



Improving the Effectiveness and Cost Effectiveness of Serving Students with Disabilities (and other struggling students as well)



Best Practices for Raising Achievement Cost Effectively

Common Practices in Vermont

The Need for Proactive Leadership and Management Tools

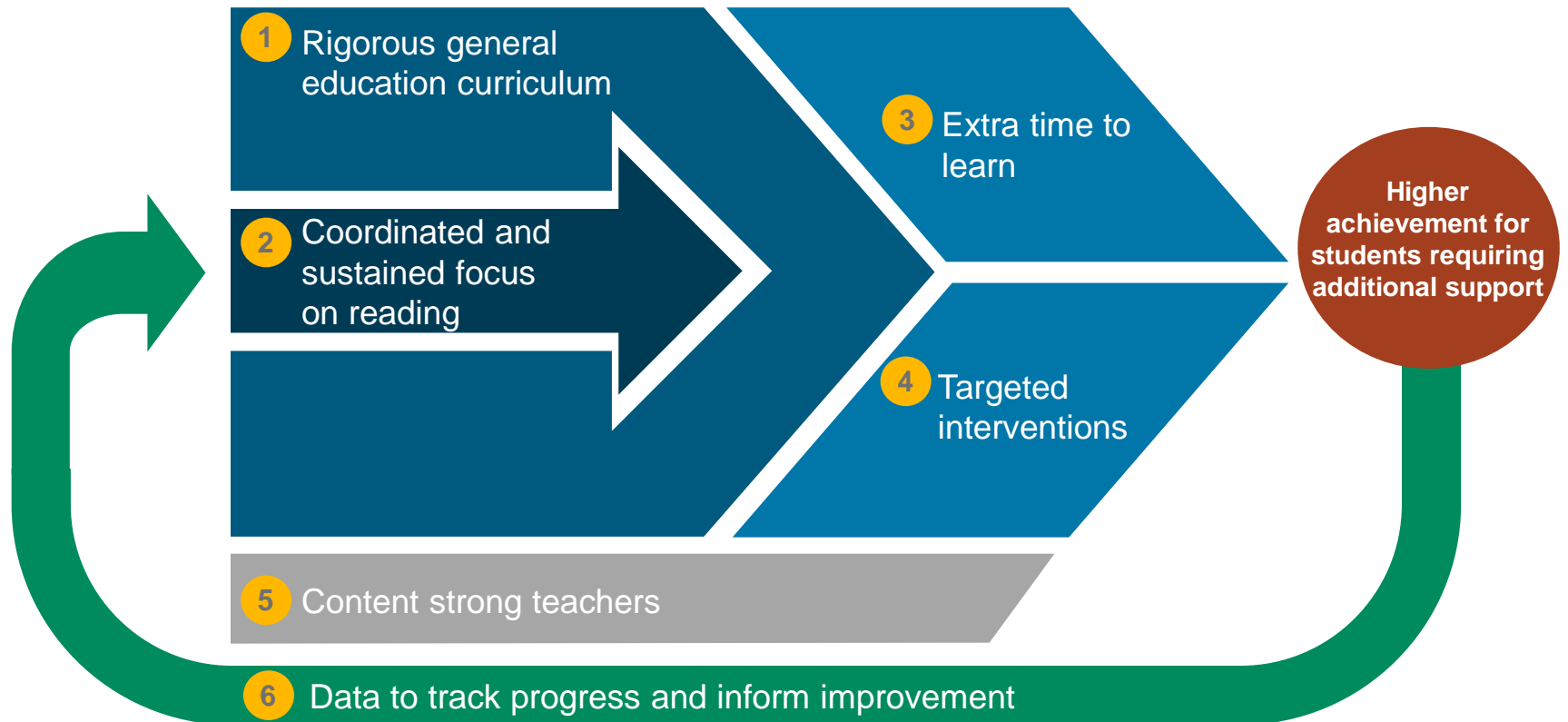
Sources and Impact

Some ideas seem crazy, at first.



Six interconnected best practices can help students requiring additional support achieve at high levels in a cost effective manner.

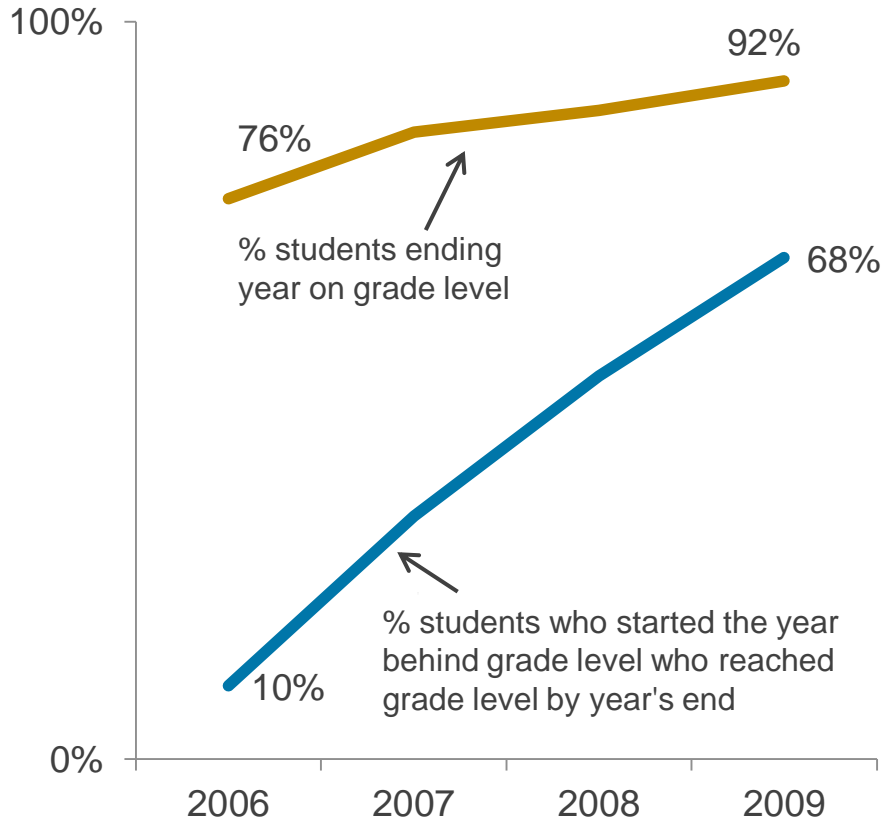
DMC Framework for Supporting Students Requiring Additional Support*



