

66TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS



SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

November 8-10, 2016

Disclaimer

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The Conundrum of American Public Education

We can, whenever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.



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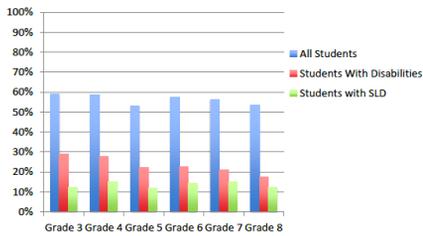
Ron Edmonds, 1982 in *DeFoucault*, 2004

Every system is perfectly aligned for the results it gets.

Outcome Assessment Data

Proficiency at or above Level Three	English Language Arts 2014-2015		
	All Students	Students With Disabilities	Students with SLD
Grade 3	59 %	28.8 %	12.3 %
Grade 4	58.8 %	27.7 %	15 %
Grade 5	53.1 %	22.3 %	12 %
Grade 6	57.3 %	22.6 %	14.2 %
Grade 7	56.1 %	20.9 %	15 %
Grade 8	53.4 %	17.5 %	12.2 %

ELA Data 2014-2015



If you want to change and improve the climate and outcomes of schooling – *both for students and teachers*, there are features of the school culture that have to be changed, and if they are not changed, your well intentioned efforts will be defeated.

Seymore Sarason

1996

Two basic questions...

Are you happy with your data?

Is every classroom one you would put your own flesh and blood?

Fundamental Assumptions

There are no quick fixes. Dedication, hard work and checking your ego at the door....works!

There is a need for General, Special, and Gifted Education, but not as it currently exists.

Too much time has been spent admiring problems.

No student is worthless. Even the worst student is a good example of what's not working.

The best place to address diverse learning needs is in the instructional process.

A Shift in Thinking

The central question is **not**:
“What about the students is causing the performance discrepancy?”

but rather...

“What about the interaction of the curriculum, instruction, learners and learning environment should be altered so that the students will learn?”

MTSS

- A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a term used to describe an **evidence-based model** of schooling that uses **data-based problem-solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention.**
- The integrated instruction and intervention is delivered to students **in varying intensities (multiple tiers) based on student need.**
- **“Need-driven”** decision-making seeks to ensure that district resources reach the appropriate students (schools) at the appropriate levels to **accelerate the performance of all students** to achieve and/or exceed proficiency .

NC RtI Definition

NC 1500-2.xx Responsiveness to instruction/responsiveness to intervention

Responsiveness to instruction/responsiveness to intervention is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions.

NC MTSS Definition

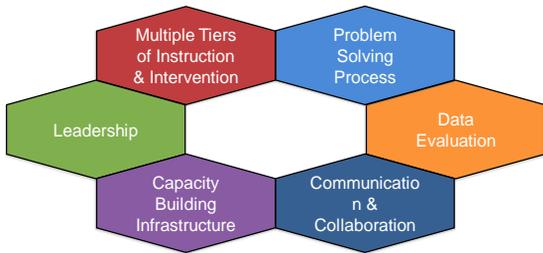
NC 1500-2.xx Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)

MTSS is a multi-tiered framework which promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices. MTSS employs a systems approach using data-driven problem-solving to maximize growth for all.

ESSA and MTSS

- The term is defined as "a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students' needs, with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision making" (Title IX, Sec. 8002(33))
- "Schoolwide tiered model"
 - Schoolwide Programs, Sec. 1114(7): Schoolwide program plans must include a description of how needs of at risk children will be met, which may include "implementation of a schoolwide tiered model to prevent and address problem behavior, and early intervening services, coordinated with similar activities and services" under the IDEA

Critical Components of MTSS



What Does It Look Like? What are the “Practices?”

- All instructional and support services are delivered through a multi-tiered system
- Decisions regarding instruction/support are made using a data-based, problem-solving process
- All problem-solving considers academic and behavior (student engagement) together
- A district-based team is responsible for monitoring performance of schools to determine the overall “health” of the district

What Does It Look Like? What are the “Practices?”

- A school-based team is responsible for monitoring student performance to determine overall “health” of the school environment
- Parents are engaged in the problem-solving and instruction/intervention process
- Student engagement is a primary priority
- Lesson Study (Planning) is the focus for effective instruction
- Early Warning Systems are in place to ensure a focus on prevention

What Does It Look Like? What are the “Practices?”

- District leadership is held accountable for implementation and outcomes
- The school (Principal) is held accountable for high quality implementation of MTSS as well as student outcomes

Three Tiered Model of Student Supports

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Three Tiered Model of Student Supports

These students + get these tiers of support = in order to meet benchmarks.

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SAM (Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation)

Overview

The instrument is used to measure schoolwide implementation of a multi-tiered system of student supports (MTSS). A team needs to observe an individual-based sample of students... (text continues)

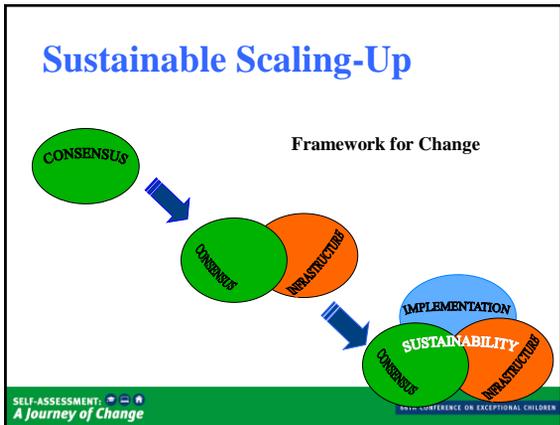
Your Task:

- On Your Own: As a team member, review the SAM instrument and Evidence of Individuality and your thoughtful responses about the status of MTSS implementation in your building.
- As a Team: After reviewing the SAM instrument, convene as a team to discuss your responses and reach agreement on which areas have improved in the current year. Your MTSS implementation report should include the data collection tool and student responses for further reflection and professional learning.

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- ## Stages of the Change Process
- **Consensus**
 - Belief is shared
 - Vision is agreed upon
 - Implementation requirements understood
 - **Infrastructure Development**
 - Regulations, Policies & Practices
 - Training & Technical Assistance
 - Effective Teaching and Learning Framework
 - Intervention systems
 - Decision-making criteria established
 - Data Systems and Management
 - Technology support
 - Schedules
 - **Implementation**
 - Evaluation
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: *A Journey of Change* 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

- ## Why have past initiatives failed?
- Failure to achieve CONSENSUS
 - School culture is ignored
 - Purpose unclear
 - Lack of ongoing communication
 - Egos
 - Unrealistic expectations of initial success
 - Failure to measure and analyze progress
 - Participants not involved in planning
 - Participants lack skills and lack support for the implementation of new skills
 - Lack of a strategic plan that relies on implementation science
 - FAILURE TO IDENTIFY THE BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION AND TO REDUCE AND/OR ELIMINATE THOSE BARRIERS
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Organizational Structure

Implementation Model

- District-based leadership team (DBLT)
- School-based leadership team (SBLT)
- School-based coaching
 - Process Technical Assistance
 - Interpretation and Use of Data
- Evaluation Data

Leadership refers to the activities of leaders, and includes

- creating a clear vision and commitment to the RtI process
- inspiring, facilitating, & monitoring growth & improvement, along with holding high standards for everyone
- promoting the essential components of RtI & the significant systemic changes needed to implement RtI with fidelity
- committing resources, time, & energy to building capacity & sustaining the momentum needed for change
- supporting collaborative problem-solving approaches with colleagues, families, learners, & community members to build partnerships
- facilitating implementation and outcome evaluation and aligning resources/supports to those data

District Infrastructure

- District Leadership
 - Common Language/Common Understanding
 - Is there a “unified” system of instruction at the district level?
- District Plan Requirements
 - Consensus, Infrastructure, Implementation
 - District Policies
 - Professional Development and Technical Assistance
 - Implementation Monitoring
 - Implementation Fidelity
 - Evaluation Plan

District Responsibilities

- Develop Policies & Procedures to Support Implementation
- Provide Support for Infrastructure
- Professional Development Aligned with Implementation & Student Need
- Allocation of Resources to Buildings based on Level of Implementation and Student Outcomes
- Monitor Implementation and Outcomes
- Support System for Principals
- Leadership Evaluation

The Role of the School Based Leadership Team (SBLT)

Who is on the SBLT?

- Principal/Assistant Principal
- Data Coach (**role**, not necessarily title)
- Facilitator
- General Education Teacher - grade or subject area representation
- Special Education Teacher
- Specialized Teacher (e.g., reading, math, gifted)
- Student Services
- EL Teacher

School-Based Infrastructure

- School-based leadership team (SBLT)
- School-based coaching
 - Process Technical Assistance
 - Interpretation and Use of Data
- Master Calendar
- Data Days
- Evaluation Model

SBLT Implementation Critical Elements

- Membership on the School Based Leadership Team
- Clear Purpose and Vision for the work of the team
- Regular calendar for data-based decision-making
- Protocol-drive meetings/"way of work"
- Roles of the Principal, Coach/Facilitator

How Does the SBLT Support MTSS?

- Acquire the skills necessary to implement the MTSS process
- Assess the impact of instruction and interventions in Tiers 1-3
- Collaborate with building staff to strengthen or modify instruction and interventions
- Embrace the leadership responsibility in the building to promote the use of data-based decision-making to achieve high student performance
 - Share Data with Staff
 - Share Success Stories
 - Model and mentor highly effective instructional practices
- Facilitate Data Days
- Provide training and mentoring for school-based personnel in the use of the MTSS process

How Does the SBLT Support MTSS?

- Apply a systematic problem solving process
- Provide training and mentoring for school-based personnel in the use of the MTSS process
- Focus on modifying instructional environment to support students
- Use instructions & interventions that have been determined to have a high probability of success given the problem identified
- Collect relevant data and monitor student progress frequently to assess response to the interventions

Principal's Role in Leading Implementation of MTSS

- Models Problem-Solving Process
- Expectation for Data-Based Decision Making
- Scheduling "Data Days"
- Schedule driven by student needs
- Instructional/Intervention Support
- Intervention "Sufficiency"
- Communicating Student Outcomes
- Celebrating and Communicating Success

Supplemental Materials

- SAM Implementation Monitoring Tool
- MTSS Common Language/Common Understanding

WWW.Floridarti.usf.edu

WWW.Florida-rti.org

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http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/resources/format/pdf/mtss_q_and_a.pdf



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2016

Policies Governing Services for
Children with Disabilities
Addendum



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

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BIG Concepts that Drive SLD Eligibility

- Unexplained Underachievement
- Intensity of the problem
- Severity of the problem
 - Rtl comes in here!
- “Discrepancy” is between current level of performance and state approved grade level standards
- Rule out likely suspects

SLD Eligibility Criteria

- **CRITERION 1:** Assurance of appropriate instruction
- **CRITERION 2:** Exclusionary factors
- **CRITERION 3:** Inadequate academic achievement
- **CRITERION 4:** Insufficient rate of progress
- **CRITERION 5:** Demonstrated educational need
- **CRITERION :** Observation of the student learning environment documents academic performance and behavior in areas of difficulty.
- **CRITERION :** Specific documentation for eligibility determination, including a requirement that parents are notified about instructional strategies, progress monitoring, and the right to request an evaluation

First Big Idea! Special Education Students are General Education Students First

Does your district/school have
consensus around this
statement??

Second Big Idea!

