SWiFT
education center
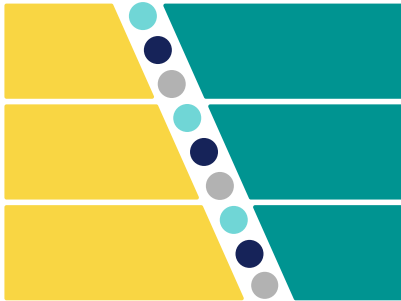
Steps to Get You Started

Strong Educator Support System

Take the specific action steps below to implement this feature in your school.

Provide Access to instructional coaching.

- Provide all educators access to instructional coaching supports on request or as needed, including opportunities for demonstration, support, and feedback.

- Ideally, one or more full time instructional coaches supports school staff. If a full time coach is not feasible for your school, consider other resources that could meet this need, such as teacher leaders, mentors, or district level coaches.

- Develop a process for teachers to request instructional coaching supports. Create a sign-up sheet or provide coverage and time for teachers to observe other teachers in the building.

- Send a note of encouragement to teachers who provide or access instructional coaching supports.

- Develop guidelines for identifying the need for instructional coaching supports. If data indicate a teacher is struggling, consider how will you ensure he or she has access to demonstrations, support, and feedback?

Seek input from teachers on professional learning needs.

- Develop a process for gathering input from teachers and support staff on professional learning needs. For example, send out a survey asking what professional learning opportunities they would like to have. Or, during professional learning days, give them options for which sessions they would like to attend.

Make professional learning opportunites available to all educators and support staff.

- Make sure when providing choices and seeking input for professional learning needs that all staff have the chance to contribute, including general educators, specialized educators, support staff, and related service providers.

- Open attendance at professional learning sessions to all staff. For example, a general educator may want to attend a session on intensive reading interventions, while a specialized educator may be interested in learning about a new general math curriculum.

- Ensure that your professional learning reflects the shift in your school towards inclusive education, in which all staff learn together as they are working collaboratively to meet the needs of all students.

Use data to guide professional learning activities.

- Use schoolwide data to identify professional learning needs.

- Use SWIFT-FIT and/or SWIFT-FIA data to identify priorities and areas for improvement.

- Develop professional learning plans that address the identified priorities.

Conduct strengths-based personnel evaluations.

- Conduct strength-based personnel evaluations that include specific feedback on individuals' strengths and opportunities for growth or improvement.

- Use multiple sources of evidence for personnel evaluations.