



FROM ROLES TO RESULTS:

LEVERAGING YOUR PEOPLE FOR
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: A
PRINCIPAL & COUNSELOR'S
STORY



OUR NEW ROLES...SAME STORY

The work started at East End Middle. Our lens has expanded to district support.

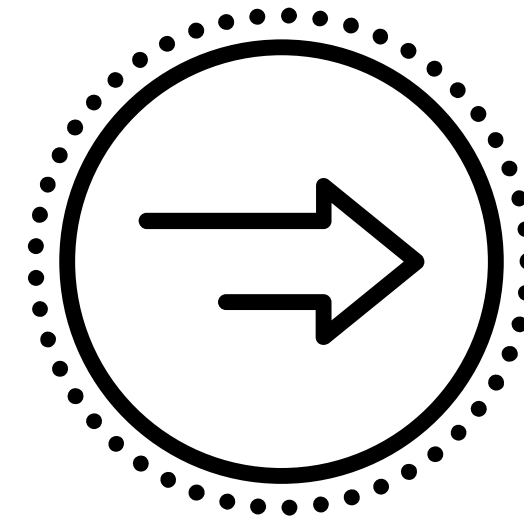


DR. HEATHER WILLIAMS

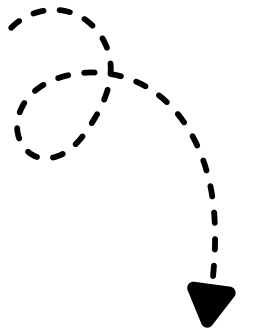
- Middle School Principal
- heatherwilliams@sheridanschools.org

JESSICA ASHCRAFT

- Middle School Counselor
- jessicaashcraft@sheridanschools.org



NOW



- Director of School Support & Leadership
- District Behavior Specialist

PURPOSE OF OUR PRESENTATION

Use the principal-counselor relationship as one example of a larger leadership move: using your people well.

1. Use the story as a leadership case study

How one school aligned people, goals, and routines to move academics, behavior, and culture

2. Clarify the partnership

What principals own, what counselors bring, and where the work must overlap

3. Build a repeatable playbook

A structure administrators can take back to strengthen school improvement with existing people.



When leaders intentionally position the right people around the right problems, improvement becomes a coordinated network instead of one person's initiative.

INTRODUCTION TO EAST END MIDDLE



- Sheridan SD
- 430 Students
- Grades 6-8
- 50% Low Income
- 15% Special Education



0.0%	Native American
2.1%	Asian
2.6%	African American
0.0%	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
11.4%	Hispanic/Latino
78.6%	White
5.3%	Two or More Races

VISION

ALL students will become lifelong learners and productive members of society.

MISSION

To educate and care for ALL students at high levels.

INTRODUCTION TO EEM

OUR STORY



- Opened in 2019-2020 school year
- 3 building principals in 3 years
- 2022-2023: Only D Rated School in Sheridan SD
- 2023-2024 Model PLC School
- 2023-24, 2024-25 SY CKH National Showcase School (2 yrs)



INTRODUCTION TO EEM

OUR STORY

- 2024-2026 school year(s): Only A rated school in Sheridan SD
- Top 20 Growth in Middle Schools in AR
- Top 5 ELA Growth in Central Arkansas' Middle Schools



LEADERSHIP MODEL: USE YOUR PEOPLE WELL



Our principal-counselor partnership is the example; the bigger idea is intentional role alignment.

1 Name the problem

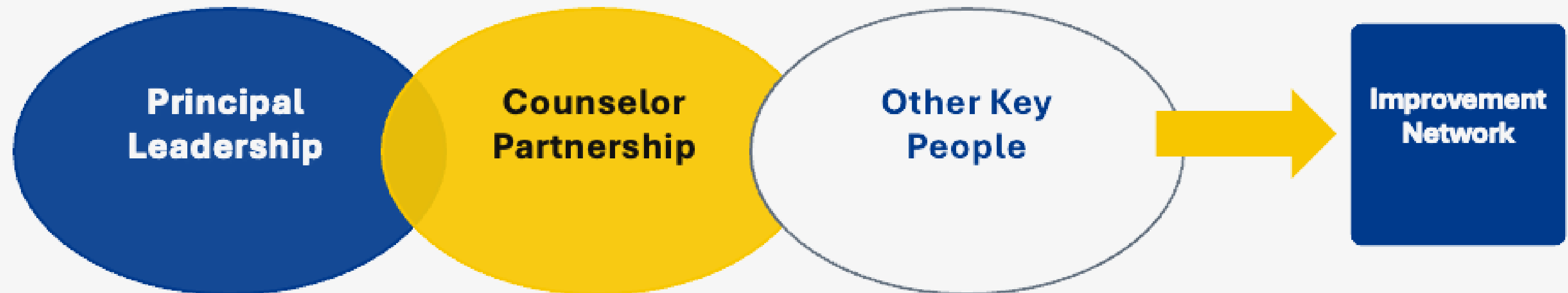
Start with the improvement goal, not a person or a program.