Academic Engaged Time (AET) Is The BEST Predictor of Student Growth.

AET

- **Academic Engaged Time (AET)**
 - 330 minutes of instruction/day
 - 1650 minutes/week
 - 56,700 minutes/year
 - 15,700 minutes for Reading
- **Minutes are finite in number**
- **Loss of minutes=Loss of achievement**
- **Minutes are the *currency* we use for instruction**
- **Equity in Access to Core Curriculum Content is, in part, a function of Academic Engaged Time.**

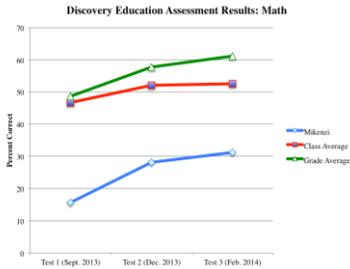
Third Big Idea!

Student Growth is the BEST Measure of a Student Response to Instruction (NOT Grade-Level Discrepancy)

Some Fundamental Principles

- **Rate of Growth**
 - Where is the student now?
 - Where is the student supposed to be?
 - How much time do we have to get there?
 - Is that time realistic?
- Rate of growth is the best measure of student response to instruction and intervention
- Rate of growth is used within an early warning system to determine if students will attain benchmarks *before time runs out and while we have time left to modify instruction*
- Rate of Growth is the best measure of effectiveness of instruction AND the most fair measure.

Which Line Represents the Greatest Growth?



Fourth Big Idea

Understanding the Difference
Between Intensity and Severity

What is the difference between a student who is significantly “behind” and one potentially with a SLD?

Intensity vs. Severity

Intensity is measured by how far *behind* a student is academically or how *different* the behavior is from peers or norms.

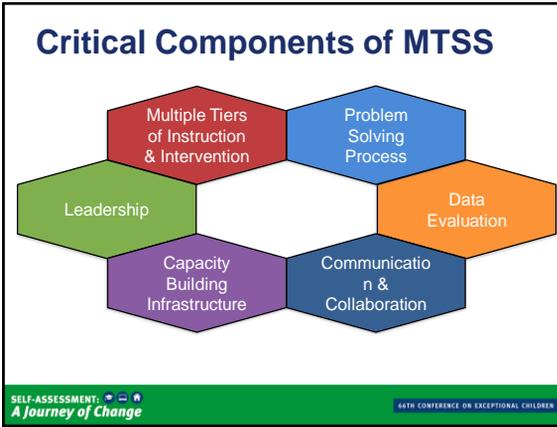
Severity is degree to which the student does or does not *respond* to evidence-based and well delivered intervention.

A student could have an *intense* problem, but catch up quickly. *Not Severe*

A student could have an intense problem, but NOT respond to well delivered interventions. *Severe*

Decision Matrix

		INTENSITY	
		LOW	HIGH
SEVERITY	LOW	NO	NO
	HIGH	NO	YES



SAM Multi-Tiered

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT
An Department of Public Instruction

SAM item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>28: Tier 1 (Core) academic practices exist that clearly identify learning standards, school-wide expectations, "flour instruction" (the engages students, and school-wide assessments)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional strategies Classroom walkthrough documents Instructional Plans School Improvement Plans/MTSS implementation plans 	<p>Tier 1 elements are NOT developed and/or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 1 elements incorporate 1 of the following: 1) clearly defined learning standards, 2) school-wide expectations for instruction and engagement, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) assessment/data sources</p>	<p>Tier 1 elements incorporate 2 or 3 of the following: 1) clearly defined learning standards, 2) classroom management practices, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) school-wide and social-emotional data sources</p>	<p>Tier 1 elements incorporate all of the following:</p>
<p>29: Tier 1 (Core) behavior practices exist that clearly identify school-wide expectations, social-emotional skills instruction, classroom management practices, and school-wide behavior data and social-emotional data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior matrix Classroom walkthroughs School improvement plans School-wide behavior data (SWB data) Social-Emotional Inventory (SEI) data Classroom management Behavior lesson plans 	<p>Tier 1 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 1 strategies incorporate 1 of the following: 1) clearly defined school-wide expectations, 2) classroom management practices, 3) link to Tier 1 academic content/instruction, 4) school-wide behavior and social-emotional data sources</p>	<p>Tier 1 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following:</p>	<p>Tier 1 strategies incorporate all of the following:</p>
<p>30: Tier 2 (Supplemental) academic practices exist that include strategies addressing integrated common student needs, are linked to Tier 1 instruction, and are monitored using assessment/data sources tied directly to the academic, behavior and social-emotional skills target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplemental intervention fidelity checks Supplemental problem-solving documentation Progress monitoring data on groups of students Tier 2 intervention plans 	<p>Tier 2 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate 1 of the following: 1) common student needs, (see Tier 1 instruction), 2) assessment/data sources tied directly to the skills target</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following:</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate all of the following:</p>

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SAM Data Evaluation

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT
An Department of Public Instruction

SAM item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>34: Staff understand and have access to academic, behavior and social-emotional data sources that address the following purposes of assessment: 1) identify students at risk academically, socially, and/or emotionally, 2) determine why student is at-risk, 3) monitor student academic and social-emotional growth/progress, 4) inform academic and social-emotional instructional planning, 5) determine student assessment of academic/behavioral outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Plan (within or separate from MTSS implementation plan) Assessment inventory School improvement plans Sharing results and use in identifying students at risk Intervention plans 	<p>Staff do not understand and have access to academic, behavior, and social-emotional data sources that address the purposes of assessment</p>	<p>Staff learn the purposes of assessment within MTSS and the leadership team selects measures for the purposes of assessment across academic, behavior and social-emotional areas that are reliable, valid and accessible, as well as culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate</p>	<p>All staff engage in assessment with fidelity to answer predetermined diagnostic/clinical questions regarding outcomes, 2) identify students who are at-risk at least 3-4 times/year, 3) determine why a student is at risk, 4) monitor student growth/progress, 5) inform instructional planning, 6) determine student assessment of academic, behavior, and social-emotional outcomes</p>	<p>AND the leadership team and/or staff collaboratively and systematically evaluate and adjust assessment practices to ensure availability of accurate and credible information, instruction, and assessment tools are evaluated for continued value, usefulness, and cultural, linguistic, and developmental appropriateness</p>
<p>35: Policies and procedures for decision-making are established for the administration of assessments, access to existing data sources, and use of data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment inventory School improvement plans Progress monitoring data 	<p>No policies and procedures are in place</p>	<p>The leadership team outlines policies and procedures for decision-making that include schedule for assessing, staff of diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring frequency, and criteria for determining length of support needed</p>	<p>AND staff consistently administer assessments, access data sources and make data-based decisions using policies and procedures for decision-making with fidelity</p>	<p>AND adherence to and effectiveness of policies and procedures for decision-making are evaluated regularly for efficacy, usefulness, and relevance for students and staff, and data are used to make adjustments to the policies</p>
<p>36: Effective data tools are used appropriately and independently by staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Plan (within or separate from implementation plan) Assessment inventory Professional Development/Coaching plans on data tool use 	<p>Staff do not have access to tools that efficiently provide data needed to answer pre-determined questions for academic, behavior and social-emotional issues</p>	<p>The leadership team ensures availability of tools that can track and graphically display academic, behavior and social-emotional data and staff are trained on the use of the tools and their responsibilities for data collection, entry and management</p>	<p>AND staff use the data and professional assistance as needed</p>	<p>AND data tools are periodically assessed and the necessary changes are made in order to improve functionality, efficiency, and usefulness, and staff is proficient and independent with data tools and easily support their staff members</p>

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Tiers as Resources

Tier 3
For Approx 5% of Students

Tier 1 Core
+
Supplemental
+
Intensive Individual Instruction

...to pass benchmark assessments.

Tier 3 Effective if there is progress (i.e., gap closing).

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Tier 1

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Eligibility Criteria Tied to Tier 1

CRITERION 1: Assurance of appropriate instruction

CRITERION 3: Inadequate academic achievement in one or more of 8 areas

CRITERION: Observation of the student learning environment documents academic performance and behavior in areas of difficulty.

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Eligible Areas

- Oral Expression
- Listening Comprehension
- Written Expression
- Basic Reading Skill
- **Reading Fluency Skills**
- Reading Comprehension
- Mathematics Calculation
- Mathematics **Problem-Solving**

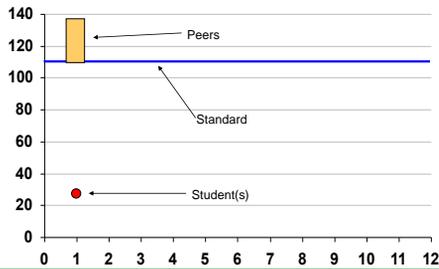


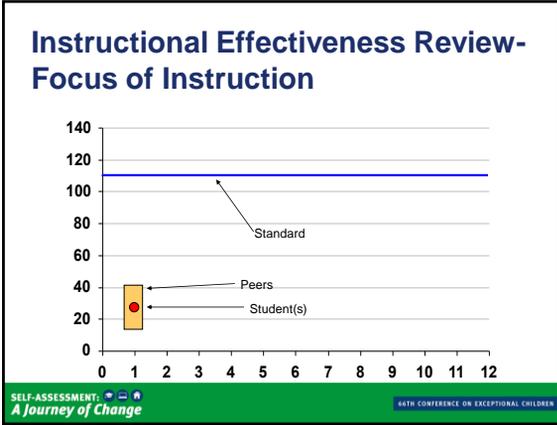
“Discrepancy”

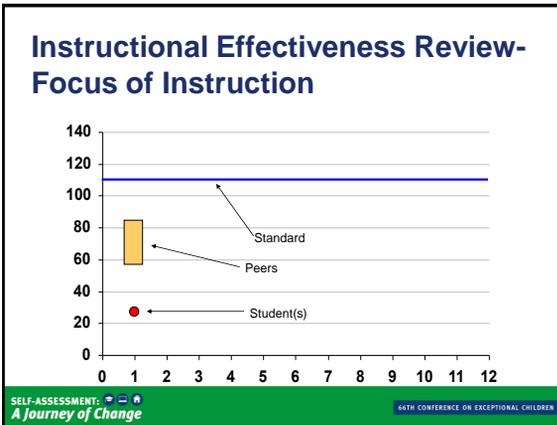
- Discrepancy is between child’s current level of performance and age or **state-approved grade-level standards**
 - GAP Analysis from Tier 1
 - Student/peer performance
 - State Assessment Data
 - Benchmark Data that Align with State Assessment Data
 - Other?



Instructional Effectiveness Review- Focus of Instruction





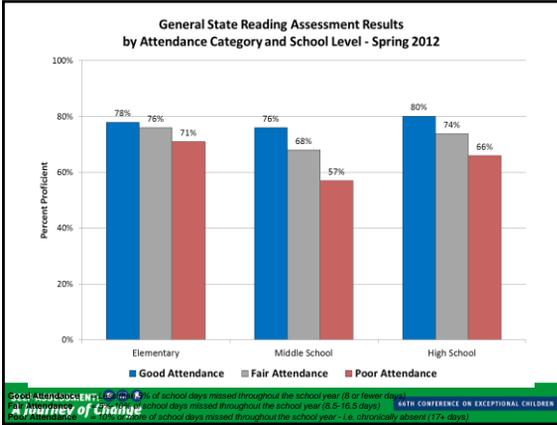


What Data Do You Use to Determine Discrepancy Between State-Approved Grade-Level Standards and Student Performance?

