

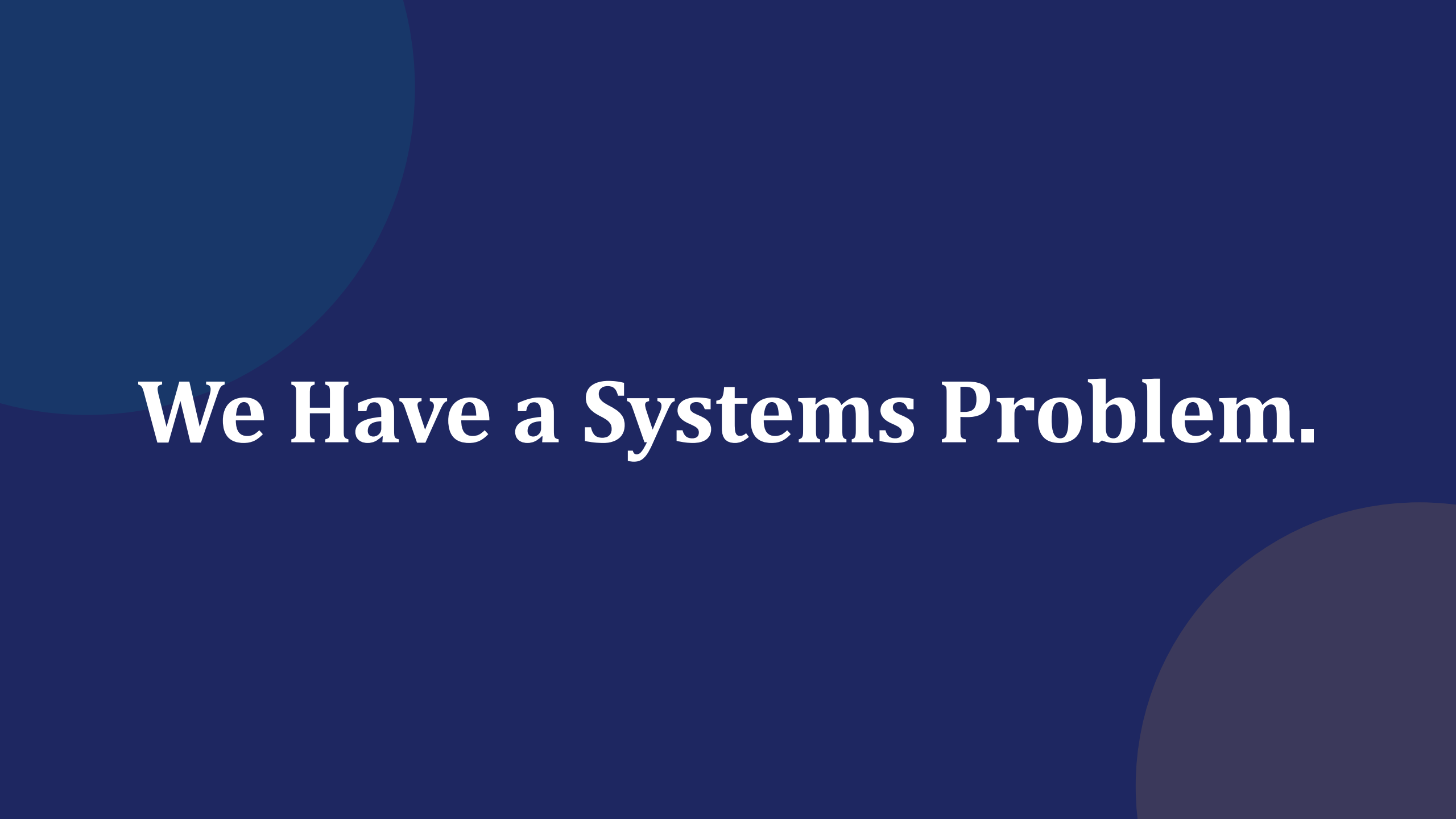
AAEA SUMMER CONFERENCE 2026

Building Instructional Systems That Drive Student Growth



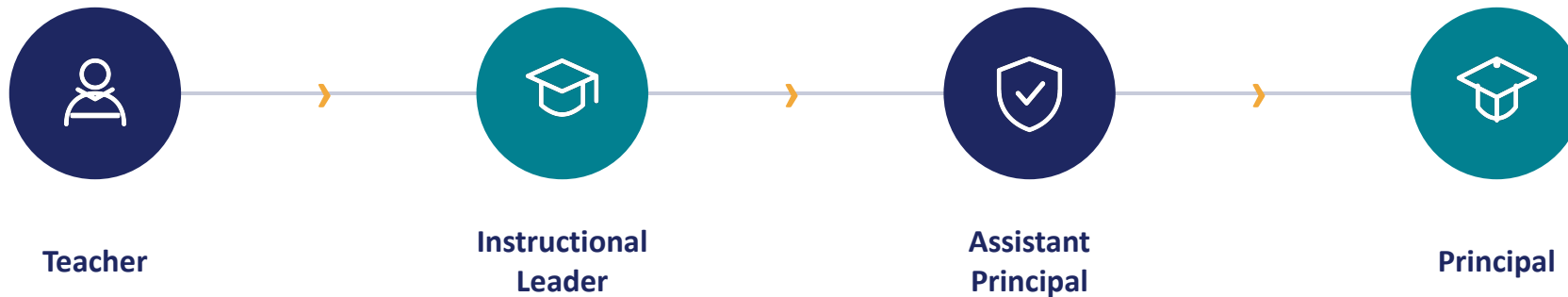
DarShauna Shepherd, Principal | IOTA Leadership Academy