*Note: Students requiring additional support is defined as students with IEPs for mild-to-moderate disabilities and students who struggle academically, however do not have an IEP.

Some districts have raised achievement for struggling students without relying on staff-intensive strategies.

Student Achievement – Arlington, MA 2006-2009



Source: Arlington Public Schools, MA; DMC Analysis

Changes in Staffing – Arlington, MA EXAMPLE 2006-2009

	FTE	\$
Additions		
Reading teachers	12.5	\$812,500
Library paraprofessionals	5.0	\$125,000
Reductions		
Reading paraprofessionals	(13.0)	(\$325,000)
Special education teachers	(3.0)	(\$195,000)
Librarians	(7.0)	(\$455,000)
Speech and language therapists	(2.0)	(\$130,000)
Total	(7.5)	(\$167,500)

Costs decreased even as the number of students served and achievement increased

These 10 best practices are common elements to effective reading programs.

A System for Effective Elementary Reading Program

National Reading Panel &
What Works Clearinghouse

Standards

- 1 Clear and rigorous grade-level expectations
- 2 Identification of struggling readers beginning in kindergarten
- 3 Frequent measurement of achievement

Core Instruction

- 4 At least 90 minutes / day of balanced core instruction
- 5 Explicit teaching of phonics and comprehension

Intervention

- 6 At least 30 min / day additional time for all struggling readers
- 7 Tight connection of remediation to core instruction

Effective Teaching

- 8 Highly skilled and effective teachers of reading

DMC

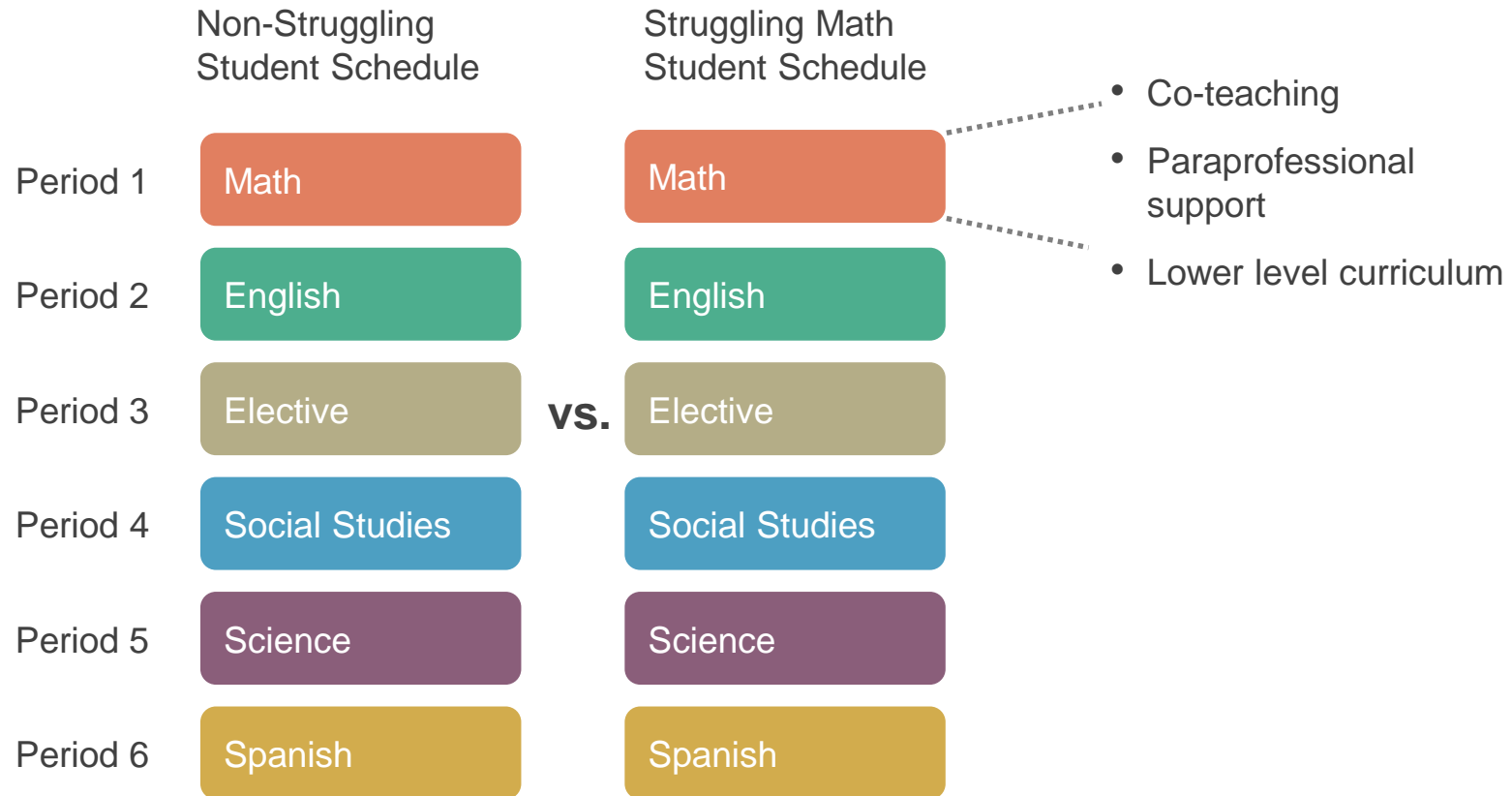
Management

- 9 Put one person in charge of reading
- 10 Use instructional coaching to improve classroom instruction

