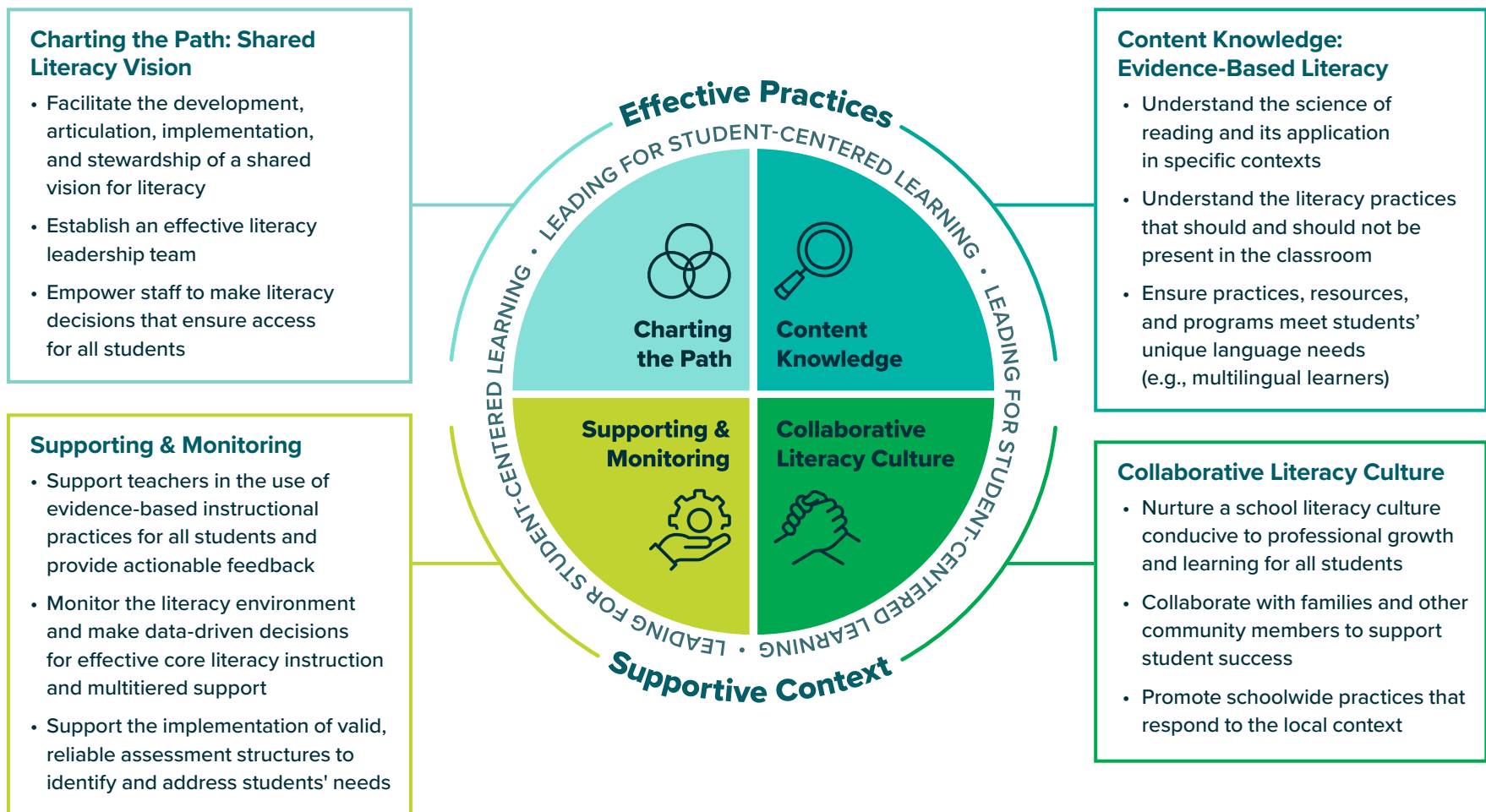


## IMPLEMENTING THE SCIENCE OF READING

# A Framework for Literacy Leadership Development

Being an effective literacy leader requires a deep understanding of the science of reading and the ability to engage multiple partners in developing, implementing, and monitoring a shared vision of literacy. Education Northwest’s Framework for Literacy Leadership Development is grounded in empirical research and specifically designed to address the implementation of literacy initiatives in diverse contexts.



## EFFECTIVE PRACTICES



### Charting the Path: Shared Literacy Vision

When implementation is launched without engaging all partners in a shared vision, it can lead to short-lived initiatives and commitment. The process of developing a common literacy vision helps foster a sense of shared ownership. One of the first steps in organizational change is to establish a compelling vision and clear standards of action (Reeves, 2007). A shared vision also guides all implementation and continuous improvement efforts. Effective leaders engage staff members, students, families, and community partners and facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a shared, equitable vision for literacy.



### Content Knowledge: Evidence-Based Literacy

To be an effective literacy leader, the principal must be viewed by the teachers as a role model of a reflective, lifelong learner who is knowledgeable in the area of literacy. Teachers are more likely to implement effective literacy practices that lead to increases in student achievement when they work for a principal who is able to talk about those practices and demonstrate them (Kindall et al., 2018). Research shows that principals with knowledge of evidence-based literacy instruction have the potential to better support improved literacy achievement among their students (Taylor, 2004) and that “effective, knowledgeable, proactive principals encourage and lead teachers, specialists, partners, and ultimately learners to success by understanding and supporting effective literacy practices ...” (ILA, 2018).

## SUPPORTIVE CONTEXT



### Supporting and Monitoring

For a literacy plan to succeed, leaders must commit to developing a structure that supports the school’s literacy efforts. Leaders need to create clear and consistent structures that ensure teachers know how to translate their knowledge of the science of reading into practice and that support them in doing so. Explicit implementation guidance and frequent feedback can help teachers and principals ensure their students have access and benefit from high-quality, consistent, evidence-based literacy instruction. Examples of this support include setting concrete, grade-level guidelines for how literacy block time should be allocated, ensuring that instruction meets each student’s specific needs, and empowering school staff members in affirming this diversity and advocating for relevant curriculum, materials, and instruction in school and classroom contexts.



### Collaborative Literacy Culture

Lack of sustained success with literacy initiatives is less about what leaders know and more about how they apply what they know, which may be impacted by a lack of buy-in or minimal support and guidance along the way. Leaders need to understand how to effectively lead an organizational change process to be in a position to support staff members who may be resistant to adopting new practices. Effective literacy leaders ensure that all teachers see themselves as responsible for meeting the literacy goals of all their students. To facilitate this, they create intentional structures for collaborative decision-making in relation to literacy teaching, learning, assessment, and multitiered systems of support (DuFour & DuFour, 2012) and engage families as co-creators. Building a collaborative literacy culture includes creating systems for self- and peer-to-peer observations that allow teachers to record, observe, and reflect upon lessons in the classroom. School leaders need to build organizational contexts that support and enable such efforts (Leithwood & Sun, 2012).