What are your “decision points” to identify students “at-risk”?

- 25%ile?
- GPA?
- Credits?
- Ds/Fs

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Tier 2

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**Tiers 2 and 3
Intervention-Based Services**

CRITERION 4: Lack of sufficient progress in response to scientific, research-based intervention

Use of the Problem-Solving Process

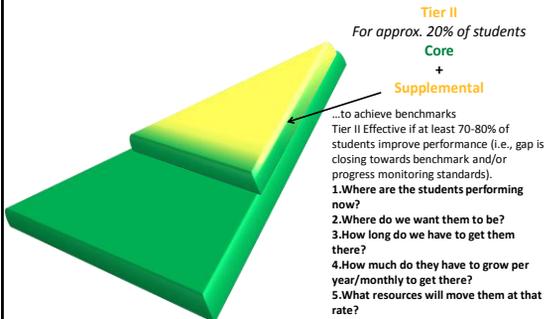
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NC Criteria

Insufficient rate of progress: When provided with high-quality core instruction that a majority of students are responding to and scientific, research-based intervention(s) matched to area(s) of need, the child demonstrates either a lack of response to instruction and intervention or is responding at a rate that is insufficient to reduce their risk of failure after an appropriate period of time.

TIER II: Supplemental, Targeted



Intensifying Instruction

- Time
 - More time, more practice and rehearsal, more opportunity for feedback
- Focus
 - Narrowing the range of instruction
 - Reading: 5 Big Ideas, SOME of the 5 Big Ideas
- Type
 - More explicit, more frequent, errorless

3 Fs + 1 S + Data + PD = Effective & Powerful Instruction

- **Frequency** and duration of meeting in small groups – every day, etc.
- **Focus** of instruction (*the What*) – work in vocabulary, phonics, comprehension, etc.
- **Format** of lesson (*the How*) – determining the lesson structure and the level of scaffolding, modeling, explicitness, etc.
- **Size** of instructional group – 3, 6, or 8 students, etc.
- Use **data** to help determine the 3 Fs and 1 S (*the Why*)
- Provide **professional development** in the use of data and in the 3 Fs and 1 S

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Developing A Schedule

- How many students require how many minutes of WHAT?
- Build schedule around the:
 - How many students need X number of minutes?
 - What will occur during those minutes?
 - Who is available to deliver?
 - When can they deliver?
 - How do we use the resources we have?

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Example of Grade Level Schedule

Fourth Grade Schedule
2008-09

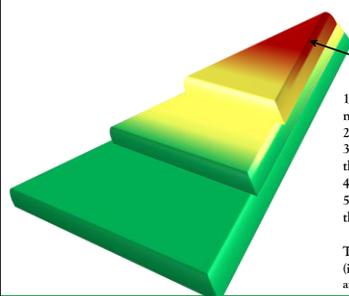
TIME	MON. TUES. THURS. FRI				WEDNESDAY				
	SUBJECT	Course Code	Minutes		SUBJECT	Course Code	Minutes		
8:35-9:40	Morning Routine (attendance, lunch, etc.)				8:35-9:40	Morning Routine (attendance, lunch, etc.)			
9:40-9:45	Morning News				9:40-9:45	Morning News			
9:45-10:15	Reading	5010050	90		9:45-10:15	Reading	5010050	90	
10:15-10:45	PE	5015010	30		10:15-10:45	PE	5015010	30	
10:45-10:55	Reading Enrichment	5010050E	10		10:45-10:55	Reading Enrichment	5010050E	10	
10:55-11:25	Specials	Art 5001000 Music 5012000 Library 5010030 Outdoors 5022000	30		10:55-11:25	Specials	Art 5001000 Music 5012000 Library 5010030 Outdoors 5022000	30	
11:25-12:00	Science	5020000	35		11:25-12:00	Language Arts OR Language Arts ESOL*	5010010 *****	35	
12:00-12:30	Lunch	*****	30		12:00-12:30	Lunch	*****	30	
12:30-1:00	Reading Intervention	5010020	30		12:30-1:00	Reading Intervention	5010020	30	
1:00-2:00	Math	5012060	60		1:00-2:00	Math	5012060	60	
2:00-3:00	Language Arts OR Language Arts ESOL*	5010040 5010010	60						
Total Minutes			375		Total Minutes			315	
Total Instructional Minutes			345		Total Instructional Minutes			285	

* = Sheltered

What is your definition of “effective instruction” in Tier 2?

70% of students are making a positive response to instruction/intervention OR are at proficiency with the supports.

TIER III: Intensive, Individualized



Tier III
For Approx 5% of Students
Core
+
Supplemental
+
Intensive Individual Instruction
...to achieve benchmarks

1. Where is the student performing now?
2. Where do we want him to be?
3. How long do we have to get him there?
4. What supports has he received?
5. What resources will move him at that rate?

Tier III Effective if there is progress (i.e., gap closing) towards benchmark and/or progress monitoring goals.

Ways that instruction must be made more powerful for students “at-risk” for reading difficulties.

More powerful instruction involves:

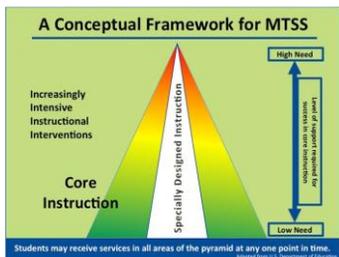
- More instructional time
 - Smaller instructional groups
 - More precisely targeted at right level
 - Clearer and more detailed explanations
 - More systematic instructional sequences
 - More extensive opportunities for guided practice
 - More opportunities for error correction and feedback
- } resources
- } skill

Characteristics of Tier 3 Instruction

- Small Group—3-4 students
- Standards Aligned
- Direct Instruction
- “Errorless” Learning
 - Scaffolding
 - Modeling
 - Feedback
 - 3:1 accurate/inaccurate
- Gradual Release
- Integrated with less intensive
- Universal Design in Tier 1 until these skills strengthen

SELF-ASSESSMENT: *A Journey of Change*

64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN



SELF-ASSESSMENT: *A Journey of Change*

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NC SDI Guidance



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EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

Considerations for Specially Designed Instruction

SELF-ASSESSMENT: *A Journey of Change*

64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Characteristics of Specially Designed Instruction

- Focus is to reduce or eliminate the impact of a disability on academic and/or behavioral progress
- Designed specifically for an individual student following individual problem-solving
- Could be implemented in Tiers 1, 2 and/or 3
- Examples include: text to speech, unique teaching strategies to teach a skill or alternatives to a skill, feedback protocols

Decision Rules: What Constitutes Sufficient Progress?

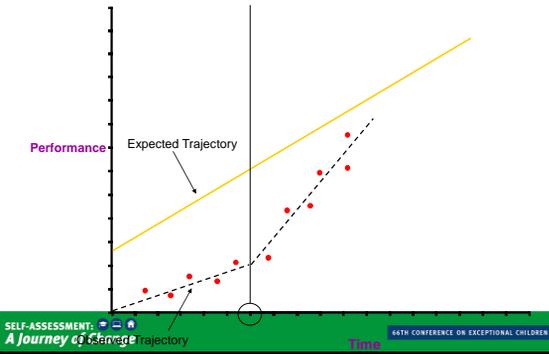
Decision Rules

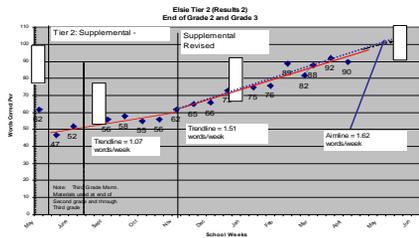
- Response to Intervention Rules
- Linking RtI to Intervention Decisions

Decision Rules: What is a "Good" Response to Intervention?

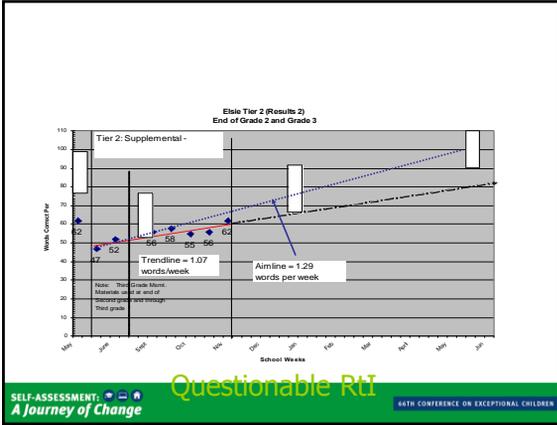
- **Positive Response**
 - Gap is closing
 - Can extrapolate point at which target student(s) will "come in range" of target—even if this is long range
 - Level of "risk" lowers over time
- **Questionable Response**
 - Rate at which gap is widening slows considerably, but gap is still widening
 - Gap stops widening but closure does not occur
- **Poor Response**
 - Gap continues to widen with no change in rate.

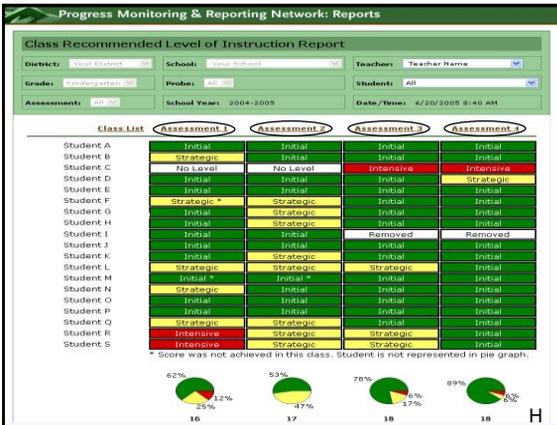
Positive Response to Intervention





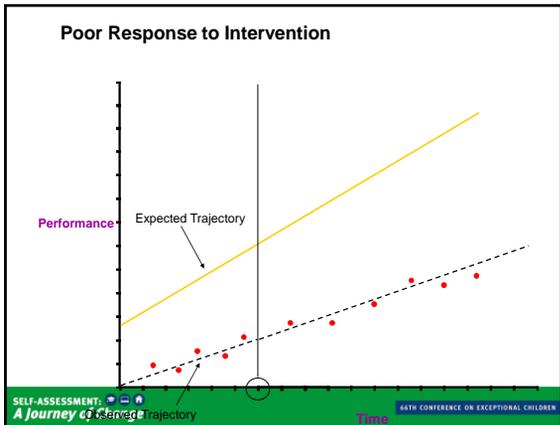
Good RtI

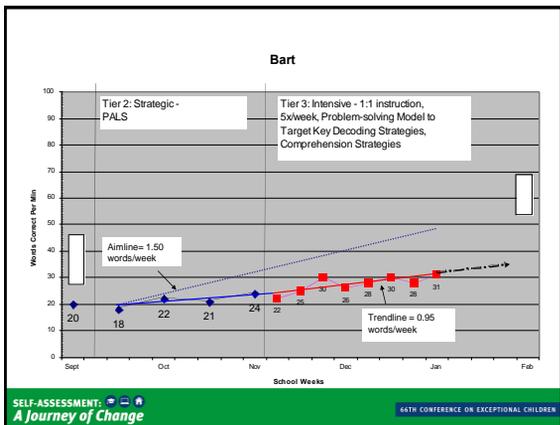


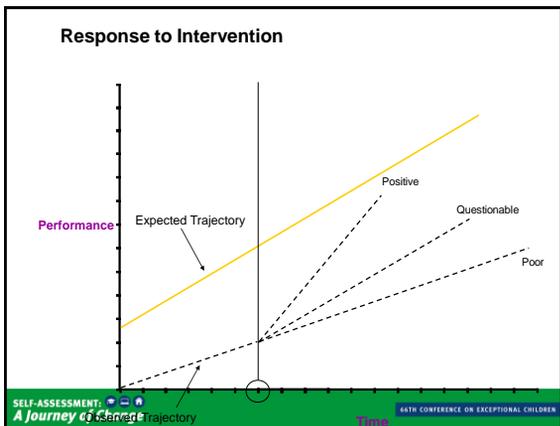


Decision Rules: What is a "Poor" Response to Intervention?