Source: National Reading Panel, What Works Clearinghouse, experience of districts who have dramatically improved reading scores

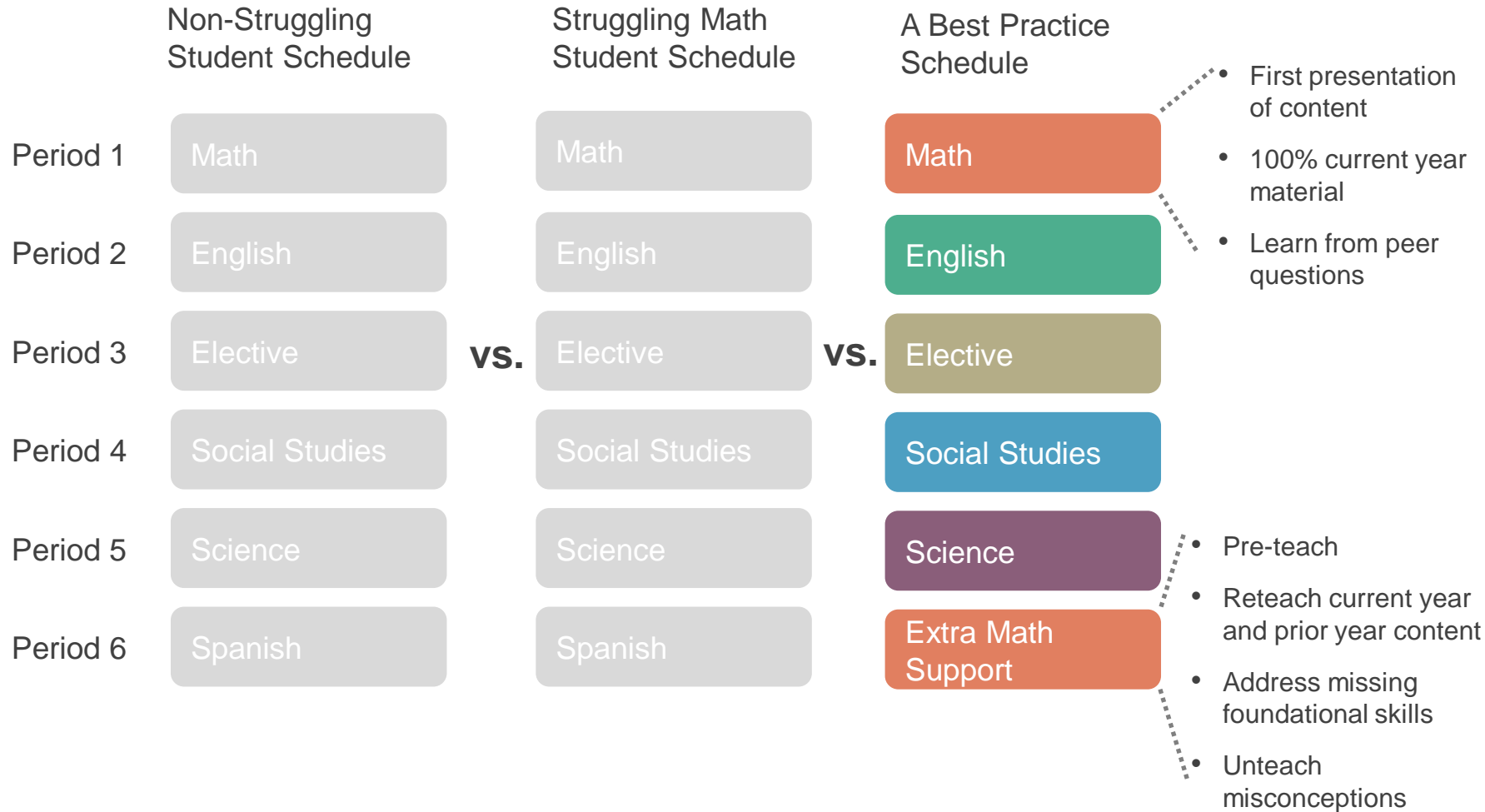
In many school systems, “extra help” happens during core instruction or instead of core instruction and is provided by less skilled staff.

