Improving Interagency Collaboration: Kentucky's Story

Improving Postschool Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

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Outcomes

Participants will increase knowledge of:

- Strategies to increase collaboration at the state and local levels.
- Approaches to analyzing state-level data for use in data-based decision-making.

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Where did it all begin?

- Find a partner and a scrap sheet of paper or digital notes spot.
- When the presenter started the timer, you will have 1 minute to find as many commonalities between you as possible.
    - As you find the commonalities, write them down.
- When the timer is up, count the commonalities.

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Kentucky's Timeline: Initial Collaboration

Initial Collaboration

Change in Capacity

Intensive Technical Assistance

Local Guidance

Data Sharing

What's next?

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Initial Collaboration

- Collaboration was happening
  - Surface level; checking boxes
  - Not systematic or systemic
- Lots of talk, no movement

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Change in Capacity - KDE

- American Rescue Plan (ARP) in part focused on transition
- ARP work led to Disability Innovation Fund and State Personnel Development Grant opportunities
  - Focused on transition
  - Worked to align different initiatives to supplement and not supplant
- Increased opportunities for collaboration, though not yet systematic
  - Judging competitions, meeting more frequently, generally relationship building

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Change in Capacity - OVR

- Turnover was a problem
  - 40% of current staff have less than five years with OVR
  - Increasing staff salaries was the solution – April 2022
  - Current turnover is less than 3%
- Space was an issue
  - Creation of the Transition Services Branch – Oct. 2020
  - Pre-ETS Coordinators
  - Pre-VR system for tracking Pre-ETS

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Kentucky's Timeline: Intensive Technical Assistance

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Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA)

- At a Capacity Building Institute (CBI), KY team identified increased capacity to focus on improving postschool outcomes for youth and requested ITA support
- Established goals with NTACT:C
  - Improve quality and consistency of transition programming across the state
  - Improve data sharing to engage in data-based decision making

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ITA Work

- Struggled to maintain a consistent team
- Encountered numerous regulatory and institutional barriers around sharing data across agency systems
- Identified a need to understand the state of interagency collaboration at the local level – in districts and local OVR offices, not just at the state agencies
  - Convened several focus groups with both education and local OVR staff
  - Data supported state understanding – lack of systems to address HOW to collaborate at local level

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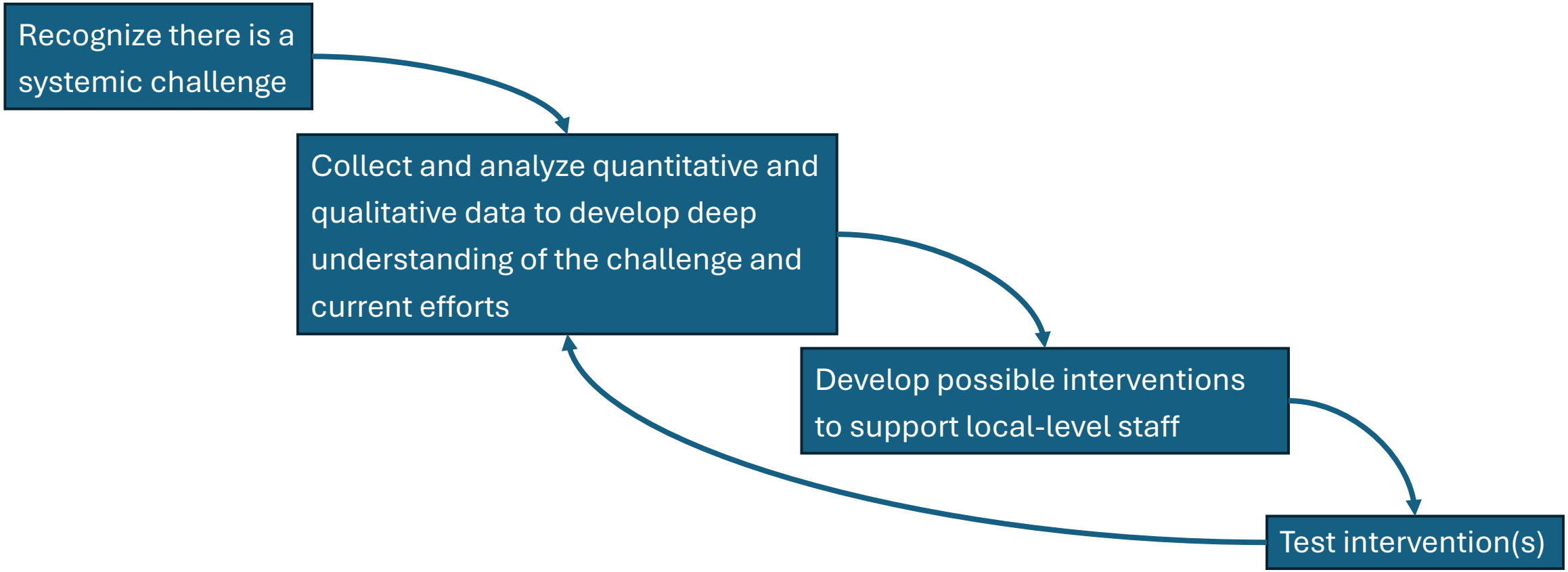
Local Collaboration Guidance Development



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Local Collaboration Guidance Document

- Guidance document is organized around four specific times/events in a student's life where education and OVR should be collaborating
- Each collaboration point details responsibilities for both education and OVR
- Individual districts and local OVR offices will determine the *process* for how these responsibilities are completed

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Local Collaboration Pilot

- State agencies jointly host virtual training for district and local VR staff.
- Currently eight district/VR office teams are piloting and useability testing.
- After pilot period complete, will evaluate and incorporate feedback from teams and release across the state.

