

# The Critical Role of the BLT



**Brian A McNulty Ph.D.**



**Creative Leadership  
Solutions**



# Outcomes

- **Clarify the roles, purposes, and critical actions of the BLT**
- **Make commitments for follow-up action**

# Ohio Improvement Process

## Who is involved?

### District/Building Leadership Teams

State Diagnostic Teams (SDTs) work with selected high support districts

State Support Teams (SSTs) work with districts and schools in need of improvement

Educational Service Centers (ESCs) work with other districts requesting assistance

## How do these teams work in districts and schools?

Teams use data tools to identify critical needs

## Who is involved?

### District/Building Leadership Teams

State Diagnostic Teams

State Support Teams

Educational Service Centers

Regional Managers

Single Point of Contact

## How do these teams work in districts and schools?

Review data  
Gather evidence of implementation and impact

## Who is involved?

### District/Building Leadership Teams

State Diagnostic Teams

State Support Teams

Educational Service Centers

## How do these teams work in districts and schools?

Work with leadership to develop research based strategies and action steps focused on critical needs identified in stage 1.

## Who is involved?

### District/Building Leadership Teams

### Teacher Based Teams

Regional Service Providers

External Vendors

Higher Education

## How do these teams work in districts and schools?

Provide technical assistance and targeted professional development

Leverage resources

## STAGE 1

Identify Critical Needs of Districts and Schools

## STAGE 2

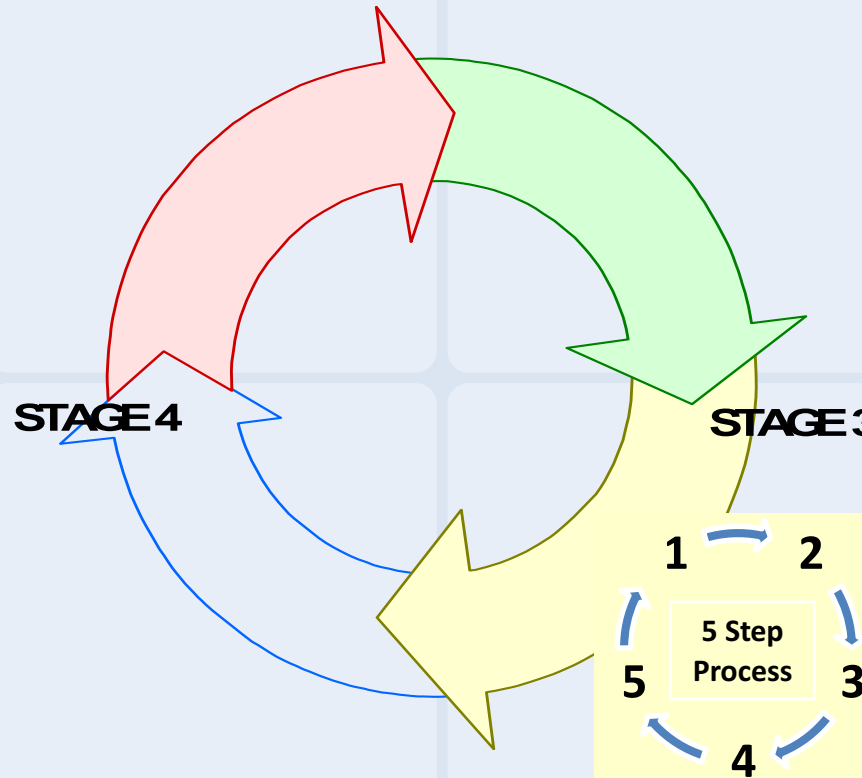
Develop a Focused Plan

## STAGE 4

Evaluate the Improvement Process

## STAGE 3

Implement and Monitor the Focused Plan

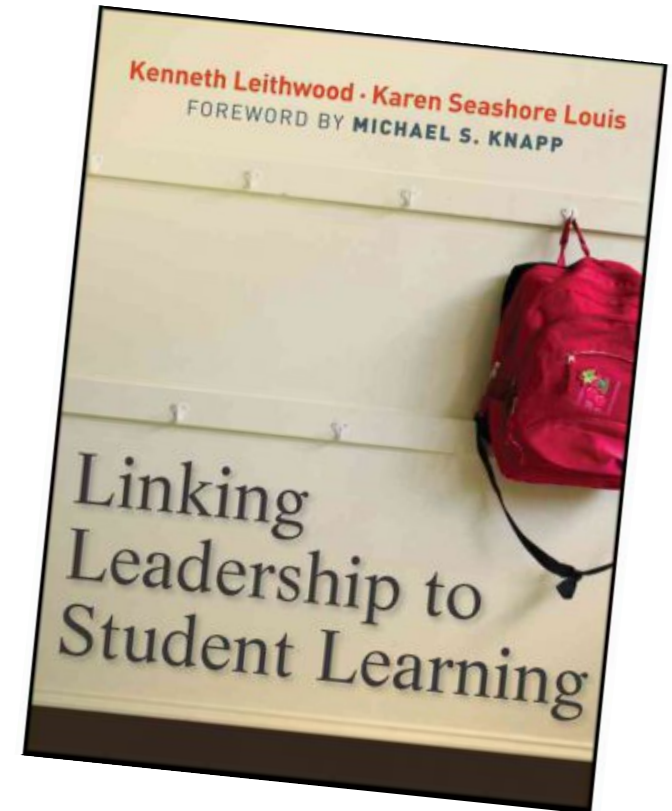


# Review of the Research OLi4 Foundations



# Largest Leadership Study to Date

- **Nine states**
- **43 school districts**
- **180 schools**
- **Data from a total of 8,391 teachers and 471 school administrators**



# Two Overall Findings

- 1. Collective leadership (collective capacity) has a stronger influence on student learning than any individual source of leadership.**