Secondary Intervention Strategy: Typical Approach



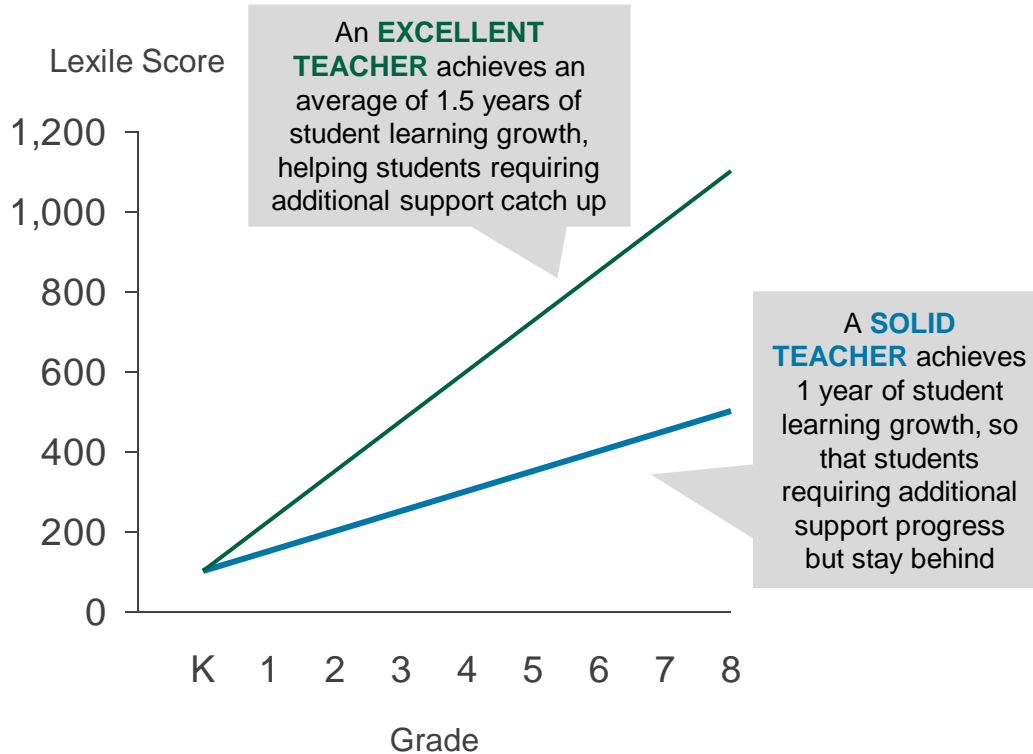
Best practice for secondary intervention is a “double time” model that involves providing “extra help” in addition to core instruction.

Secondary Intervention Strategy: Best Practice Approach



Every student requiring additional support benefits from a highly effective teacher.

All Levels: Impact of Highly Effective Teachers



The research is clear: no school-based factor is more important than the quality of the teacher.

Source: Suh, Thomas-Fore. "The National Council on Teacher Quality: Expanding the Teacher Quality Discussion. ERIC Digest." (2002); Adapted from Public Impact's OpportunityCulture.org website, accessed 11/6/2013 <http://opportunityculture.org/extending-the-reach-of-excellent-teachers-infographic/>

Deep content knowledge by teachers helps students unlearn misconceptions and master needed skills.

Instructional Support for Students Requiring Additional Support

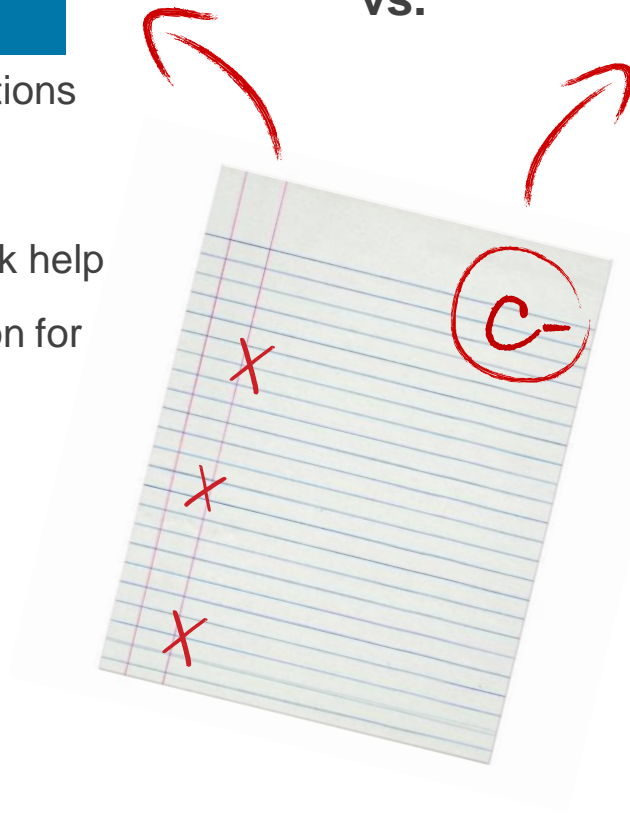
Generalist Support

- Review test questions and show correct answer
- Provide homework help
- Quiz in preparation for future tests

vs.

Content Strong Support

- Associate each incorrect answer with underlying concept
- Infer misunderstandings from incorrect answers
- Teach prior, fundamental skills
- Teach correct material using 2 or 3 different approaches



*Note: Students requiring additional support is defined as students with IEPs for mild-to-moderate disabilities and students who struggle academically, however do not have an IEP.

Shift special education paraprofessional's role from academics to supporting students' health, safety, or behavior support needs.

Revised Role of a Special Education Paraprofessional

Current Responsibilities

- Supporting students with mild-moderate disabilities with academic IEP goals: reading, math, writing, etc
- Materials creation/lesson planning for daily instruction
- Small group or 1:1 instruction for students with special needs
- Behavior support
- Supporting students with severe needs
- Lunch duty, recess duty, bus duty

New Responsibilities

- ~~• Supporting students with mild-moderate disabilities with academic IEP goals: reading, math, writing, etc~~
- ~~• Materials creation/lesson planning for daily instruction~~
- ~~• Small group or 1:1 instruction for students with special needs~~
- Behavior support
- Supporting students with severe needs
- Lunch duty, recess duty, bus duty

By shifting the special education instructional assistant's role, students can be supported by the most skilled staff.