- **Positive Response**
 - Gap is closing
 - Can extrapolate point at which target student(s) will "come in range" of target--even if this is long range
- **Questionable Response**
 - Rate at which gap is widening slows considerably, but gap is still widening
 - Gap stops widening but closure does not occur
- **Poor Response**
 - Gap continues to widen with no change in rate.
 - Level of "risk" worsens over time







Decision Rules: Linking Rtl to Intervention Decisions

• Positive

- Continue intervention with current goal
- Continue intervention with goal increased
- Fade intervention to determine if student(s) have acquired functional independence.

Decision Rules: Linking Rtl to Intervention Decisions

• Questionable

- Was intervention implemented as intended?
 - If no - employ strategies to increase implementation integrity
 - If yes -
 - Increase intensity of current intervention for a short period of time and assess impact. If rate improves, continue. If rate does not improve, return to problem solving.

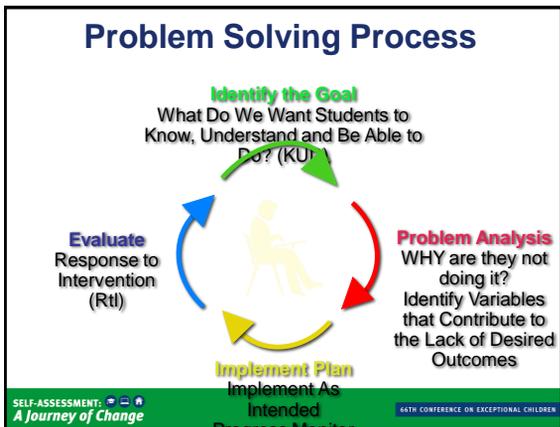
Decision Rules: Linking Rtl to Intervention Decisions

• Poor

- Was intervention implemented as intended?
 - If no - employ strategies in increase implementation integrity
 - If yes -
 - Is intervention aligned with the verified hypothesis? (Intervention Design)
 - Are there other hypotheses to consider? (Problem Analysis)
 - Was the problem identified correctly? (Problem Identification)

Problem Solving Process: Levels of Implementation

Level of Implementation	Problem Solving Team	Example
Student	Individual Teacher and/or Teacher Teams	Student is continually absent from class
Classroom	Individual Teacher and/or Teacher Teams	A large number of students in one classroom failed the unit test
Grade/Department Level	Teacher Teams and/or Instructional Leadership Team	A majority of students in grade 9 Algebra did not perform well on the mid-year assessment
School Level	Instructional Leadership Team	Low overall percentage of students meeting growth targets
District Level	District Senior Leadership Team	Increase in expulsions across schools



- ### Steps in the Problem-Solving Process
1. **Problem Identification**
 - Identify replacement behavior
 - Data- current level of performance
 - Data- benchmark level(s)
 - Data- peer performance
 - Data- GAP analysis
 2. **Problem Analysis**
 - Develop hypotheses (brainstorming)
 - Develop predictions/assessment
 3. **Intervention Development**
 - Develop interventions in those areas for which data are available and hypotheses verified
 - Proximal/Distal
 - Implementation support
 4. **Response to Intervention (RtI)**
 - Frequently collected data
 - Type of Response: good, questionable, poor
- SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change | 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Step 1

Identifying the GOAL

SELF-ASSESSMENT: **A Journey of Change** 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Steps in the Problem-Solving Process

1. Goal Identification

- Identify replacement behavior
 - Pass math in 9th grade
- Data- current level of performance
 - 193 are passing math 27 are not passing
- Data- benchmark (desired) level(s)
 - 220
- Data- peer performance
 - 193/220 passing
- Data- GAP analysis
 - 27 students

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Step 2:

Problem Analysis

The “Why”, “Root Cause”

Hypotheses Development
Assessment To Validate
Hypotheses

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Develop Hypothesis: ICEL

- We must ask questions to form a hypothesis regarding “What is the goal not being attained? Why is the goal not being attained?”
- We ask questions across four domains.



Key Domains of Learning

I	Instruction	Instruction is <u>how</u> the curriculum is taught.
C	Curriculum	Curriculum refers to <u>what</u> is taught.
E	Environment	The environment is <u>where</u> the instruction takes place.
L	Learner	The learner is <u>who</u> is being taught.



Step 3

Developing, Implementing
Instruction/Interventions
With Fidelity and Sufficiency



From Problem Analysis to Intervention

- Hypothesis 2: **Validated**

The difference between expected and current levels of performance exist because not enough time is allocated for the most effective instructional practices.

What type of intervention does this validated hypothesis suggest?

Interventions

- **WHAT** will be done?
 - Allocate more time to the most effective instructional practices that engage students.
- **WHO** will do it?
 - Classroom Teachers with PLC support
- **WHEN** will it be implemented and for how long?
 - Start Date---
 - 4 weeks
- **WHAT** data will be collected to monitor intervention on student performance
 - Accuracy on chapter tests and common assessments
 - Peer observations of instructional practices and student engagement
- **HOW** often will the data be reviewed?
 - After each chapter test.

Intervention Support

- Intervention plans should be developed based on student need and skills of staff
- All intervention plans should have intervention support
- Principals should ensure that intervention plans have intervention support
- Teachers should not be expected to implement plans for which there is no support

Step 4

Response to
Instruction/Intervention

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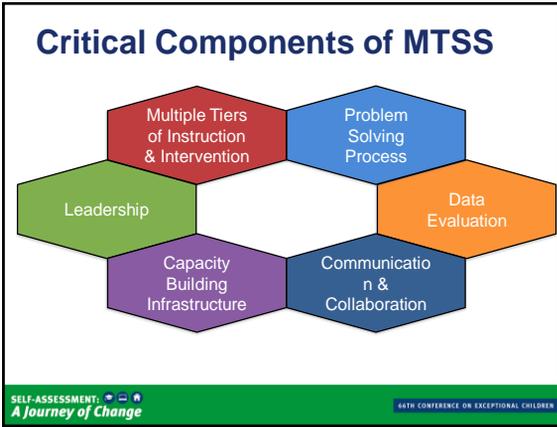
**Decision Rules:
What Constitutes Sufficient
Progress?**

SELF-ASSESSMENT:  *A Journey of Change* 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Decision Rules

- Response to Intervention Rules
- Linking RtI to Intervention Decisions

SELF-ASSESSMENT:  *A Journey of Change* 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN



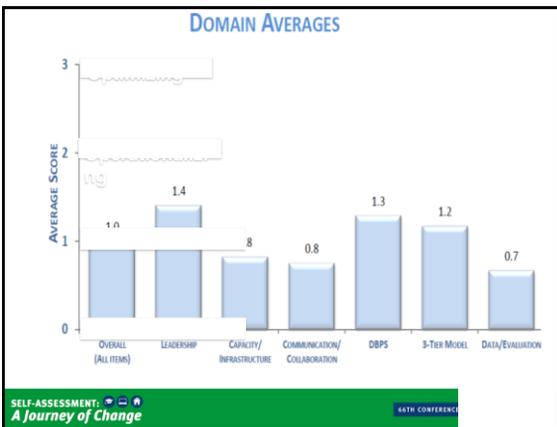
SAM (Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation)

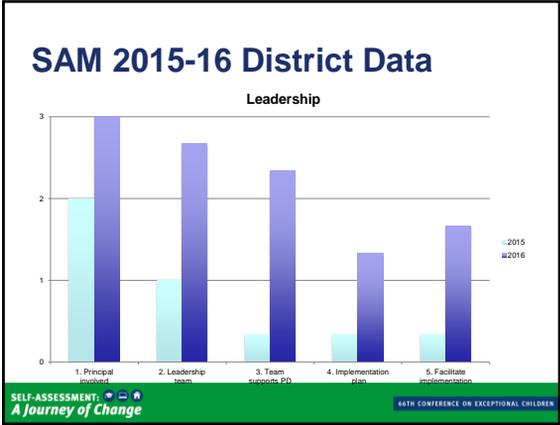
The image shows several overlapping documents related to SAM. The top document is the "Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAM) Overview". It includes an overview of the tool and a "Your Task" section with three main points:

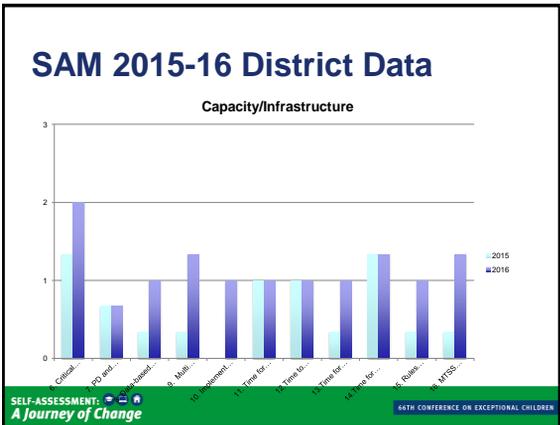
- On Your Own:** As a team member, review the SAM instrument and evaluate individuality and confidence levels for each item. Use the data on the instrument to reflect on your thoughts and perceptions about the status of MTSS implementation in your building.
- As A Team:** After reviewing the SAM instrument, convene as a team to discuss your responses and reach agreement on which items best represent the current status of MTSS implementation in your building. Your MTSS coach will facilitate this discussion and advise your responses for further implementation of your building's MTSS plan.
- As A Team:** After reviewing the SAM instrument, convene as a team to discuss your responses and reach agreement on which items best represent the current status of MTSS implementation in your building. Your MTSS coach will facilitate this discussion and advise your responses for further implementation of your building's MTSS plan.

Below the overview is a table titled "Evaluation (SAM)" with columns for "Item", "Response", and "Comments". The table contains several rows of data, including items related to "Problem Solving Process" and "Data Evaluation".

At the bottom of the collage, there is a green banner with the text: "SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change" and "64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN".







Comprehensive Evaluation

SELF-ASSESSMENT: *A Journey of Change* 64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Criterion 3-Rule Outs

CRITERION 2: Findings are not primarily the result of a visual, hearing, or motor disability, an intellectual disability,* emotional disturbance, cultural factors, environmental or economic disadvantage, or limited English proficiency (LEP).