2 Map your people

Identify who has influence, access, skills, data, or relationships connected to the goal.

3 Define the overlap

Clarify what each person owns and what must be shared, scheduled, and reviewed together.



The counselor was our strongest example of an underused strategic partner, but every improvement goal should trigger the same leadership question: **Who do we need at the table, and what decision can they help us make?**

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS:

WHAT MOVED THE NEEDLE?

THREE GOALS.
ONE INTEGRATED SYSTEM.
CLEAR OWNERSHIP.



ACADEMICS

BEHAVIOR

CULTURE

PEOPLE + PURPOSE + PROCESS

The partnership made improvement manageable because it connected the people closest to students with the goals adults were trying to reach.



East End Middle
2025-2026 School Improvement Plan

Vision: All students will become lifelong learners and productive members of society.
Mission: To educate and care for ALL students at high levels.

Developed by 2025-2026 Guiding Coalition & 2025-2026 Behavior Team:

2025-2026 Guiding Coalition	2025-2026 Behavior Team
• Heather Williams, Principal • Alan Westfall, Asst. Principal • Summer Williams, Instructional Facilitator • Jessica Ashcraft, School Counselor • Misty Ingram, 6th Grade Science • Morgan Pitts, 7th Grade ELA • Mandy Porter, 7th Grade Science • Jody Williams, 8th Grade Math • Meaghan Askew, 6-8 Special Education • Laura DePriest, Art	• Heather Williams, Principal • Alan Westfall, Asst. Principal • Jessica Ashcraft, School Counselor • Jessica Threet, 6th Grade Social Studies • Rachel Jordan, 7th Grade Math • Ashley Jacobs, 8th Grade ELA

Monitor by:

- August 2025
- October 2025
- January 2026
- March 2026
- May 2026

Focus Area(s) & 25-26 Action Steps:

- **Goal 1: Student Growth & Achievement**
 - ☐ Build and Strengthen a Data-Driven Culture
 - ☐ Plan and deliver standards-based, high-quality, responsive Tier 1 instruction (85%)
 - ☐ Targeted interventions based on student need as evidenced by data
 - ☐ Progress Monitoring, Reflection, and Celebration
- **Goal 2: Behavior Management**
 - ☐ Strengthen the implementation of Tier 1 behavior systems (token economy system, behavior matrix, discipline flowchart)
 - ☐ Collaborative teams will develop SMART goals based on improved outcomes for all students focused on school-wide behavioral expectations (quarterly)
 - ☐ Implement Tier 2 behavior interventions with targeted goals
 - ☐ Progress monitor Tier 2 behavior interventions

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. At East End Middle, our SIP was a living document.
2. We had SMART goals for Academics, Behavior, and Culture.
3. Our school improvement goals were aligned to the district strategic plan.
4. Our goals were monitored schoolwide in October, January, and March.
5. Our schoolwide counseling program goals were aligned to our SIP.