- 2. Higher-performing schools award greater influence to teacher teams.**



# BLT/DLT Purpose



**The BLT  
exists to improve  
instructional practice  
and performance.**

# To Measure Progress Towards Their **Purpose**, the BLT Monitors...

**1. Staff learning progress  
(Adult Actions)**

**2. Student learning progress**





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**1. Staff learning progress  
(Adult Actions)**

**2. Student learning progress**



***Research consistently shows that supporting adult learning is directly and positively linked to enhancing children's achievement.*** Drago-Severson, 2009



What is the first and primary responsibility of the **B L T**?



Stop and reach agreement on the primary responsibility of the **B L T**

**What is the first and primary  
responsibility of the BLT?**

**To help support and strengthen your**

**T B T S**

**Make some quick notes  
for your BLTs work.**



# **B** **L** **T** **Monitoring**

The purpose of “Monitoring Data” is...

- **Feedback** to the TBTs
- **Support** to the TBTs

# **B** **L** **T** Monitoring

- **Use 5-step rubric to collect monitoring data (handout)**
- **Three data points on each TBTs**
  - 1. TBT Teams self evaluate.**
  - 2. Principal monitors TBTs.**
  - 3. BLT members monitor a TBT (that is, not their own).**

# **B L T** Monitoring

## **Frequency of Monitoring**

**Plan for 2 inquiry cycles—in the fall and the spring.**

- Collect and analyze data**
- Make decisions and commitments for support**
- Provide for support**
- Collect another round of data**





**Where are your TBTs now?**



Where  
are  
you  
now?

**What do your TBTs need?**

# Insights from TtoT/BLT Teacher Sessions



- BLT members know that TBTs need more support.

*Most BLT members rated their TBTs overall as a 1 or 2 on a 4-point scale.*

- Most BLT members had not visited a TBT that was not their own.



**Stop and discuss why this is important.**

# How has your BLT improved the performance of your TBTs?

**Stop to see if you can identify one action that your BLT has taken to improve TBT practices and performance.**

- How well did it work?**
- How do you know?**
- How did you share this with the school?**