July 28, 2026

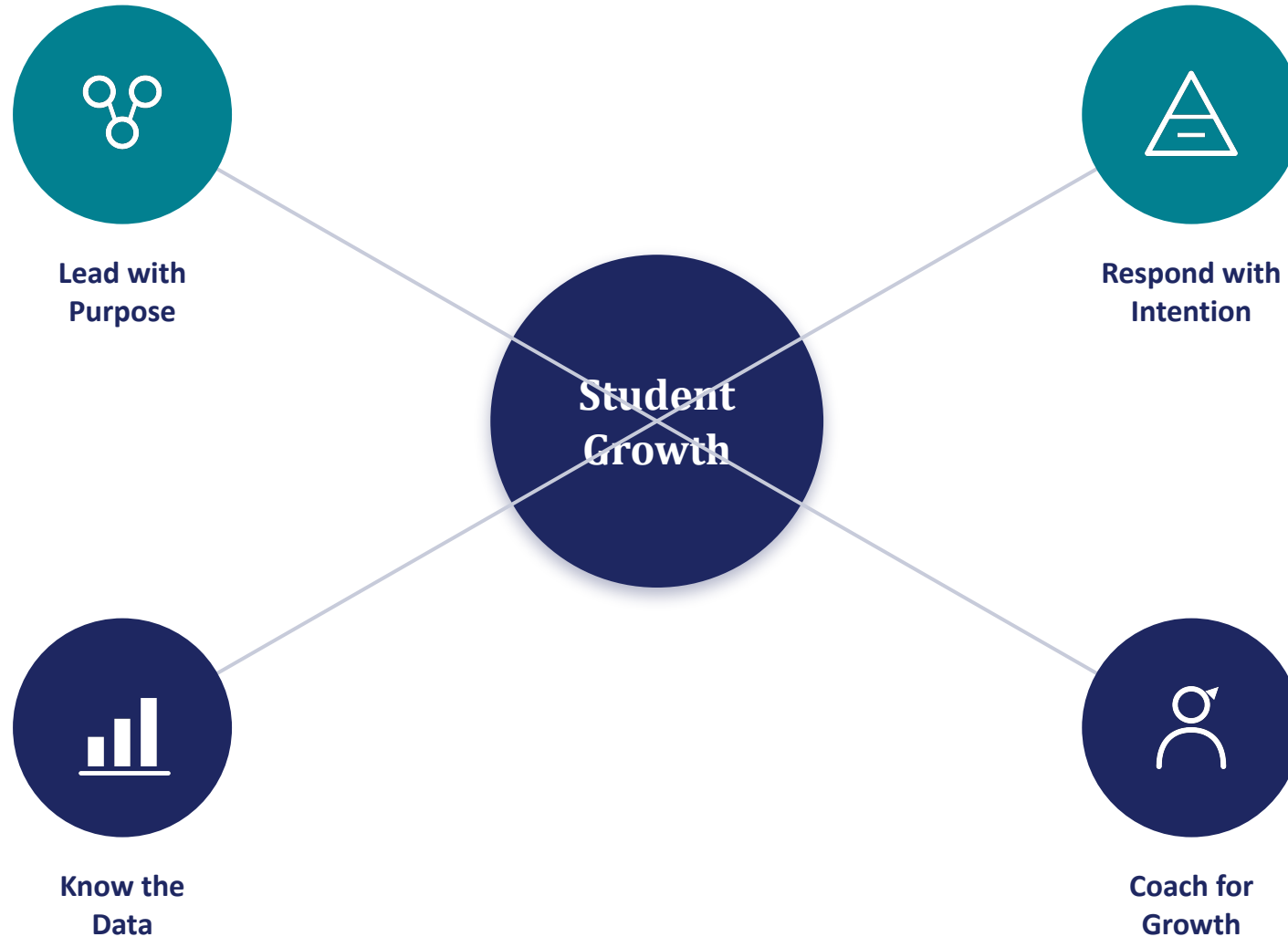


We Have a Systems Problem.

“Every role taught me something different about what it takes to improve student achievement.”



The Four Instructional Systems



PART ONE

Lead with Purpose

15 minutes

Instructional Leadership Teams



Who's on it

Principal, assistant principal, instructional coach, department or grade-level leads, and a data/MTSS coordinator.



How often

A weekly, monthly, and quarterly cadence — each with a distinct purpose and a distinct set of decisions.



Purpose

Translate data into classroom action — the ILT exists to move information into instruction, not just review it.

Meeting Structure



Weekly

Short-cycle check-ins on current data and immediate classroom next steps.



Monthly

Deeper review of trends across classrooms and progress on active interventions.



Quarterly

Big-picture look at systems, department goals, and whether the plan is working.

As instructional leaders, what does your ILT currently spend most of its time discussing?

2 minutes



DELIVERABLE

Deliverable: ILT Agenda

A ready-to-use weekly, monthly, and quarterly ILT agenda template.

PART TWO

Know the Data

15 minutes

**Assessment isn't the goal.
Action is.**

The Short Data Cycle



10th Grade Math — Unit 3 Common Assessment

Standard / Skill	% Mastery	# Below Benchmark	Trend
Ratios & Proportional Relationships	78%	9	▲ Improving
Operations with Rational Numbers	54%	18	▼ Declining
Expressions & Linear Equations	61%	15	— Flat
Geometry: Area & Surface Area	71%	11	▲ Improving
Statistics & Probability	48%	20	▼ Declining



As instructional leaders, what would your teachers do next?

Sample data for illustration — grade-level and course names are representative, not from my specific school.



DELIVERABLE

Deliverable: Data Meeting Protocol

A step-by-step protocol for turning a data meeting into a classroom action plan.



