one, worked in a high school, very high performing high school that changed within five years. Within a five year period it went from like two percent of kids free and reduced lunch to twenty-two percent free and reduced lunch. What do you think happened to the school population for kids at risk? Went up pretty dramatically, so the school leadership team did a really good thing. They screened all of their incoming ninth graders before they walked in the door of ninth grade.

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Dr. Shinn: And they identified the kids that needed intervention, and then they made a fatal mistake. They gave parents a choice, now though I think they identified something like 40 some kids who were so low but not tier three, these are kids that were at risk, they identified something like 40 kids that the school believed needed intervention, I believe four parents agreed. Cause they didn't want their kids for blah, blah, blah, blah so in other words, I mean if you do that and you really have good measures, there were kids that really were at risk readers, these were not casual kids a little bit crooked or sideways, these were kids that really needed intervention. You made it a parent choice and most parents didn't want the whatever, the stigma or who knows what goes into the mind of a parent, but didn't work. They did all this work and nothing came of it. Too bad. There are plenty of models all around the country for how to strengthen your language arts curriculum.

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Dr. Shinn: Plenty of models, you can read a model program out of the University, out of the Consortium on Reaching Excellence. Here is their website, this is the conference I suggested that you go to in end of February early March. This is Linda Diamond who is the chief officer on Consortium on Reading Excellence, it's a company that was founded more than 15 years ago to support evidence-based practices by the former superintendent of schools of California. They work in something like 38 states, if you want to train your teachers they are screamingly good. They provide unbelievable feedback on coaching and other things, they're really good. So if Mark has his way since I was gonna give you some examples of what I might do, here is an example. Let's pick a program. A program, let's pick I don't know how about Prentice Hall Literature?

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Dr. Shinn: It's a core program, me it, it novels, I would do the core Prentice Hall plus novel study, plus getting kids to read a lot outside. How many of you have involved your media specialist librarian in your multi-tiered Virginia Tiered Services of Supports Initiative? Anybody? Why would you involve your media specialist or librarian?...

Respondent 2: They're a librarian, and even to the point of one librarian who has her cart and she will meet with teachers and identify what the concepts are for that particular unit and then she brings in a variety of texts for the students to be able to pick from even those who are reading at an advanced level have learned that sometimes it's okay to read down.

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Respondent 2: Because you can make sure you've got that background that you need, and then that steps you into the higher level of reading that might actually be the level that you are reading at.

Dr. Shinn: Outstanding, and I would write that up and promote that. I'm serious, because you see if we're gonna be coordinated we have to involve all of our parties, and a lot of people don't think of the media people or library people as contributing to our core language arts curriculum. But when we're having discussions about what kids could read or should read in terms of wide reading who better to support us in that effort than our school librarian? See as a science teacher, and I want kids to read widely about science, I don't have to sit down and say this is too hard, this is too difficult. I want to have somebody do that work for me. And same thing for science and social, you know, for things like social studies. I need kids to be able to read more about American history but boy this stuff is too hard. What are some things that might be suitable for kids who read like this, have somebody else do the legwork.

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Dr. Shinn: This is part of strengthening your core program, and things that really make a difference. Now, my tier two, my tier two will not just be louder and longer. Remember me I'd like to deliver it within the block, here is an example of how I might do it. Okay, my program is Prentice Hall Literature. It comes with a intervention component called Reader's Companion. I would probably augment that with Anita Archer's Rewards program and then I need to have notice what I call structured outside wide reading. This means I need to have a voice, a voice where somebody sits down and says that's too easy or that's too hard. My son in sixth grade was bringing home picture books, seriously? Well they're World War II picture books dad, they have good pictures. Dominic come on. You can do better than that I don't want to play that role.

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Dr. Shinn: This is delivered within the double block and for tier three if I'm serious if I can keep the kid involved in my core program it's gonna be plus some explicit program I

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might say like Reach plus structured wide outside reading. Now the goal for me is not to give you this as a prescription, but as you think about strengthening your language arts curriculum are you interested? Do you need to and how would you? You don't have to have all of those answers, but if we go through the different sort of things, developing your plan to move forward what are some of the things you can think about in a structured way? Now that's Kevin Feldman, anybody been to any Kevin Feldman's training? Kevin Feldman is really good at what he does, okay he's retired now from the director of literacy in Sonoma County. The nice thing is if you get to know Kevin you get to visit him in Healdsburg, and if you think wine in Virginia growing well go to the best place in the United States, which is actually Sonoma County.

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Dr. Shinn: Don't go to Napa too commercial, well Kevin is, I've known Kevin for 30 years. And Kevin is my person that I like to call on when I have a question from somebody on adolescent literacy. So I got a question from a middle school language arts teacher in Michigan saying, so Mark what would you think would be really good to strengthen our language arts curriculum since you said having one might make the job easier? So immediately I'm smart I call Kevin. And here is Kevin's response, okay, so and these are all, these are his, his words not mine. So Prentice Hall this is, this one is my favorite. A solid blend of fiction, non-fiction, academic vocabulary, writing etc. Holt, okay there is a website, many in California have used this report good things. Houghton Mifflin he doesn't say much about it but he puts it on there okay. So here is the bottom line for me.

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Dr. Shinn: The key to me is not so much which program, but get this, choose one that has substantial non-fiction, it's language arts not literature arts, solid writing and grammar, robust vocabulary and clear accommodation for English learners and, and special Ed. students. Now it's not so much this, but this is what you want to think about, but here is this part. How you support it, how, how literacy is developed across other academic disciplines within the school, now there is Kevin's email address. He's got a blog and resources that has some of the top people in the country contribute regularly to it. It's free, they don't track you in terms of email or bug you, but you know what? Do you have a program? If you do how do you support it? If you can't answer those questions part of your plan might be to address these things this year. Study the strengths and weaknesses of your language arts curriculum, you can again take the same concept and apply it to math.

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Dr. Shinn: Now I mentioned Read to Achieve, not as a plug or as a, you know, I get a kickback or anything else like that. But I like Read to Achieve because it's designed for like a one year program at tier one, a one year program or remedial program for older

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kids, and what I like about it, how well it is designed, and you can't see all the print, it explicitly teaches using a direct instruction approach. It's kind of like bringing reading mastery to middle school. So it explicitly teaches kids strategies to navigate narrative and expository text. It teaches them by having all kids read a sample of narrative and I mean it's an extended sample, with scripted instructions, and then kids learn how to generalize those strategies to their own narrative curriculum.

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Dr. Shinn: It also teaches kids to read a selection; it's an extended selection of expository text and apply those strategies to their science book or their social studies book. But it's, you gotta know it's a direct instruction scripted program, which I tend to like. These are not the only programs because we'd also want kids reading a lot. We have a choice here, what are you doing for your language arts program? What is the priority for you? What are the parameters you work with? What do you agree with what I said, what do you disagree with? What's in place? What needs to be done? What is your level of priority? Here is your time, it is about 2:45, do you want to take your ten-minute stretch before you sit down and talk? Seem like a good time to do that or not a good time to do that?

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Dr. Shinn: Good time to do that, okay so your overall time will be 3:05. So circulate, if you stay here you'll just have longer to talk.