**Make some quick notes  
for your BLTs work.**



**Monitoring only matters if  
you act on the data.**



# Negative Monitoring Does Not Work!!!



**You cannot expect changes in  
student performance...**



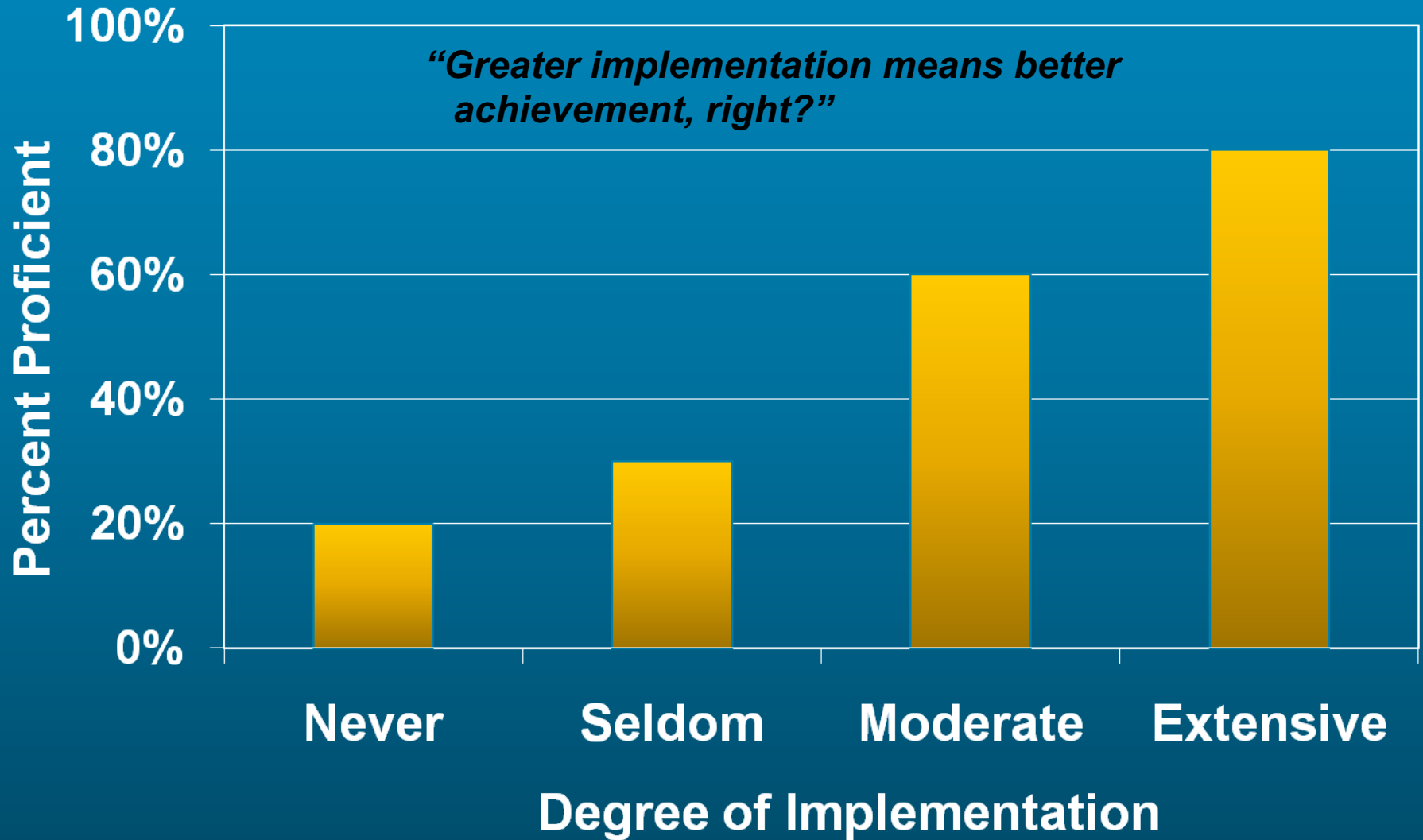
**...before there are changes  
in adult performance.**