DELIVERABLE

Deliverable: Long-Range Plan

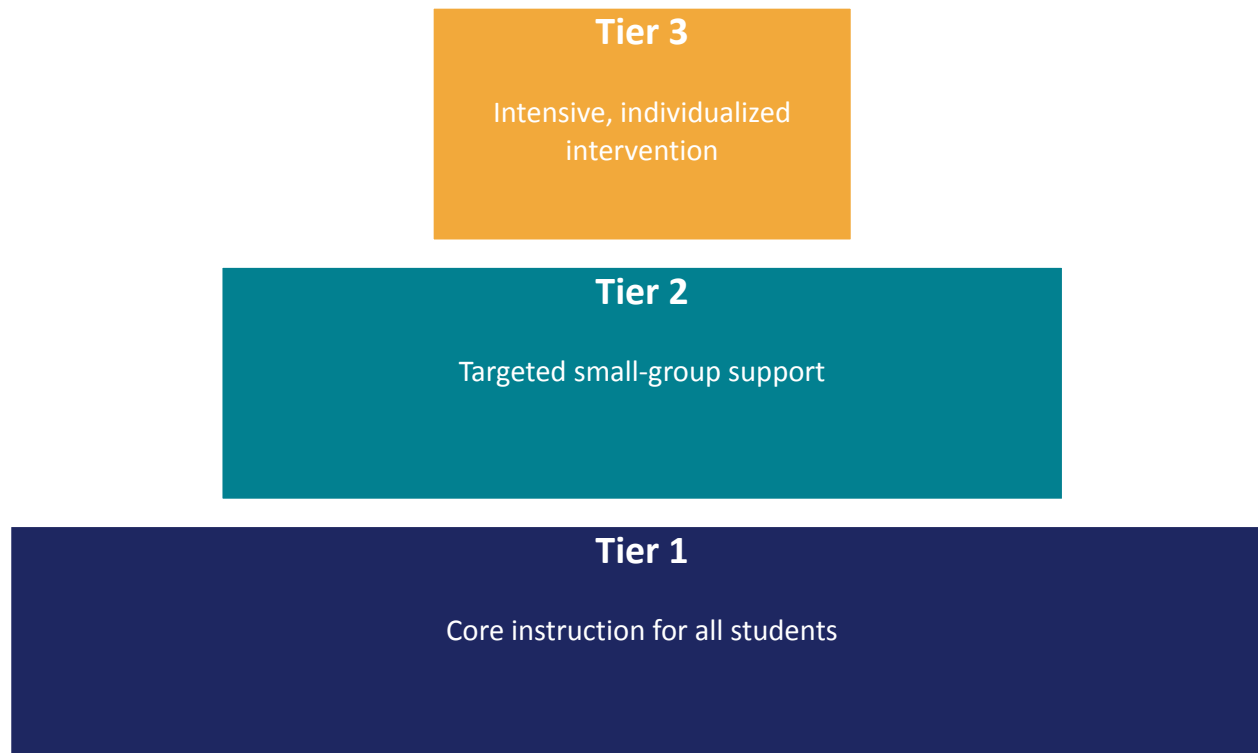
An annual, by-quarter plan built from ATLAS state summative data — set before the year starts.

PART THREE

Respond with Intention (RTI)

15 minutes

The RTI Pyramid



**RTI isn't a place.
It's a response.**

Making RTI Work



Grouping

Students are grouped by specific skill need, using current data — not by class period or convenience.



Progress Monitoring

Short, frequent checks show whether the intervention is closing the gap.



Movement

Groups shift as data changes — placement in a tier is never permanent.



Exit Criteria

A clear, predetermined target defines when a student exits the intervention.



DELIVERABLE

Deliverable: RTI Planning Sheet

A planning sheet for grouping, monitoring, and exiting students with intention.

PART FOUR

Coach for Growth

15 minutes

The Coaching Cycle





One Piece of Feedback.

Effective Coaching Isn't About More Feedback



Identifying the highest-leverage practice



Providing one clear action step



Following up consistently



Creating teacher leaders who multiply the work

Think about your last observation. What was the one piece of feedback that would have made the greatest difference? Did you focus on that... or did you give a list of everything?

Systems create sustainability.