IDEIA Comprehensive Evaluation

- The findings are not primarily the result of:
 - Sensory or Motor Disability
 - Mental Retardation
 - Assess Adaptive Behavior First
 - Emotional Disturbance
 - Data from observation
 - Observation and performance data
 - Cultural Factors
 - AYP Data for Race (NCLB)
 - Comparative AYP for Culture (Local Norms)
 - Environmental or Economic Disadvantage
 - AYP Data for Low SES
 - Limited English Proficiency
 - AYP Data for LEP



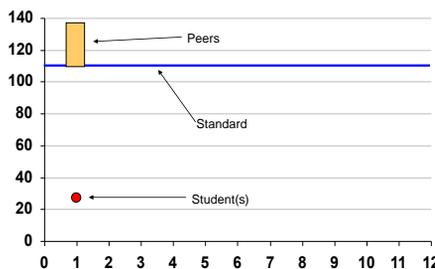
Rule Out: ED

- Behavior Observation
 - Compare behavior to peers through systematic observation procedures
 - Document any "behaviors" that cluster with particular disorders
- Behavior Rating Scales that document "emotional disorder/disturbance" (if necessary--remember these behaviors must **adversely** effect academic or social performance)

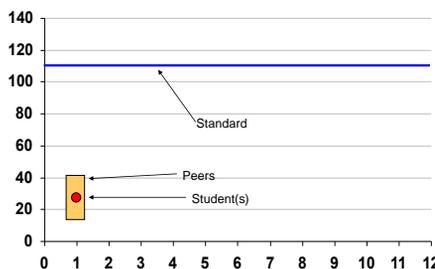
Rule Out: Culture/Race

- Collect data on other students of same culture on target behaviors/concerns and compare with target student.
- Use state assessment data (or benchmark data) to compare performance of target student with data from those students who share demographics.

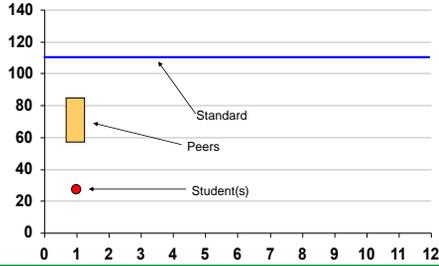
Instructional Effectiveness Review- Focus of Instruction



Instructional Effectiveness Review- Focus of Instruction



Instructional Effectiveness Review- Focus of Instruction



SELF-ASSESSMENT:
A Journey of Change

64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Rule Out: Economic Disadvantage

- Compare performance of target student with the state assessment or district data on other students on the “free/reduced lunch program. FRLP”
 - If other FRLP students are performing at a significantly higher level, then it is less likely that economic disadvantage is the primary reason.
 - If other FRLP students share the same performance levels, then the team must consider core instruction issues with these students.

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Rule Out: English Language Proficiency

- Compare performance of target student with the state assessment or district data on other ELL students.
 - If other ELL students are performing at a significantly higher level, then it is less likely that economic disadvantage is the primary reason.
 - If other ELL students share the same performance levels, then the team must consider core instruction issues with these students.

SELF-ASSESSMENT:
A Journey of Change

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Table Top

- Does your district have specific definitions, criteria and data collection methods for each of the rule out areas?

CRITERION :

Specific documentation for eligibility determination, including a requirement that parents are notified about instructional strategies, progress monitoring, and the right to request an evaluation

Basic Issues in Eligibility Determination

- Student must have the CHARACTERISTICS of the disability
- Student must demonstrate a NEED for the program (Specially Designed Instruction)
 - » (IDEIA, 2004)

Educational Need Criterion 5

- Educational need. The disability must have an adverse effect on educational performance *and* require specially designed instruction.

Need determined through the use of an evidence-based problem-solving process.

NC SDI Guidance



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Considerations for Specially Designed Instruction

RtI Toolkit

- www.ncld.org
- www.Understood.org



Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS

George Batsche

Sessions 19 & 40

Self-Assessment Participant Journal

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Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS

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Self-Assessment Participant Journal

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Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS

Participant Planning Journal

November 9, 2015

Planning Element 1: Leadership

(Beliefs, Common Understanding of MTSS, MTSS Plan, District and School Structures, Roles/Responsibilities of DBLT/SBLT, Understanding/Common Language Regarding “What is SLD?”, Multi-Tiered System of Building Supports)

- 1. What do we have in place?**

- 2. What is a priority focus—next steps work?**

BIG Ideas—

- 1. What do we buy into?**

- 2. What must we work on?**

Planning Element 2: Multi-Tiered System

(Definitions of Tiers, Definition of Effective Instruction-Tiers 1 and 2, How Does Specially Designed Instruction Fit, Schedules, “Relational Data”, Decision Rules)

- 1. What do we have in place?**

- 2. What is a priority focus—next steps work?**

Planning Element 3: Data-Based Problem Solving

(Do we have a single model used consistently, Do we have the infrastructure in place to implement Problem-Solving with Fidelity?)

1. What do we have in place?
2. What is a priority focus—next steps work?

Planning Element 4: Data Evaluation

(How are we/will we use data to assess implementation? What data system do we have in place to support schools use of DBPS?)

1. What do we have in place?
2. What is a priority focus—next steps work?

Planning Element 5: SLD-Comprehensive Evaluation

(Exclusionary Factors—particular attention to Cultural Factors, Economic Disadvantage and English Language Learners)

1. What do we have in place?
2. What is a priority focus—next steps work?

Critical Components of MTSS

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Reflection 2: Big Ideas-Common Language/Common Understanding

Effective Core Instruction

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

MTSS Model Aligns with SLD Eligibility

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Reflection 3: Role of Leadership, Responsibilities and Structures

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

TIER 2: Definition, Eligibility Requirements, Data Requirements

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Tier 3: Definition, Eligibility Requirements, Data Requirements

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Decision Rules for Response to Intervention

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Reflection 5: Problem-Solving Process, Structures

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Reflection 6: School-Based Leadership Team

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?

Reflection 7: Use of the SAM

- What have we talked about that AFFIRMS what you already know and have in place for implementation

- What have we talked about that you do not have in place but that you wish to consider?



Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS

George Batsche

Sessions 19 & 40

Self Assessment of MTSS Items and Evidence Examples

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North Carolina Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAM) Item Descriptors

The Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAM), now in its second edition, measures school-level implementation of MTSS. The purpose of administration is to help school-level and district-level personnel identify and prioritize implementation steps. The SAM contains 39 items in 6 domains (Leadership, Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation, Communication and Collaboration, Data-based Problem-solving, Three-tiered Instructional/Intervention Model, and Data-Evaluation). The SAM was originally developed in Florida, and has undergone a national pilot for use in other locations.

For use in North Carolina, a standard setting project for the SAM was also conducted. A diverse group of educational professionals experienced and skilled in the implementation of multi-tiered, data-based support systems (e.g., Responsiveness to Instruction, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, MTSS) were utilized to set this criterion. In addition, this expert panel also reviewed each item on the SAM to determine its accuracy and validity for use in North Carolina. In order to add additional robustness to the assessment of MTSS implementation, the expert panel also identified existing school-level and district-level work products that would be used as evidence in the administration of the SAM.

When will it be used?

As a self-report and guide for school teams in implementation, the SAM can be used at any time. However, one time per year (April-June is the recommended time frame), the district MTSS coordinator and/or another member of the MTSS District Team would facilitate administration at the school. This facilitated administration would allow the district personnel to review evidence to support the school team's proposed score.

Directions for annual administration as a fidelity measure:

1. Each team member should review the SAM item descriptors and think how s/he, personally, would respond to each item.
2. After reviewing the SAM item descriptors independently, the team members should come together with the district MTSS coordinator and/or member of the MTSS district team to discuss their responses and reach agreement on which answer best represents the current status of implementation at their school.
3. The district personnel facilitating the administration will use the suggested evidence below each item at their discretion to verify the school team's responses on the SAM.
4. The school team, with the help of the district personnel can use the data to plan best next steps for MTSS implementation.
5. Total scores for the facilitated SAM administration will produce one of three levels of implementation within each domain: *not implementing, initially implementing, or fully implementing*.

In order to receive a score with level of implementation for each domain, the facilitator is responsible for entering score levels within the NC SAM Excel Scoring Protocol.

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Leadership				
1: The principal is actively involved in and facilitates MTSS implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Plan shows evidence of MTSS systems and practices Agendas and meeting rosters showing evidences of data-based problem-solving PD Plan(s) with MTSS systems and practices showing principal involvement Staff/student handbook with evidence of MTSS practices 	The principal does not actively support MTSS.	The principal communicates an urgent desire to implement MTSS, participates in professional development on MTSS, and is establishing an MTSS vision	AND the principal actively supports the leadership team and staff to build capacity for implementation	AND the principal actively supports data-based problem-solving use at the school
2: A leadership team is established that includes 5-7 members cross-disciplinary representation (e.g., principal, general and special education teachers, content area experts, student support personnel¹) and is responsible for facilitating MTSS implementation² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership team roster Leadership team meeting agendas/minutes 	No leadership team with explicit responsibility for leading MTSS implementation exists	A leadership team exists that includes cross-disciplinary representation,	AND the leadership team has explicit expectations for facilitating MTSS implementation,	AND the leadership team members have the beliefs, knowledge, and skills to lead implementation efforts
3: The leadership team actively engages staff in ongoing professional development and coaching³ necessary to support MTSS implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development and coaching plan Professional Development roster(s) 	The leadership team does not have a needs-based plan to provide staff with professional development or coaching to support MTSS implementation	A needs assessment is conducted to gather information on beliefs, knowledge, and skills to develop a professional development plan to support MTSS implementation	AND a professional development plan is created based on the needs assessment and used to engage staff in ongoing professional development and coaching	AND ongoing professional development activities are informed by data collected on the outcomes of professional development and coaching for continuous improvement
4: A strategic plan for MTSS implementation is developed and aligned with the school improvement plan⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTSS implementation/strategic plan with alignment to or as a part of the School Improvement Plan 	No strategic plan for MTSS implementation exists	Leadership team is engaging district, family, and community partners to identify stakeholder needs, resources for and barriers to MTSS implementation	AND as part of the school improvement planning process a strategic plan is developed that specifies MTSS implementation ⁵	AND a strategic plan for MTSS implementation is updated as needed based on student outcome and implementation fidelity data as part of the school improvement planning process
5: The leadership team is actively facilitating implementation of MTSS⁶ as part of their school improvement planning process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School improvement plan with evidence (direct language or components explicitly mentioned) of MTSS 	The leadership team is not actively engaging in efforts to facilitate MTSS implementation	The leadership team engages in action planning and has created a strategic plan to facilitate implementation of the critical elements ⁷ of MTSS	AND the leadership team provides support to educators implementing the critical elements of MTSS identified in the strategic plan	AND the leadership team uses data on implementation fidelity of the critical elements of MTSS to engage in data-based problem-solving for the purpose of continuous school improvement

Adapted from *The Self-Assessment of MTSS*. (2013). Florida's MTSS, Florida Department of Education. Adapted with permission.