# What We Believe Happens...





# The Myth of Linearity

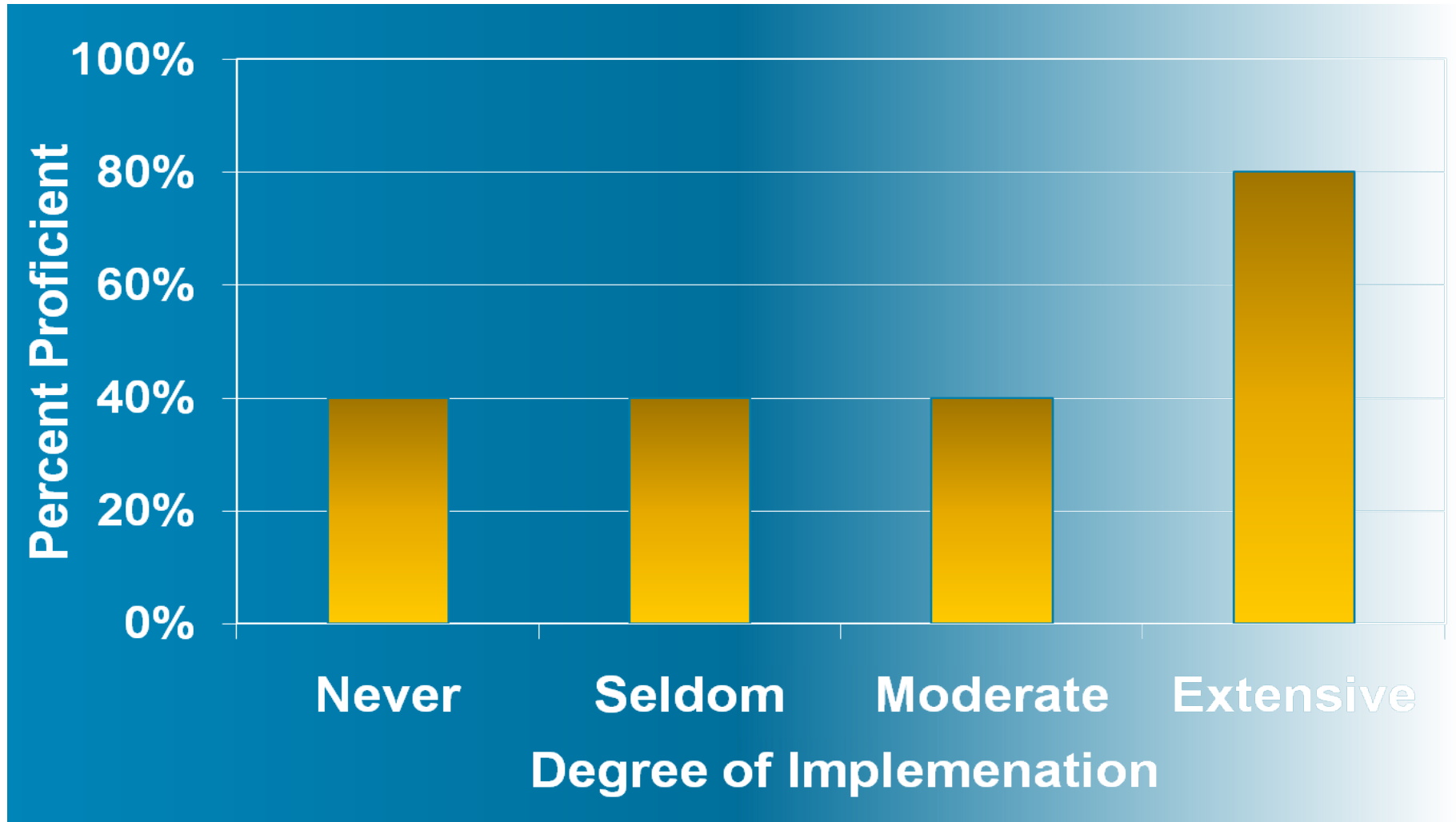


# What Really Happens



**WELCOME TO  
REALITY**

# The Non-Linear Path of School Improvement



# To Measure Progress Towards Their Purpose, the BLT Monitors...

**Year 2**

- 1. Staff learning progress  
(Adult Actions)**
- 2. Student learning  
progress**



# **The BIG question for the BLT...**



**Are our student supports and interventions working?**

**How do we know?**

## 2. Student Learning Progress

- **Based on benchmark or other assessments**
  - **Which individual and subgroups of students are/are not making progress? Why?**
  - **What actions will we take to facilitate progress? e.g., strengthening Tier 1, interventions and supports**
- **Follow the same 5-step process as TBTs**



# What are inclusive leadership actions?

- **Creating a culture of inquiry**
- **Distributing leadership**
- **Shaping the discourse about school inclusiveness**
- **Encouraging and supporting professional learning communities (TBTs/BLTs/DLTs)**
- **Informing yourself about learning difficulties and interventions**



# Clarifications and Agreements on TBTs

T B T S



**What are TBTs supposed to be doing?**



**Stop and reach agreement on what TBTs are supposed to do in their meetings.**

# **TBTs look at three primary things:**

- 1. Unpacking standards to identify and agree on important learning outcomes**
- 2. Developing and using shared Formative Assessments**
- 3. Agreeing on a shared Instructional Practice**



**Make some quick notes  
for your BLTs work.**



# Where to start with “teaching practices”

- Start with an important learning outcome
- Choose a simpler practice
- Make it work for all kids--  
Modify, adapt, expand, etc.
- Learn from using the practice
- Share your learnings



# Insights from TtoT/BLT teacher sessions



- **BLT members were unclear on instructional practices in the TBTs.**
  - **BLTs need to know what practices TBTs are working on and are finding effective.**
  - **BLTs need to share effective practices across the school.**
  - **What teaching practices should they focus on?**
- **Caution re: Hattie, effect sizes and meta-practices**

**Make some quick notes  
for your BLTs work.**



***Positive outcomes are unlikely in the absence of building leadership (BLT) that supports and holds teacher teams accountable for sustaining the inquiry process until they see tangible results.***

Gallimore et al., 2009



# Inquiry and Learning

Your BLT should be able to answer the BIG Inquiry Questions.

Are you making progress?

- *How* do you know?
- Do you know *Why*?





# Inquiry and Learning

Your BLT should be able to answer the BIG Inquiry Questions.

If you are not making progress...

- *How* and *When* do you know?
- Do you know *Why*?





# STOP and Process

**How are these ideas consistent with your perceptions?**

- **Confirmed my perceptions:**

- **Surprising – not my previous perceptions:**

# In Your Handout

Review and address the BLT Planning Questions





***All successful school systems  
have come to trust and  
respect teachers.***

**Fullan (2010)**

**Other questions?**



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