Goal

Plan

Do

Study

Act

Set priority

Name people

Implement routines

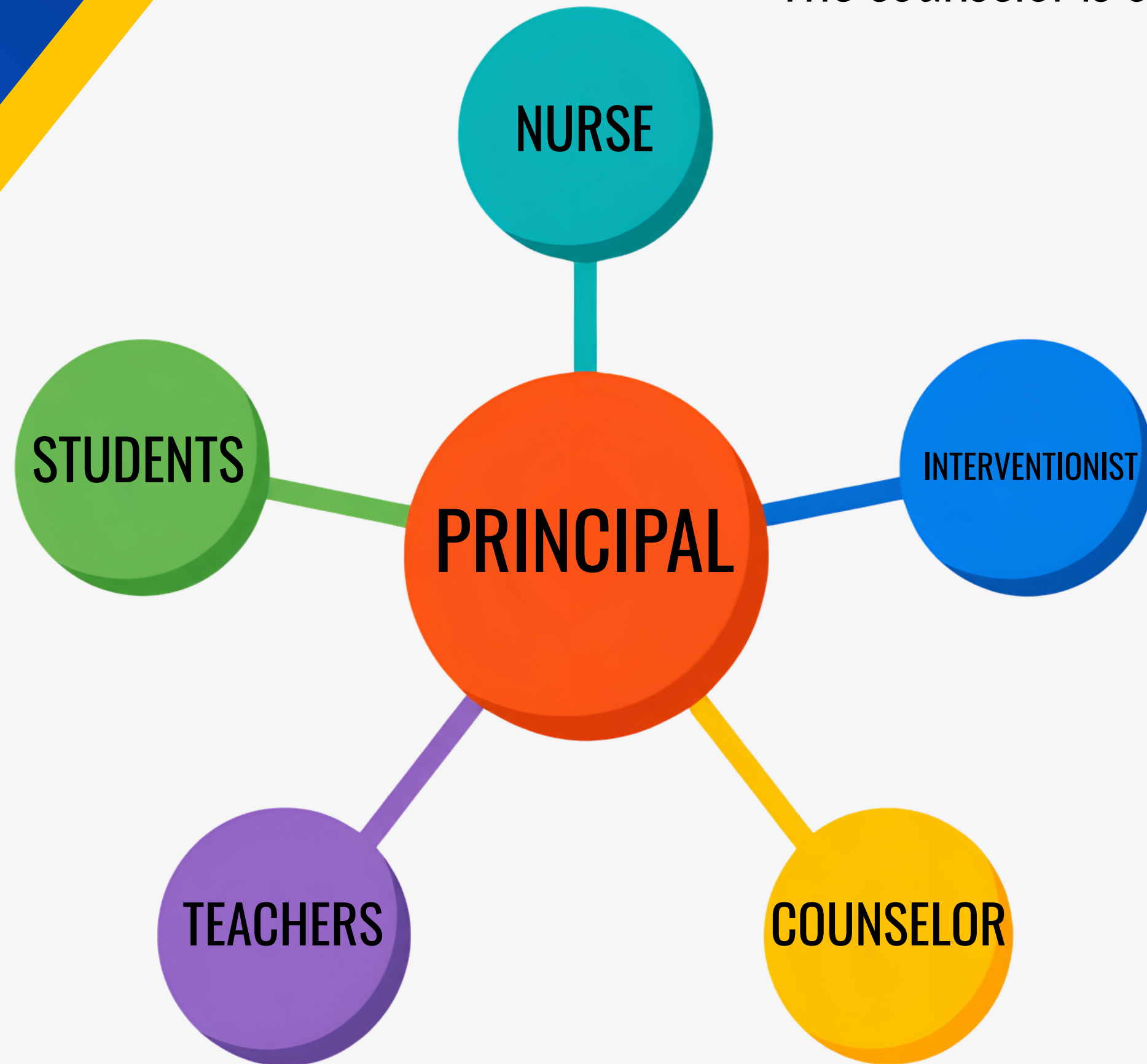
Analyze evidence

Adjust supports



BUILD THE IMPROVEMENT NETWORK

The counselor is one strategic connector; sustainable improvement requires a network of people with clear purpose.



**ADMINISTRATOR MOVE:
FOR EACH SIP GOAL, NAME
THE ADULTS WHO CAN
INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME,
THE DATA THEY WILL USE,
AND THE DECISION THEY ARE
EMPOWERED TO MAKE.**



TARGETED GOALS **ACADEMICS**



SMART GOAL: By May 2026, EEM will increase overall literacy, science, and mathematics proficiency by at least 5% for all grade levels (6-8) as measured by ATLAS summative assessment.

ACADEMICS

PRINCIPAL

- **Vision/Mission/ Core Beliefs**
- Tier 1 instructional model
- Support PLTs
- Targeted PD
- Classroom observations
- Student ownership (goal setting, data tracking)
- High levels of expectations for rigor in assessments, instruction, and curriculum
- Monitor & support intervention model

COUNSELOR

- Analyze data
- Monitor SMART goal
- Support Guiding Coalition
- Strategic master scheduling (*kid-by-kid focus*)
- Completed a needs assessment with parents & students
- Identified academic behaviors needs
- Provide Tier 1 school counseling program academic support (*based on survey data*)
- Collecting pre/post data

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TARGETED GOALS **BEHAVIOR**



SMART Goal: Compared to 2025-2026 school year, there will be a 5% decrease from the same quarter in the number of Office Discipline Referrals.