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Building the Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation				
<p>6: The critical elements of MTSS are defined and understood by school staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common instructional framework for academics and behavior At least two staff members can define critical aspect of a tier and a content area (ex, "Tell me one critical aspect of Core, Supplemental, or Intensive instruction for literacy, math or behavior at your school) 	<p>No information on the critical elements of the school's MTSS is available</p>	<p>The critical elements of MTSS are in the process of being defined</p>	<p>AND the critical elements of MTSS are defined and communicated to school staff</p>	<p>AND the curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices that define the school's critical elements of MTSS can be communicated by all school staff</p>
<p>7: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching⁸ for all staff members on assessments and data sources used to inform decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on assessments and data sources PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on assessments and data sources Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on assessments and data sources 	<p>Initial professional development is not provided to all staff members</p>	<p>The staff engages in initial, job-embedded professional development focusing on: 1) purpose and administration of assessment tools, 2) role of assessment/data sources in making instructional decisions, 3) review of current assessments/data sources being utilized & those being considered, 4) analyzing and using assessment results to improve instruction, 5) using various types of data to inform instructional practices to meet the needs of diverse learners, 6) communicating and partnering with families about data and assessment practices</p>	<p>AND the staff engages in ongoing professional development and coaching related to the administration of assessments and interpretation of the data/data sources. Professional development includes: 1) changes or updates to assessments/data sources, 2) changes to data collection, tracking and analysis, 3) ongoing coaching on instructional practices and interpreting assessment results</p>	<p>AND the leadership team analyzes feedback from staff as well as outcomes in order to identify professional development and coaching needs in the area of assessment/ data sources in support of a continuous improvement</p>

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>8: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching for staff members on data-based problem-solving relative to their job roles/responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on assessments and data sources PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on assessments and data sources Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on assessments and data sources 	<p>Professional development does not focus on data-based problem-solving</p>	<p>Initial professional development on data-based problem-solving is provided that includes the following elements: 1) rationale for use of data-based problem-solving, 2) problem-solving steps to address school-wide, classroom, small-group and individual student needs, 3) roles and responsibilities for team members engaging in data-based problem-solving</p>	<p>AND ongoing professional development and coaching on data-based problem-solving is delivered and includes the following elements: 1) differentiation of professional development based on staff roles/responsibilities, 2) coaching, 3) modeling, practice, and collaborative feedback on problem-solving steps, 4) support for collaboration and teaming skills</p>	<p>AND data on use of problem-solving skills and application are used to inform continuous improvement of professional development and coaching efforts</p>
<p>9: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching for all staff on multi-tiered instruction and intervention relative to their job roles/responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on multi-tiered instruction and intervention content PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on multi-tiered instruction and intervention Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on multi-tiered instruction and intervention 	<p>No explicit connection to multi-tiered instruction and intervention is evident in professional development provided</p>	<p>Initial professional development on multi-tiered instruction and intervention is provided that includes the following elements: 1) rationale for and modeling of instructional and intervention design and delivery (e.g., standards, instructional routines, universal behavior supports, lesson planning for active student engagement), 2) connections are made regarding how the practices are aligned with and integrated into MTSS, 3) how data informs instruction and intervention design and delivery that reflects student diversity and results in learning opportunities for all students</p>	<p>AND ongoing professional development and coaching on multi-tiered instruction and intervention is provided that includes the following elements: 1) differentiation of professional development and coaching based on staff roles/responsibilities, 2) coaching, 3) modeling of, practice of, and collaborative feedback on, evidence-based practices</p>	<p>AND the leadership team regularly uses data on student needs and fidelity of how evidence-based practices are implemented to continuously improve professional development and coaching efforts</p>

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>10: Coaching is used to support MTSS implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching logs/documentation of coaching activities/opportunities School improvement plan includes information about coaching supports and structures around MTSS PLC/Grade Level/Department Team meetings logs evidencing coaching opportunities 	No coaching is provided to build staff capacity to implement the critical elements of MTSS	Initial coaching is occurring that is focused primarily on facilitating or modeling the components of MTSS	AND coaching activities are expanded to include: 1) opportunities to practice, 2) collaborative and performance feedback	AND data on professional development, implementation fidelity, and student outcomes are used to refine coaching activities
<p>11: Schedules provide adequate time for trainings and coaching support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master schedule has time provided for PD and coaching PLC/Grade level/Department agendas evidence coaching support/coaching opportunities PD calendar 	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to professional development and coaching for MTSS	Schedules include time allocated for trainings	AND schedules include time for ongoing coaching support	AND schedules permit personnel to access additional training and coaching support that is differentiated based on their needs
<p>12: Schedules provide adequate time to administer academic, behavior and social-emotional assessments⁹ needed to make data-based decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master schedule or master calendar with time for data collection included Assessment calendar 	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to administering assessments needed to make decisions across tiers	Schedules include time for academic, behavior and social-emotional assessments administered to all students (e.g., universal screening)	AND schedules include time to administer more frequent progress monitoring assessments to students receiving Tier 2 and 3 services as specified (e.g., weekly or monthly assessments)	AND schedules permit personnel to administer additional assessment (e.g., diagnostic assessments) across content areas and tiers needed to engage in data-based problem-solving
<p>13: Schedules provide adequate time for multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction and intervention to occur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master schedule with evidence of intervention/instruction time based on needs of school population (adequate time for Core, Supplemental and Intensive) 	The master schedule is developed without student data and does not include time for multi-tiered interventions	The master schedule is developed utilizing student data and includes time for multi-tiered interventions	AND the master schedule facilitates effective implementation of multi-tiered interventions matched to student needs by content area and intensity (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3)	AND the master schedule allows for flexible student groupings
<p>14: Schedules provide adequate time for staff to engage in collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master schedule with evidence of data-based problem-solving time reserved 	The master schedule does not provide opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur	The master schedule provides opportunities to engage in collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur	AND the master schedule provides sufficient time for the process to occur with fidelity	AND the master schedule provides opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur in settings such as: leadership team meetings, grade-level meetings, cross grade-level meetings, professional learning community meetings

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>15: Processes, procedures, and decision-rules¹⁰ are established for data-based problem-solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of processes, procedures and decision-rules for tiers of instruction found in implementation plans, guidance or school improvement plans Data-decision rules outlined on some type of planning document that is evident to teams across the school building 	<p>No systematic processes, procedures, or decision-rules are established</p>	<p>Processes, procedures, and decision-rules needed to engage in data-based problem-solving are developed and existing structures and resources are incorporated</p>	<p>AND the steps of problem-solving; procedures for accessing, submitting, and using data; and decision-rules needed to make reliable decisions are communicated to staff¹¹</p>	<p>AND Data-based problem-solving processes, procedures, and decision-rules are refined based on data and feedback from staff, schedule changes, and resource availability</p>
<p>16: Resources¹² available to support MTSS implementation are identified and allocated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource allocation documentation (i.e., maps, inventories, etc.) MTSS implementation plan School Improvement plan 	<p>No process exists for mapping and allocating resources available to support MTSS implementation</p>	<p>Leadership team members are gathering information on the personnel, funding, materials, and other resources available to support MTSS implementation</p>	<p>AND resource inventories are established using the gathered information on the personnel, funding, materials, and other resources available to support MTSS implementation and plans for allocating the resources are established</p>	<p>AND Existing resource maps and resource allocations are updated at least annually based on student need, available personnel, funding, materials, and other resources</p>

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Communication and Collaboration				
17: Staff¹³ have consensus and engage in MTSS implementation¹⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC Beliefs Survey results indicating consensus Agenda and minutes from meetings where data is discussed that indicates good staff representation in problem-solving 	Staff are not provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS	Staff are provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS	AND staff has opportunities to gain understanding of its relevance to their roles and responsibilities	AND staff has opportunities to provide input on how to implement MTSS
18: Staff are provided data on MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes¹⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes/agendas/notes from various platforms that show presentation of both outcome and implementation data to staff- representative of the number of times per year they are reporting sharing of data 	Staff are not provided any data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity nor student outcomes	Staff are rarely (1/per year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes	Staff are regularly (2/per year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes	Staff are regularly (3+/year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes
19: The infrastructure exists to support the school's goals for family and community engagement¹⁶ in MTSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral and written protocols exist for communicating with families Intentional connection and involvement of families in School Improvement Planning Family engagement plan/protocol for all populations PTA documentation 	Family and community engagement is: not defined and monitored with data; not linked to school goals in SIP/MTSS plan; and procedures for facilitating 2-way communication do not exist	Family and community engagement are 1 of the following 3:	Family and community engagement are 2 of the following 3:	Family and community engagement are all of the following 3
		1) defined and monitored with data, 2) linked to school goals in SIP/MTSS plan, 3) procedures for facilitating 2-way communication exist		
20: Educators actively engage families in MTSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family attendance and active participation at problem-solving meetings evidenced through meeting minutes Family attendance and active involvement during leadership or school improvement meetings evidenced through meeting minutes Protocols for family engagement clearly communicated through handbooks, guides, expectations, etc. Evidence of outreach using a variety of venues (i.e., websites, videos, mass phone messages, emails, handouts, parent nights, etc.) Documentation of information provided to families regarding interventions, student response and progress on repeated assessments 	Staff do none of the following:	Staff do 1 of the following 4:	Staff do 2 of the following 4:	Staff do ALL of the following 4:
		1) actively engage families that represent the diverse population of the school, 2) engage families in problem solving when their children need additional supports, 3) provide intensive outreach to unresponsive families ¹⁷ , 4) increase the skills of families to support their children's educations		

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Data-Based Problem Solving				
<p>21: Integrated data-based problem solving¹⁸ for student academic, behavior and social-emotional outcomes occurs across content areas, grade levels and tiers¹⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity 	<p>Data on academic, behavior and social-emotional outcomes may be collected, BUT data-based problem-solving does NOT OCCUR ACROSS: 1) academic, behavior and social-emotional areas, 2) any grade levels, 3) any tier</p>	<p>Data-based problem solving occurs across 1 of the following 4: 1) at least 2 content areas,(e.g., reading, behavior, social-emotional) 2) at least 50 % of grade levels, 3) a single tier 4) only academic outcomes, or only behavior and social-emotional outcomes</p>	<p>Data-based problem solving occurs across 2 of the following 3: 1) at least 3 content areas, 2) at least 75 % of grade levels, 3) at least two tiers</p>	<p>Data-based problem solving occurs across all of the following: 1) across all content areas, 2) all grade levels, 3) all tiers</p>
<p>22: ACROSS ALL TIERS, data are used to identify the difference or "gap" between expected and current student outcomes relative to academic, behavior and social-emotional goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity 	<p>The gap between expected and current student outcomes is NOT identified</p>	<p>The gap between expected and current student outcomes is identified</p>	<p>AND the gap between expected and current outcomes is identified, and is associated with academic, behavior and social-emotional goals</p>	<p>AND the gap between expected and current outcomes is identified relative to academic, behavior and social-emotional goals and is used to identify the appropriate level (tier) of instruction/ intervention</p>
<p>23: Academic, behavior and social-emotional data are used to identify and verify reasons why²⁰ students are not meeting expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity Instruction and intervention plans show use of measures that inform "root cause" or answer the reason why students are not meeting expectations (i.e., diagnostic assessments/processes) 	<p>Reasons why students are NOT meeting expectations are NOT identified</p>	<p>Reasons why students are not meeting expectations are identified</p>	<p>AND Data are used to verify the reasons why students are not meeting expectations</p>	<p>AND reasons why students are not meeting expectations span multiple reasons related to instruction and the learning environment of why students struggle and are verified using a range of assessment methods</p>