Increase Supports for Students from Skilled Staff

Responsibilities

- Supporting students with mild-moderate disabilities with academic IEP goals: reading, math, writing, etc.
- Materials creation/lesson planning for daily instruction
- Small group or 1:1 instruction for students with mild-to-moderate needs



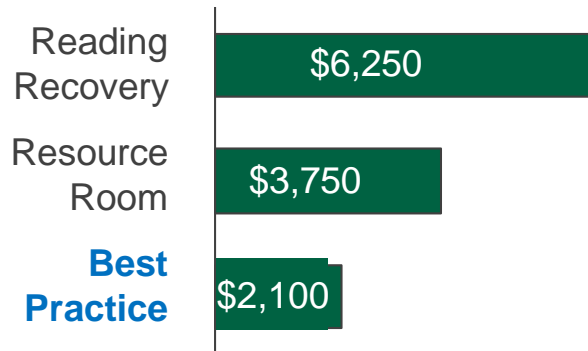
Staff Who Could Support

- Reading specialists
- Math interventionists
- Classroom teachers
- Special education teachers with content expertise

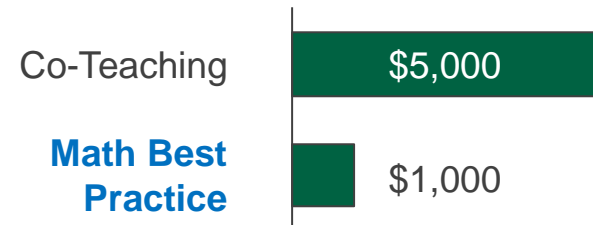
Most of the best practices for raising achievement for students with special needs cost less than many common practices.

Examples: Cost per Student

Elementary Reading



Secondary Math



There are 5 roles that can be leveraged for increasing supports and services for struggling learners, at lower costs.

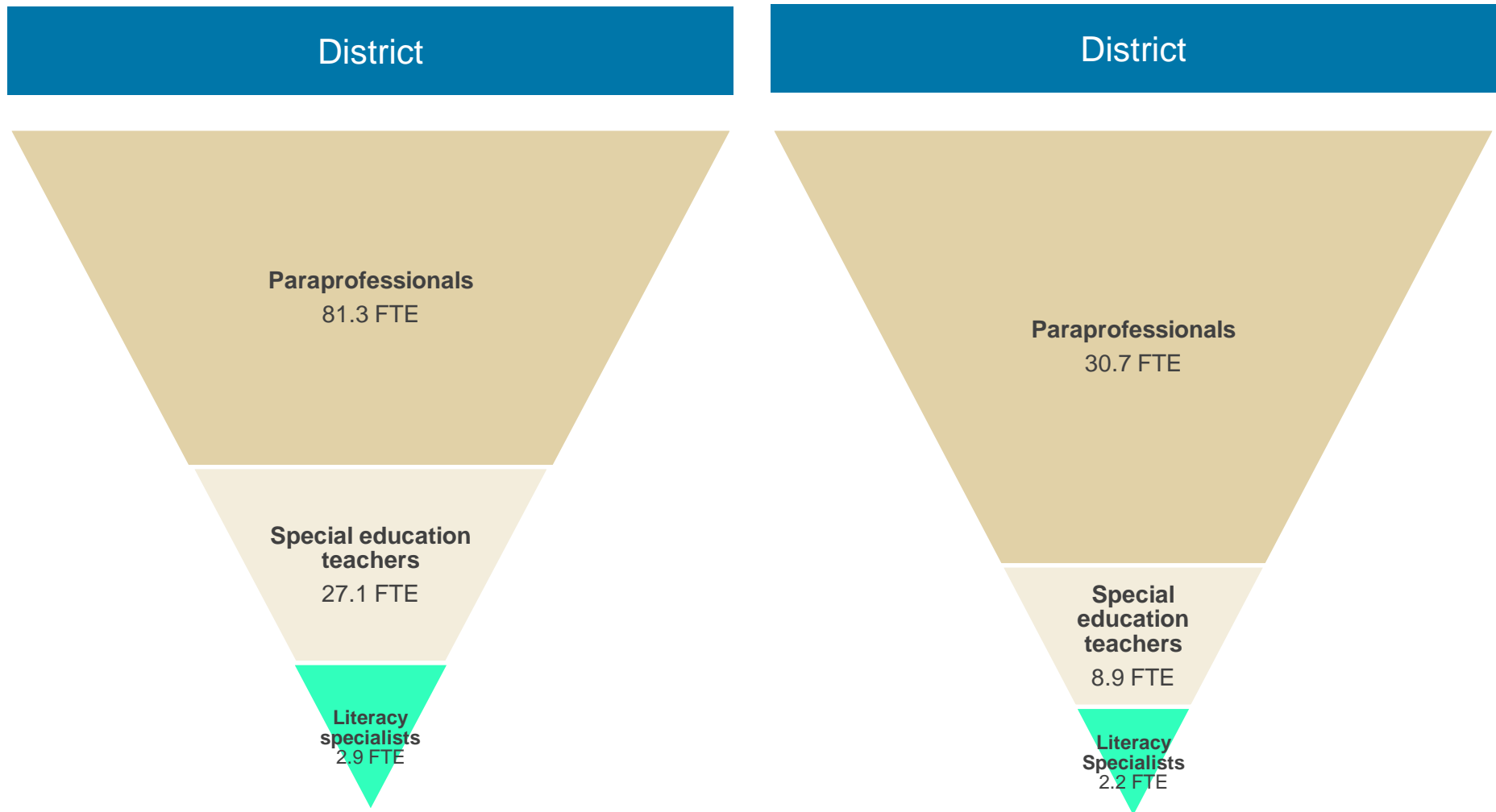
5 Roles with Potential Leverage to Help Struggling Learners

- 1 Improving **Reading Instruction** for All Struggling Students
- 2 Redefining the **Use of Paraprofessionals**
- 3 Expanding the Reach of **Special Education Teachers**
- 4 Increasing Time **Speech and Language Staff** Spend with Students
- 5 Increasing Amount of **Counseling Services with Students**

These opportunities exist in the vast majority of districts in the state

VT districts invest heavily in staff with generalized or limited training for supporting struggling students with IEPs.