BEHAVIOR

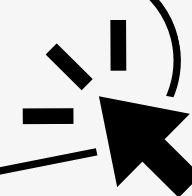
PRINCIPAL

- **Vision/Mission/ Core Beliefs**
- Tier 1 Behavior Flowchart
- Tier 1 Behavior Matrix
- Building wide, consistent procedures
- Classroom management support & expectations
- Behavior expectations for Tier 1 are taught school-wide
- Accountability for behavior

COUNSELOR

- **Tier 1 Behavior Incentive System**
- Provide PD on behavior & trauma
- Analyze data
- Monitor SMART goal
- Support behavior team
- Strategic master scheduling (*kid-by-kid focus*)
- Student Intervention Team (*Tier 2 & 3*)

- Provide Tier 2 Small Group Intervention
- Monitor SIT team data
- Meet individually with students to teach behavior goals for Tier 2 interventions
- Facilitate Tier 3 referrals & resources

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STUDENT INTERVENTION TEAM

- SIT Team includes:
 - Principal
 - Asst. Principal
 - Counselor
 - Nurse
 - Reading Interventionist
 - Special Ed Rep
 - School Social Worker
 - Grade Level Teacher Rep
- Meets 2x/month (*every other week*)
- Analyze data:
 - Grades
 - Attendance
 - Discipline Referrals
 - Behavior Intervention Data
 - Other data as needed
- Plan next steps



Student Name (link SIT Referral form to name): [REDACTED]								
Meeting Date	Current Intervention (Academic/ Behavior)	SMART Goal (academic or behavior)	# of Discipline Infractions	Current Grades/ Academic Performance	Attendance	Is the student meeting intervention goals?	Determination to Continue, Change, or Exit Intervention	Conference Notes & Next Steps
12/09/24	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior		0 Discipline Referrals	English 64% Science 78% Math 58% Art 66% SS 76% PE 91% Flight/Space 83%	12 Unexcused Absences; 6 Excused Absences	No	Add Additional Intervention	Parent Contact, Issues with Tardiness (8th Grade has developed tardy protocol), SAS Lab with Beckwith (2nd Period), SIM Form Completed (Look @ Behavior Intervention) - Add Folder (CICO)
01/17/25	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior		0 Discipline Referrals	English 67% Science 80% Math 62% Art 85% SS 75% PE 86% Flight/Space 85%	4 Unexcused; 1 School Business	No	Continue Intervention	Continue CICO & SAS Lab; Met goal for CICO 87% of the time; Monitor Attendance & Schedule Truancy Conf. with Mom
01/31/25	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior		0 Discipline Referrals	Eng. Sc. 100 Math 0 SS 62	2 Unexcused; 2 excused 1 School Business	Yes	Continue Intervention	has met his goal 83% of the time.
02/28/25	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior		0 Discipline Referrals	Eng. 41 Sc. 92 Math 32 SS 46	5 Unexcused; 3 excused 1 School Business	Yes	Continue Intervention	Out of 14 days, has met his goal 92.85% of the time.
03/21/2025	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior		0 Discipline Referrals	Eng. 67 Sc. 76 Math 71 SS 63	6 Unexcused; 3 excused 1 School Business			Met goal 80% of time
04/11/2025	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior	will meet his goal 85% of the time.	0 Discipline Referrals	Eng. 60.53 Sc. 62.53 Math SS 65.13	6 Unexcused; 5 excused 1 School Business	Yes	Continue Intervention	Met goal 80% of time - Increase % for goals to 85%
04/25/2025	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior	will meet his goal 85% of the time.		Eng. 60.53 Sc. 62.53 Math SS 65.13	7 Unexcused; 5 excused 1 School Business	Yes	Continue Intervention	Met 100% of the time; GOAL: 1. On task behaviors, including active participation, 2. I will only talk with permission and with respect.
5/9/25	Academic/ Attendance/ Behavior			Eng. 59 Sc. 76 Math 42 SS 82				



TARGETED GOALS **CULTURE**



SMART Goal: By May 2026, 90% students at EEM will report that EEM is a safe & caring environment as evidenced by BOY, MOY, and EOY Culture Surveys.