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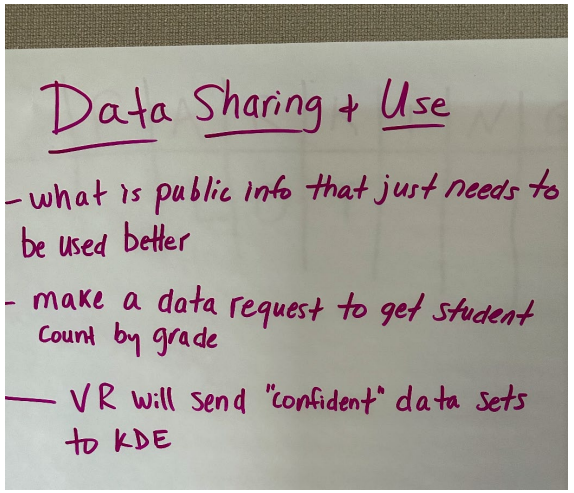
Kentucky's Timeline: Data Sharing



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Data Sharing: Barriers

- Team started with gold standard – trying to work within systems to compare student data in education to same student data in OVR
- Encountered many institutional barriers
  - Leadership all agree two agencies SHOULD be sharing data
  - Disagreement on HOW to share the data

- CBI 2024 – KY team member attended session on data heat maps and reframed KY's data sharing problem: not how can we share everything, but what CAN we share?

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Data Sharing: Solutions

- Team identified publicly available or aggregate data sources that could be shared
- Asked question: what can we learn from this data?
- Data tells a story
  - How is this small, rural district able to engage such a large percentage of their high school students with disabilities in preETS services?
  - Why are these counties not engaging in ANY preETS services?

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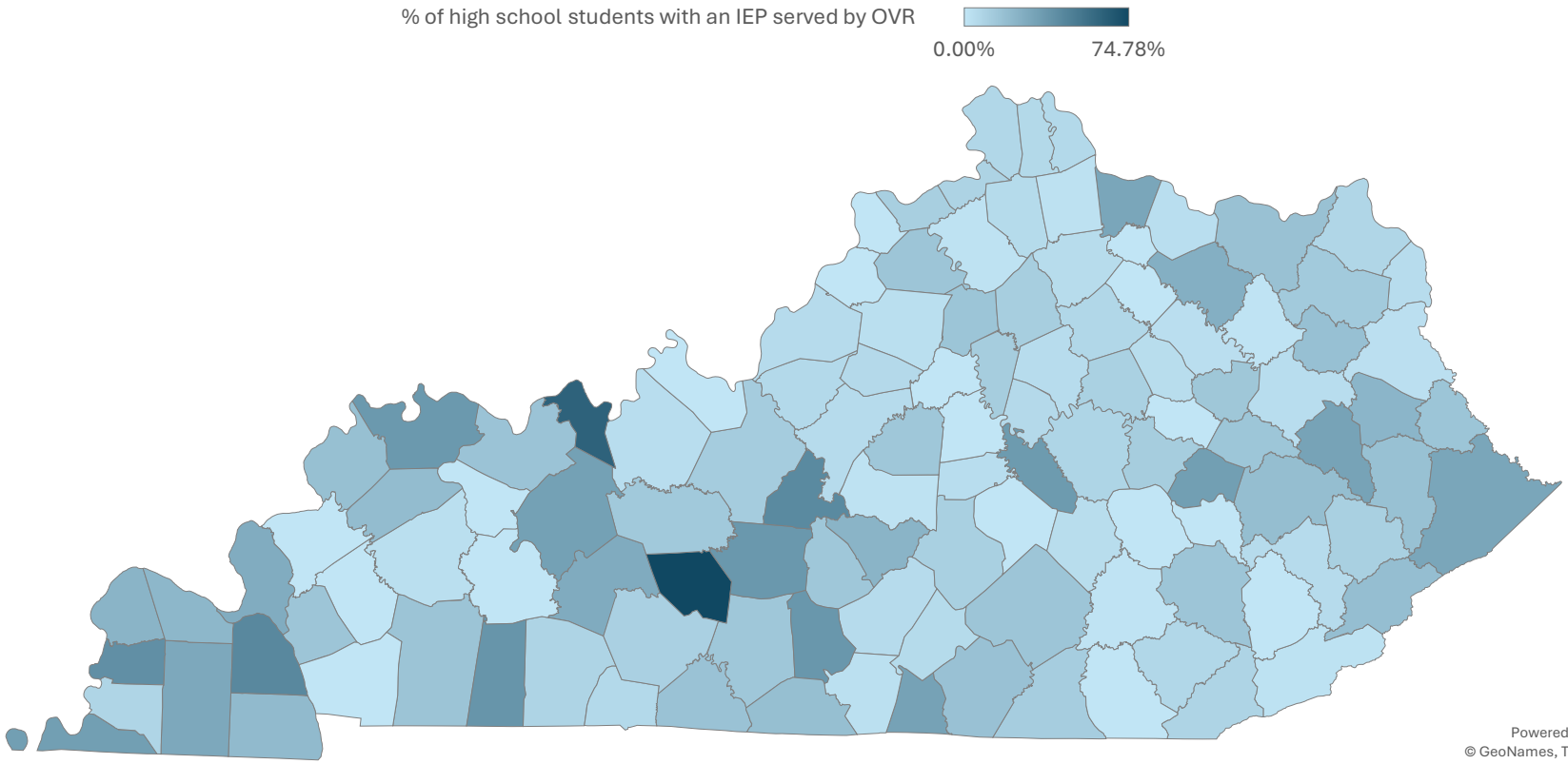
Data Sharing: Heat Map

Percentage of high school students with an IEP who also received Pre-ETS services, SY 2022-2023



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