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>24: Specific instructional/ intervention plans are developed and implemented based on verified reasons why students are not meeting academic, behavior and social-emotional expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring • MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model • Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity 	Instructional/intervention plans are NOT developed	Instructional/Interventions plans are developed	AND instructional/ intervention plans consistently specify what will be done, by who, when it will occur, and where with enough detail to be implemented ²¹	AND instructional/intervention plans are developed based on verified reasons students are not meeting expectations
<p>25: Student progress specific to academic, behavior and social-emotional goals specified in intervention plans are monitored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring • MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model • Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity • Progress-monitoring graphs utilizing valid and reliable assessments 	Progress monitoring does NOT occur and student progress is NOT evaluated	Plans for monitoring progress toward expected student outcomes are developed	AND in most cases data collected to monitor student progress and intervention fidelity	AND Changes are made to instruction/ intervention based on student responses
<p>26: Data-based problem-solving informs how patterns of student performance across diverse groups (e.g., racial/ethnic, cultural, social-economic, language proficiency, disability status) are addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-Solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring • MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model • Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity 	Patterns of student performance across diverse groups are NOT identified	Data on student outcomes are collected	AND patterns of student performance across diverse groups are identified	AND Data on student outcomes informs how MTSS Implementation efforts are impacting different groups of students
<p>27: Resources for and barriers²² to the implementation of MTSS are addressed through a data based problem solving process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource allocation maps with evidence of data-based problem-solving use • School Improvement Plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining a MTSS • MTSS implementation plan with evidence of data-based problem solving use 	Data-based problem solving of resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS does not occur	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS, but does not collect data to assess implementation levels or develop action plans to increase implementation	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS and does one of the following: 1) collects data to assess implementation levels, 2) develops action plans to increase implementation	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS and does both of the following: 1) collects data to assess implementation levels, 2) develops action plans to increase implementation

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Three Tiered Instruction/Intervention Model				
28: Tier 1 (Core) academic practices exist that clearly identify learning standards²³, school-wide expectations²⁴ for instruction that engages students, and school-wide assessments²⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Framework • Classroom walkthrough documents • Instructional Plans • School Improvement Plans/MTSS implementation plans 	Tier 1 elements are NOT developed and/or clearly defined	Tier 1 elements incorporate 1 of the following 4:	Tier 1 elements incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 1 elements incorporate all of the following:
		1) clearly defined learning standards, 2) school-wide expectations for instruction and engagement, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/ data sources		
29: Tier 1 (Core) behavior practices exists that clearly identify school-wide expectations, social-emotional skills instruction, classroom management practices²⁶, and school-wide behavior data and social-emotional data²⁷ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior matrix • Classroom walkthroughs • School Improvement Plan • School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) data • Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data • Plans for classroom management • Behavior lesson plans 	Tier 1 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined	Tier 1 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4:	Tier 1 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 1 strategies incorporate all of the following:
		1) clearly defined school-wide expectations, 2) classroom management practices, 3) link to Tier 1 academic content/instruction, 4) school-wide behavior and social-emotional data sources		
30: Tier 2 (Supplemental) academic practices exist that include strategies addressing integrated common student needs, are linked to Tier 1 instruction²⁸, and are monitored using assessments/data sources tied directly to the academic, behavior and social-emotional skills taught <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental intervention fidelity checks • Supplemental problem-solving documentation • Progress-monitoring data on groups of students • Tier Two Intervention matrix 	Tier 2 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4:	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 2 strategies incorporate all of the following:
		1) common student needs, 2) link to Tier 1 instruction, 3) link to behavior and social emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources link directly to the skills taught		

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
<p>31: Tier 2 (Supplemental) behavior and social-emotional practices exist that include strategies addressing student needs, are linked to Tier 1 instruction²⁹, and are monitored using assessments/data sources tied directly to the skills academic, behavior and social-emotional taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplemental intervention fidelity checks • Supplemental problem-solving documentation • Progress-monitoring data on groups of students • Tier Two Intervention matrix • Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data 	<p>Tier 2 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 2 strategies incorporate all of the following:</p>
		<p>1) common student needs; 2) link to Tier1 instruction; 3) link to academic content; 4) assessments/ data sources link directly to the skills taught</p>		
<p>32: Tier 3 (Intensive) academic practices³⁰ exist that include strategies that are developed based on students' needs, are aligned with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional goals and strategies, and are monitored using assessments/data sources that link directly to skills taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive intervention fidelity checks • Intensive problem-solving documentation • Progress-monitoring data on individual students 	<p>Tier 3 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate all of the following:</p>
		<p>1) developed based on students' needs, 2) developed to support Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources that link directly to the skills taught</p>		
<p>33: Tier 3 (Intensive) behavior and social-emotional practices³¹ exist that include strategies that are developed based on students' needs, are aligned with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional goals and strategies, and are monitored using assessments/data sources that link directly to skills taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive intervention fidelity checks • Intensive problem-solving documentation • Progress-monitoring data on individual students • Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans • Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data 	<p>Tier 3 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:</p>	<p>Tier 3 strategies incorporate all of the following:</p>
		<p>1) based on students' needs, 2) aligned with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, 3) link to academic content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources that link directly to the skills taught</p>		

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Data-Evaluation				
<p>34: Staff understand and have access to academic, behavior and social-emotional data sources that address the following purposes of assessment: 1) identify students at-risk academically, socially, and/or emotionally, 2) determine why student is at-risk, 3) monitor student academic and social-emotional growth/progress, 4) Inform academic and social-emotional instructional planning, 5) determine student attainment of academic/behavioral outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Plan (within or separate from MTSS implementation plan) Assessment inventory School Improvement plans Screening results and use in identifying students at-risk Intervention Plans 	<p>Staff do not understand and have access to academic, behavior, and social-emotional data sources that address the purposes of assessment</p>	<p>Staff learn the purposes of assessment within MTSS and the leadership team selects measures for the purposes of assessment across academic, behavior and social-emotional areas that are reliable, valid and accessible, as well as culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate</p>	<p>AND staff engage in assessment with fidelity to: 1) answer predetermined guiding/critical questions regarding student functioning/outcomes, 2) identify students who are at-risk at least 3-4 times/year, 2) determine why a student is at risk, 3) monitor student growth/progress, 4) inform instructional/intervention planning, 5) determine student attainment of academic, behavior, and social-emotional outcomes</p>	<p>AND the leadership team and/or staff collaboratively and systematically evaluate and adjust assessment practices to ensure availability of accurate and useful data to inform instruction, and assessment tools are evaluated for continued value, usefulness, and cultural, linguistic, and developmental appropriateness</p>
<p>35: Policies and procedures for decision-making are established for the administration of assessments, access to existing data sources, and use of data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment inventory School Improvement plan Progress-monitoring data 	<p>No policies and procedures are in place</p>	<p>The leadership team outlines policies and procedures for decision-making that include schedules for screening, use of diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring frequency, and criteria for determining tier(s) of support needed</p>	<p>AND staff consistently administer assessments, access data sources and make data-based decisions using policies and procedures for decision-making with fidelity</p>	<p>AND adherence to and effectiveness of policies and procedures for decision making are evaluated regularly for efficiency, usefulness, and relevance for students and staff, and data are used to make adjustments to the policies</p>
<p>36: Effective data tools are used appropriately and independently by staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Plan (within or separate from implementation plan) Graphing results Professional Development/Coaching plans on data tools use 	<p>Staff do not have access to tools that efficiently provide data needed to answer problem solving questions for academic, behavior and social-emotional issues</p>	<p>The leadership team ensures availability of tools that can track and graphically display academic, behavior and social-emotional data, and staff are trained on the use of the tools and on their responsibilities for data collection, entry and management</p>	<p>AND staff use the data tools and are provided assistance as needed</p>	<p>AND data tools are periodically assessed and the necessary changes are made in order to improve functionality, efficiency, and usefulness, and staff is proficient and independent with data tools and easily support new staff members</p>

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
37: Data sources are used to evaluate the implementation and impact of MTSS implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes/agendas School improvement planning Walkthrough data 	No data sources to evaluate implementation of the critical elements of MTSS have been identified	The leadership team has identified data sources that will be used to evaluate implementation of the critical elements of MTSS	AND the leadership team uses data sources to evaluate implementation and to make systemic improvements to the critical elements of MTSS	AND the leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine how implementation of critical elements of MTSS relate to positive student outcomes
38: Available resources are allocated effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School improvement plan or MTSS implementation plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining a MTSS 	Resources are NOT allocated based on student need and the availability of time, available personnel, funding, and materials	Resources are allocated based on student need	AND the relationship between the resources allocated and the outcomes of students is evaluated	AND Processes and criteria for resource allocation are refined based on strategies that result in improved student outcomes.
39: Data sources are monitored for consistency and accuracy in collection and entry procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment plan (within or separate from implementation plan) Professional development/coaching plans on data tools use Meeting minutes from leadership team discussion of fidelity with data use 	Data sources are NOT monitored for accuracy or consistency	The leadership team ensures that staff understand the importance of accurate and consistent data collection practices and have provided professional development on policies and procedures for methods, types and frequency of data collection	AND the leadership team uses a protocol (e.g., email notifications for failure to take attendance, etc.) To monitor data consistency and accuracy	AND The Leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine consistency and accuracy of data

¹ Instructional support staff may include: interventionists, coaches, behavioral specialists, etc. Student support personnel are comprised of school psychologists, school counselors, social workers, school nurses, etc.

² Responsibilities for facilitating MTSS implementation are not limited to, but can include:
 Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation plan
 Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for the planning and delivery of evidence-based assessment, instruction and intervention
 Providing ongoing professional development and coaching support to school staff
 Collecting and analyzing data on MTSS implementation efforts

³ Professional development and coaching are ongoing activities that develop the capacity of staff to implement MTSS. Efforts should be aligned with results of school needs assessments and modified based on the results of professional learning.

⁴ At the school level, a school-based leadership team should guide implementation of a MTSS. This may take place within the structure of the School Improvement Team or may be a subset of this team that is charged with implementation planning. Teams may differ based on several factors but a connection should always be made in order to facilitate

effective implementation. A long-term plan for implementation of MTSS should be developed by the school-based leadership team. This may be a part of the school improvement plan or separate from it but again should be aligned with the overall goals and actions within the school improvement plan.

⁵ A strategic plan for MTSS implementation should address the following components (at a minimum):

- a. Communication and collaboration strategies
- b. Capacity building targets and activities
- c. Data to monitor implementation fidelity of the critical elements of MTSS

⁶ Different approaches to facilitating school-wide implementation of an MTSS model can include:

The focus on a three-stage model of consensus building, infrastructure development, and implementation of practices consistent with an MTSS model

The focus on a specific sets of activities related to successful implementation of a designated model of service delivery (e.g., National Implementation Research Network framework)

The approach to facilitating school-wide implementation of an MTSS model should be connected to the School Improvement Plan (SIP), as well as other school-wide plans.

⁷ Critical elements of MTSS communicated to staff include:

- Curriculum standards
- Assessment data used to inform instruction
- Multiple tiers of instruction and intervention
- Data-based problem-solving used to make decisions

⁸ “Coaching” is defined as technical assistance and support provide to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS model, including: Co-Planning, Modeling/Demonstration, Co-Facilitation, and Guided practice with high quality feedback. “Coaching does NOT necessarily have to be completed by one person. Coaching can be provided by a number of different individuals depending upon their specializations, skill sets, as well as the particulars of the context of activities. It is unreasonable to assume that just one individual, or one coach will have all the skills required to effectively provide coaching for MTSS in every given situation that may arise.” March, A.L. and Gaunt, B.T. (2013). *Systems Coaching: A model for building capacity.*

⁹ Behavior/Social-Emotional Assessment:

Screening: Recommended Behavior/Social-Emotional screening data include reviewing and analyzing all students’ adherence to school-wide expectations through collection of:

Minor problem behavior (classroom managed)

Major problem behavior (office discipline referral)

Attendance patterns

Other areas that some schools may choose to universally screen in the area of Behavior/Social-Emotional skills using a school-wide screening for internalizing behaviors (e.g., depressive symptoms, anxiety, etc.).