CULTURE

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PRINCIPAL

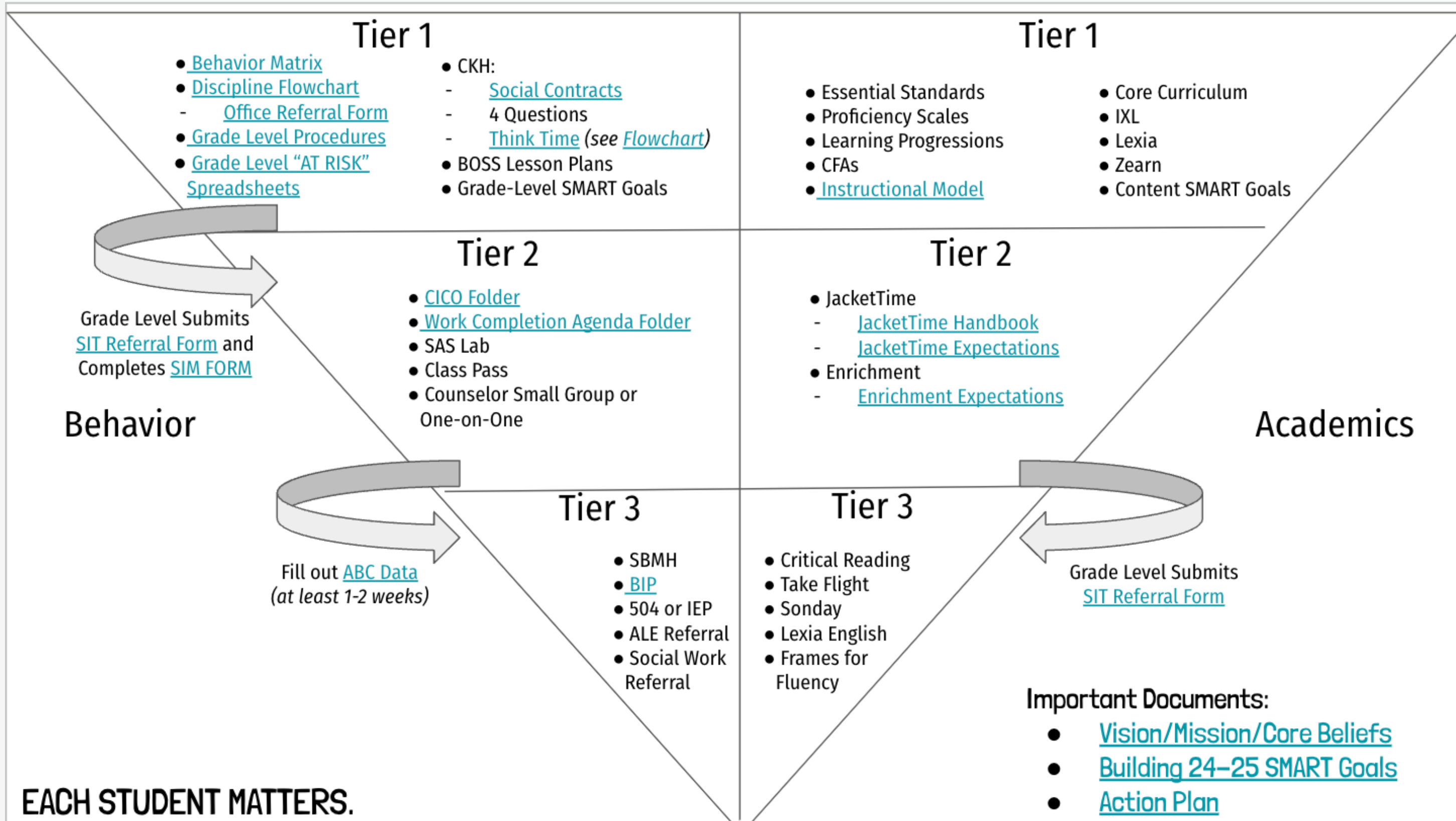
- **Vision/Mission/ Core Beliefs**
- Facilitate culture survey with staff, students & parents
- Analyze culture data with staff to make decisions/changes
- Peer observations
- Teacher-led culture/climate committee

COUNSELOR

- **Tier 1 behavior incentive system**
- School-wide theme
- Daily announcements
- CKH student & teacher character awards
- Visibility
- Student leadership/student voice small group
- Weekly school-wide character lessons aligned to CKH monthly character word



PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER: INTEGRATED SYSTEM FOR ACADEMICS & BEHAVIOR



ADMINISTRATOR PLAYBOOK: REPLICATE THE WORK



1 Name the goal

Make academics, behavior, and culture goals visible and measurable.

2 Map the people

Identify who is closest to each barrier and who can influence change.

3 Define the overlap

Clarify what each person owns and what must be shared.

4 Create a cadence

Schedule data reviews, team meetings, and student-specific follow-up.

5 Study and adjust

Use evidence to continue, change, or stop supports.

The principal's job is not to have every answer.

The principal's job is to create the conditions where the right people solve the right problems together.



REFLECTION

Which improvement goal currently needs better alignment of people, routines, and data?

1

Who is already in your building who could be used more intentionally?

2

Who should be positioned as a key connector for this goal?

3

What recurring meeting or data routine would make the work stick?



USE YOUR PEOPLE WELL.

Contact Information

Dr. Heather Williams
Director of School Support & Leadership
heatherwilliams@sheridanschools.org

Jessica Ashcraft
District Behavior Specialist
jessicaashcraft@sheridanschools.org

QUESTIONS?