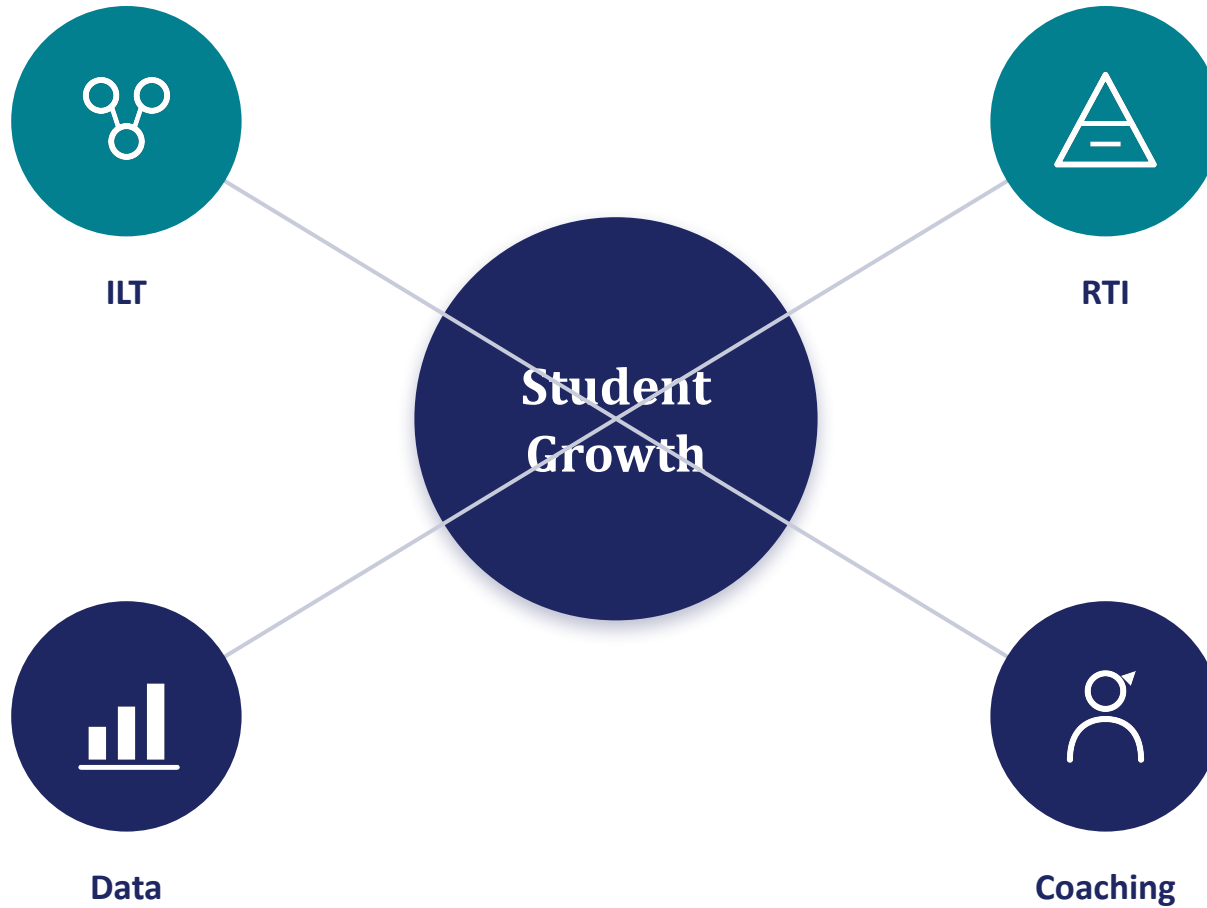


DELIVERABLE

Deliverable: Coaching Conversation Template

A simple template for turning one observation into one focused coaching conversation.

One System, Four Parts



What happens if one of these is missing?

REFLECTION

As instructional leaders, before we open it up... every leader in this room is leaving with one action they'll take in the next 30 days.



What system is strongest in your building right now?



What system needs the most attention?



What's ONE thing you'll implement in the next 30 days?

1 minute

Questions

5 -10 minutes



Lead with Purpose



Know the Data



Respond with Intention



Coach for Growth

LET'S COLLABORATE

DarShauna Shepherd

501-747-3547

darshauna.shepherd@iotaschools.org



DarShauna Shepherd, Principal | IOTA Leadership Academy

AAEA Summer Conference 2026



**Great schools don't happen by
chance.**

They happen by design.