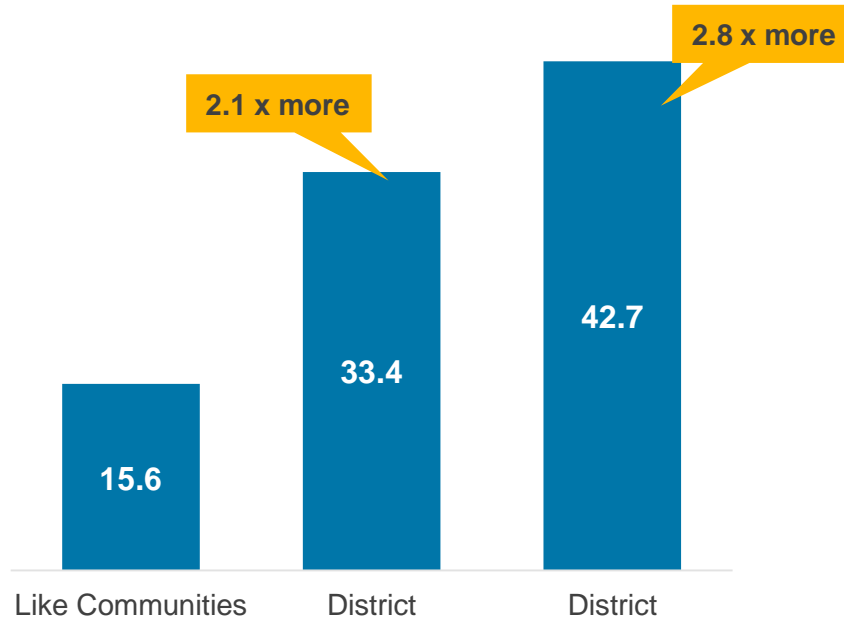
FTE Dedicated to the Academic Support of Struggling Students (K-8 Level)



By reducing paraprofessionals, a sizeable pool of funds could be shifted to provide highly skilled and effective teachers of reading and instructional coaches.

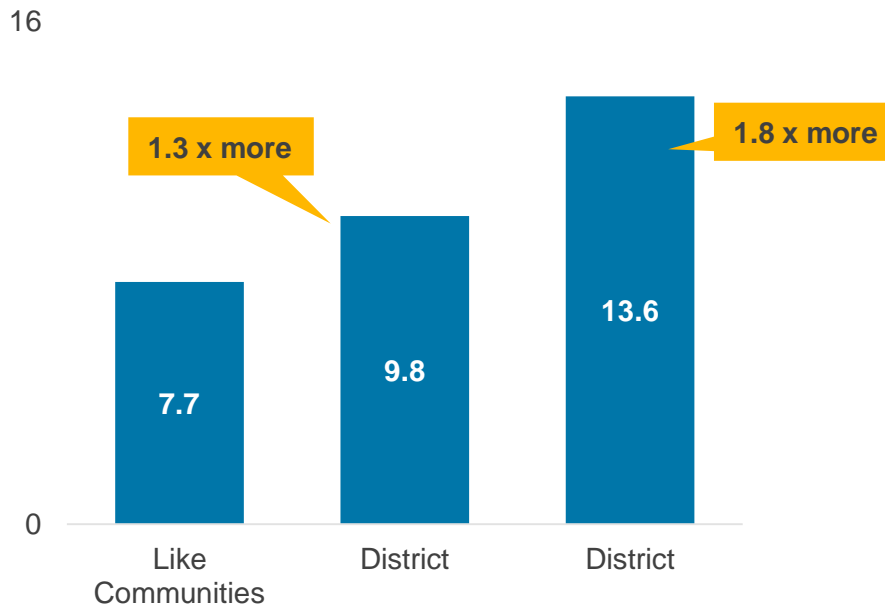
Paraprofessional Benchmarking

“All Inclusion” Model



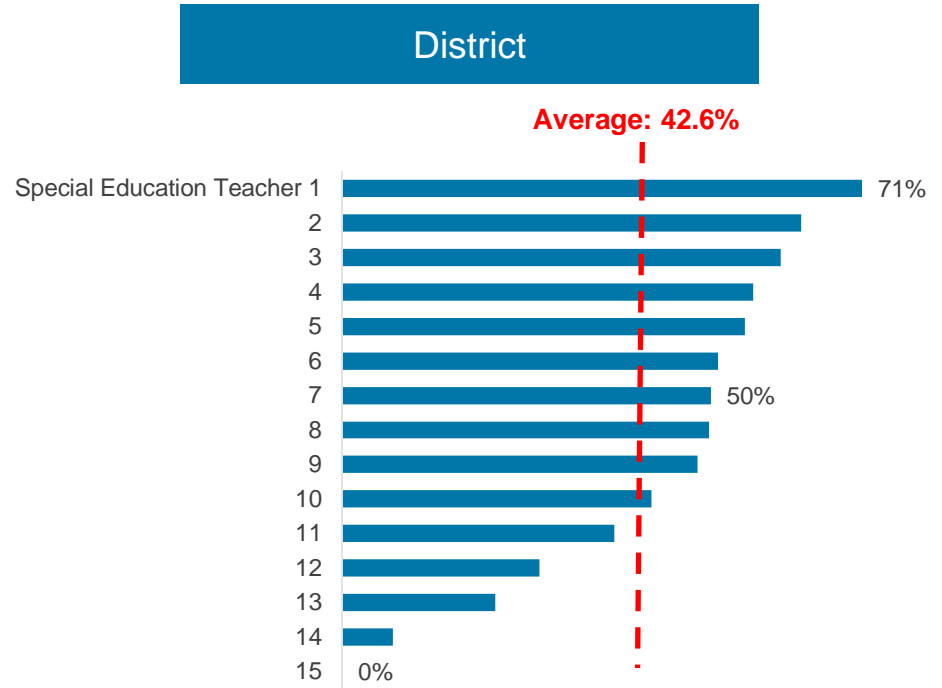
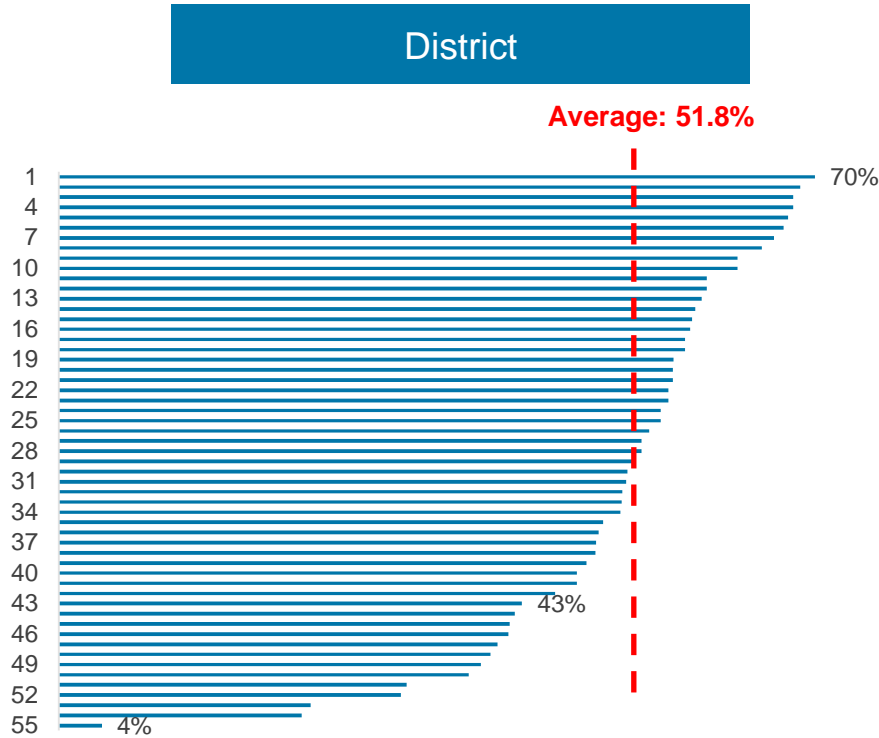
By adjusting staffing levels, a sizeable pool of funds could be shifted to provide highly skilled and effective teachers of reading to struggling readers.

Special Education Teacher Benchmarking



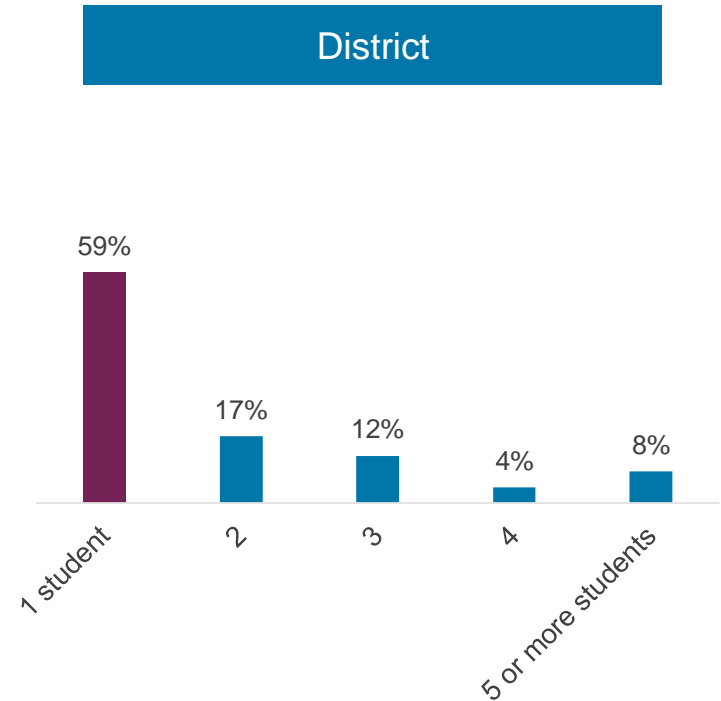
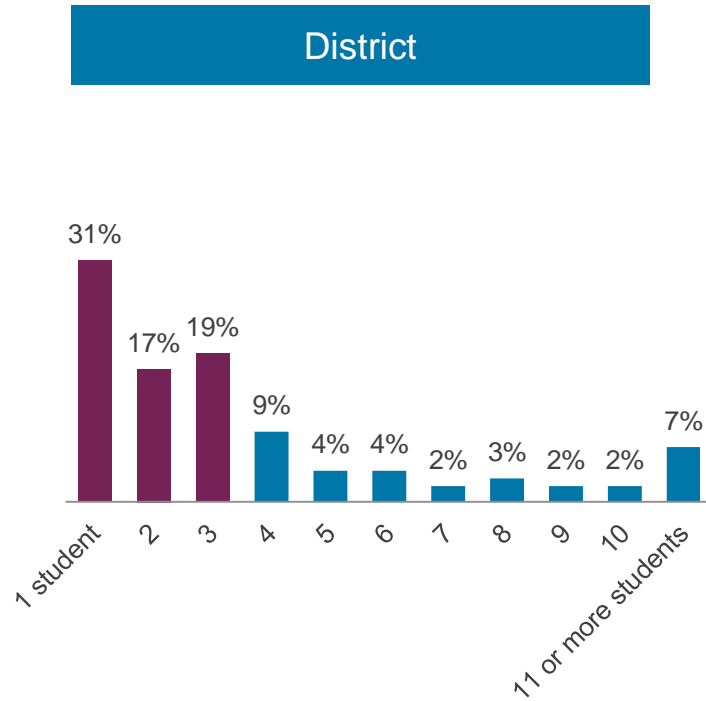
Many special education teachers spend less than half their day teaching students.

Special Education Teacher Time with Students (K-8)



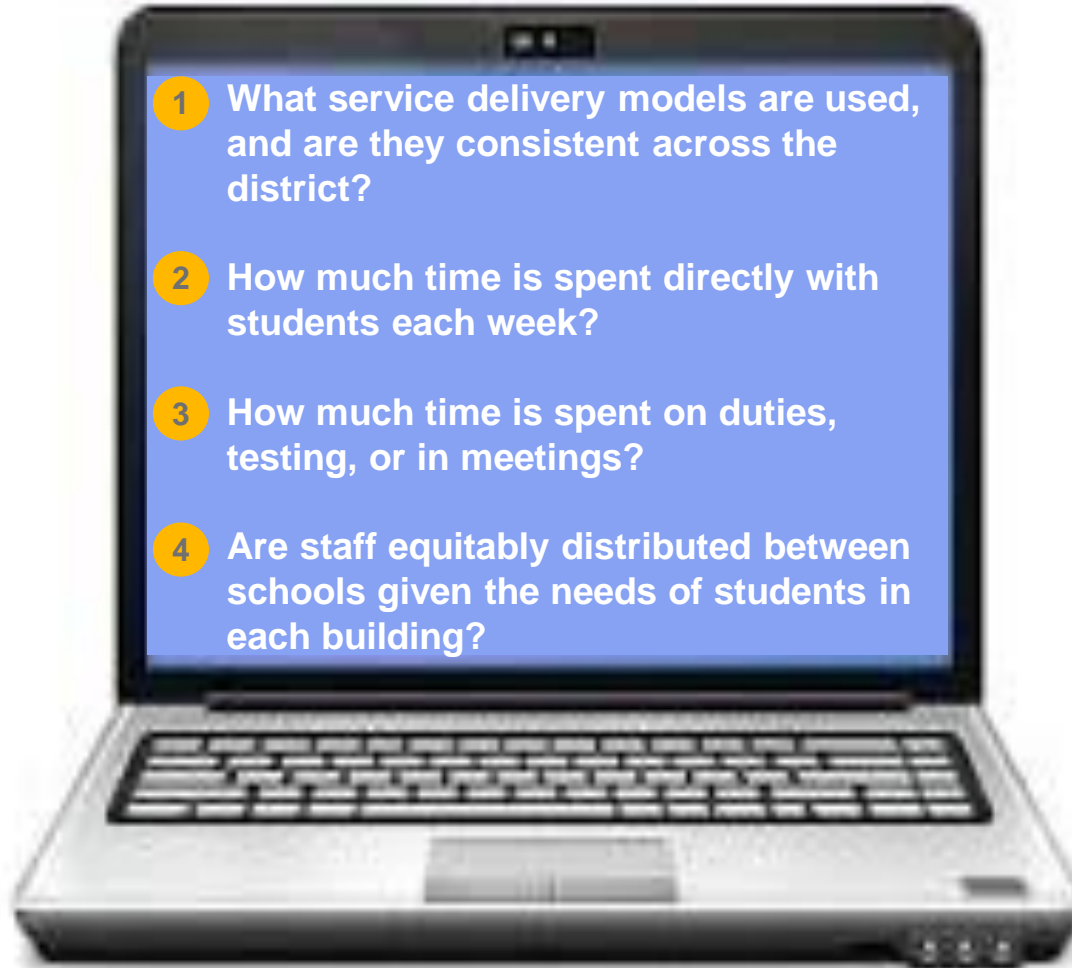
Special education teachers spend a majority of their time supporting students in very small groups.

Special Education Teacher Group Size (K-8)



By collecting detailed data directly from staff, central office leadership can gain deeper understanding into how staff spend their time.

DMC Research and Technology



District leaders in consultation with staff should proactively establish best practices and understand current practices in detail

Question	Answer
1. What percentage of service is:	push-in _____% pull-out _____% team teaching _____%
2. How much service is:	one-to-one _____% small group _____% whole class _____%
3. What subjects or topics are being supported and to what extent?	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Writing
4. What role do paraprofessionals play in each school?	_____
5. Do all children have equal access to similar types of support?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Do these practices and strategies vary by school or staff member?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Questions ?

DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices.

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A number of school systems have implemented these best practices, which has resulted in improvements in supports for students requiring additional support.

Best Practice Case Studies

School System Type	Enrollment	% FRPL	% IEP	Outcomes
Large School System (Montgomery, MD)	156,455	35%	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29% reduction in 3rd grade reading achievement gap
Mid-Sized Urban School System (Newport News, VA)	29,553	63%	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 percentage point increase in math proficiency in one year; 14 percentage point increase over 4 years 5 percentage point increase in reading/ELA in one year; 4 percentage point increase over 3 years
Suburban School System (Arlington, MA)	5,208	8%	14%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced the number of struggling readers in K-5 by 65% Decreased the special education achievement gap at the secondary level by 66%
Small Suburban School System (Simsbury, CT)	4,516	8%	11%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shifted paraprofessionals to fund reading teachers, instructional coaches, and behaviorists Increased the number of students ending the year on grade level in reading by 33%

Source: DMC analysis of state assessment and internal school system data

*Note: Students requiring additional support is defined as students with IEPs for mild-to-moderate disabilities and students who struggle academically, however do not have an IEP.



If you have any comments or questions about the contents of this document, please contact Nate Levenson, President, District Management Council:

- **Tel:** (877) DMC-3500
- **Email:** info@dmcouncil.org
- **Fax:** (617) 491-5266
- **Web:** dmcouncil.org
- **Mail:** 133 Federal Street, Boston, MA 02110