Diagnostic: Diagnostic assessments for behavior/social-emotional skills include use of functional behavior assessments in order to find the root cause for the student’s difficulties.

Progress-Monitoring: In the area of behavior/social-emotional functioning, the monitoring of student progress with the intervention should be matched with the problem of concern. Within progress-monitoring of behavior, teams will want to consider monitoring frequency, duration, intensity and latency recording.

¹⁰ Schools will need to establish and communicate the problem solving process to be used, specific steps to be followed, and criteria to use when making decisions (e.g., what is good, questionable, or poor response to instruction/intervention). Schools should consider district and state guidelines when available.

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- ¹¹ Processes and procedures for problem solving, data collection and use, and decision-rules include:
- Specific guidelines on the steps of problem solving to be used
 - Documentation requirements
 - Opportunities for engaging in data-based problem solving (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, etc.)
 - Roles and responsibilities of participants
- ¹² Resources encompass not only available monetary assets but also available personnel, instructional materials, and time that will facilitate the implementation and sustainment of an MTSS as a framework for supporting all students.
- ¹³ Staff refers to employees at the school that will be impacted by or will be involved in implementation of MTSS. This will always include administration, teachers, other professionals and para-professional support staff. The degree to which other employees (e.g., bus drivers, cafeteria workers, administrative support staff, etc.) are included may be determined by their level of involvement with/implementation of MTSS components at the individual school level.
- ¹⁴ Efforts to engage staff should align with district and state guidance regarding MTSS implementation to facilitate staff understanding of connections between school, district and state initiatives.
- ¹⁵ Data on student outcomes, school-level implementation fidelity, the capacity of educators to implement, and commitment from staff are needed to inform implementation. Staff roles and responsibilities will drive the specific data they need to inform implementation.
- ¹⁶ Family and community engagement is the active and meaningful partnership that educators build and maintain with students' families and the broader community for the purpose of supporting student learning.
- ¹⁷ Intensive outreach to unresponsive families refers to additional activities undertaken by the school to engage families of students who need additional supports, but who are not engaging with the school's typical outreach practices (e.g., letters and phone calls home). Intensive outreach is an individualized approach requiring information gathering and problem solving to identify outreach strategies that are more likely to be successful for a family.
- ¹⁸ Data-based problem solving refers to a multi-step process that includes examining performance related to goals/expectations (problem identification), understanding variables causing problems (problem analysis), selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals (instruction/intervention delivery), and monitoring effectiveness (monitoring/evaluation).
- ¹⁹ Data-based problem solving should occur (a) across content areas (reading, math, science, behavior, social-emotional and other relevant content areas for a school) (b) within and across grade levels (e.g., horizontal meetings for 6th, 7th, 8th, as well as vertical meetings), and (d) across tiers (performance data in response to instruction used to engage in problem solving for all students (Core), for some students receiving supplemental instruction (Supplemental), and for students receiving individualized support (Intensive).
- ²⁰ Reasons why students are not meeting expectations are sometimes referred to as hypotheses or barriers to learning. The big idea is that schools identify potential curriculum, instruction, environmental (e.g., peer distractions, classroom management issues), and learner (e.g., skill deficits) for why the student is not meeting expectations and collect data/information to determine which reasons are contributing to the problem.
- ²¹ Specific instruction/intervention plans include information outlining:
- a. The goal of the intervention/action plan
 - b. What intervention or action steps (e.g., curriculum adjustments, instructional processes and procedures) will be put in place
 - c. How often (daily/weekly/etc.) the intervention will be utilized
 - d. How long each session is to be implemented
 - e. Who is responsible for intervention implementation and support
 - f. Where and when the intervention will happen

Adapted from *The Self-Assessment of MTSS*. (2013). Florida's MTSS, Florida Department of Education. Adapted with permission.

- g. Plan for monitoring instruction/intervention fidelity and progress towards identified goals
- h. Timeframe (dates) for periodic review of progress monitoring data and decision points

²² Structured problem solving is utilized to identify resources that can be used to facilitate implementation and barriers that are hindering implementation for the purpose of developing specific action plans to increase implementation levels.

²³ Priority learning standards are curriculum standards that define what students should know and be able to do for a given content area and grade level (e.g., NCSCOS, Social-Emotional/Behavior Standards, etc.).

²⁴ Expectations for instruction often include elements related to the instructional routine (e.g., whole-group, small-group, and independent practice), amount of time dedicated to instruction, and which evidence-based instructional strategies are used.

²⁵ Both statewide assessments and formative assessments administered to all students are important to identify so that expectations for the data needed to inform decisions are consistent.

²⁶ Structured instruction of behavioral expectations and social and emotional skills is provided to all students. Classroom routines include social and emotional learning principles and classroom management strategies embedded into instruction. School climate and environments support student well-being. A small number of clearly defined school-wide expectations that are positively stated are a foundational element of a Tier One school-wide behavior support system.

²⁷ School-wide social-emotional behavior data may include Office Discipline Referrals, In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions, and social-emotional screening data sources used to examine the effectiveness of Tier One behavior and social-emotional supports.

²⁸ Tier two interventions should be aligned with Tier One instructional goals and expectations, address high-probability barriers to achieving instructional goals and expectations, and include assessments, which measure specific skills, general outcomes, and student progress.

²⁹ Tier Two interventions should be aligned with school-wide behavior and social-emotional expectations, address high-probability barriers to meeting instructional goals and student well-being, and include assessments that monitor student discipline incidents, social-emotional skills, and well-being.

³⁰ Tier three interventions generally provide increased exposure (time in minutes) to quality instruction or intervention, more focused instruction matched to student need, and smaller groupings. Additionally, Tier Three interventions often are developed during individual student focused problem solving sessions. Importantly, Tier Three interventions focused on academic issues should be linked to Tier One and Two instructional content and processes and also should consider what behavioral and social-emotional supports are needed for success.

³¹ Tier Three interventions are matched to a student's specific behavior and social-emotional needs and ensure the student has access to Tier One and Tier Two supports. For a few students with complex needs, individualized interventions may involve wraparound supports across systems (e.g., mental health, education, medical, family, etc.). Individualized interventions include specific prevention and consequence-based strategies based on assessment information (i.e., Functional Behavior Assessment), and may include modifications to the classroom environment or instruction, teaching new skills, and reinforcement of desired behaviors as well as a range of supports such as mental health services.



Building District Capacity to Implement/Evaluate School-Level Implementation of MTSS

George Batsche

Sessions 19 & 40

MTSS Q&A

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*A Multi-Tiered
System of Supports*

MTSS Implementation Components

*Ensuring common language
and understanding*

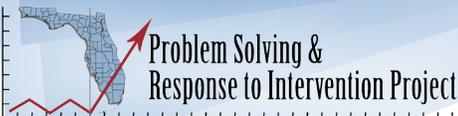


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Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Defined:

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a term used to describe an evidence-based model of schooling that uses data-based problem-solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention. The integrated instruction and intervention is delivered to students in varying intensities (multiple tiers) based on student need. “Need-driven” decision-making seeks to ensure that district resources reach the appropriate students (schools) at the appropriate levels to accelerate the performance of ALL students to achieve and/or exceed proficiency.

Many existing terms and initiatives share the common elements of data-based problem-solving to inform instruction and intervention (e.g., Positive Behavior Support [PBS], Problem Solving/Response to Intervention [RtI], Continuous Improvement Model [CIM], Lesson Study, Differentiated Accountability). Although several initiatives share this core characteristic of data-based problem-solving, the **differences** in the use of **terms** (i.e., the labels used to describe them), **who** has responsibility for implementing data-based problem-solving (e.g., general education, special education, student services), and the **language** used to describe the initiatives have often resulted in high levels of variability in the implementation of the model at state, district and school levels. These differences serve to potentially limit the impact of this model on both the integrity of implementation and on student growth.

The primary function of district leadership is to 1) ensure that a **common-language, common-understanding** exists around the rationale for and the purpose and expected outcomes of implementation, 2) clearly identify **who** has the responsibility for **what** and how those individuals will be held **accountable**, 3) ensure that district **policies** are supportive of, and not barriers to, the implementation of the model, 4) provide sufficient support (professional development, technical assistance) to ensure that the implementation plan and timelines can be achieved and 5) identify clearly the district- and school-level leaders who will have implementation expectations as part of their annual performance reviews.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components

Common Questions

1. What are the basic components of the problem-solving process?

The 4-step problem-solving model involves:

- Step 1: Define, in objective and measurable terms, the goal(s) to be attained (what is it we want students/educators/systems to know and be able to do).
- Step 2: Identify possible reasons why the desired goal(s) is not being attained.
- Step 3: Develop and implement a well-supported plan involving evidence-based strategies to attain the goal(s) (based on data that verified the reasons identified in Step 2).
- Step 4: Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in relation to stated goals.

Some important things to consider when using a data-based problem-solving model:

1. A problem-solving model provides the structure to identify, develop, implement and evaluate strategies to accelerate the performance of ALL students.
2. The use of scientifically based or evidence-based practices should occur whenever possible.
3. The effectiveness of the problem-solving process is based on both fidelity of the problem-solving process itself and fidelity in the implementation of the instruction/intervention plan.
4. The problem-solving process is applicable to all three tiers of instruction/intervention and can be used for problem-solving at the community, district, school, classroom and/or individual student levels.

2. How do we define Tiers 1, 2, and 3?

Tier 1 is what “ALL” students get in the form of instruction (academic and behavior/social-emotional) and student supports. Tier 1 focuses on the implementation of the district’s Core Curriculum and is aligned with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). Tier 1 services (time and focus) are based on the needs of the students in a particular school. Some schools require more time than other schools in particular core curriculum areas based on student demographics (readiness, language, economic factors) and student performance levels to ensure that all students reach and/or exceed state proficiency levels.

Tier 2 is what “some” students receive in addition to Tier 1 instruction. The purpose of Tier 2 instruction and supports is to improve student performance under Tier 1 performance expectations (levels and conditions of performance). Therefore, “effective” Tier 2 services occur when at least 70% of students receiving Tier 2 services (in addition to Tier 1) meet or exceed grade level/subject area Tier 1 proficiency levels (academic and/or behavior) established by the district. Tier 2 services are more “intense” (more time, narrow focus of instruction/intervention) than Tier 1. Tier 2 services can be provided by a variety of professionals (e.g., general education and/or remedial teachers, behavior specialists) in any setting (general education classroom, separate settings, home). Since the number of minutes of Tier 2 services is in addition to Tier 1, the total amount of time a student receives Tier 1 and Tier 2 services is based, fundamentally, on the number of minutes all students receive Tier 1 supports.

Tier 3 is what “few” students receive and is the most intense service level a school can provide to a student. Typically, Tier 3 services are provided to very small groups and/or individual students. The purpose of Tier 3 services is to help students overcome significant

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

barriers to learning academic and/or behavior skills required for school success. Tier 3 services require more time and a more narrow focus of instruction/intervention than Tier 2 services. Tier 3 services require effective levels of collaboration and coordination among the staff (general and specialized) providing services to the student. The expected outcome of Tier 3 services, combined with Tiers 1 and 2, is that the student(s) will achieve Tier 1 proficiency levels (academic and/or behavior) established by the district.

3. How do we differentiate Tiers 1, 2, and 3?

The tiers are differentiated by the “intensity” of the services provided. Intensity is defined as the number of minutes and the focus of the instruction/intervention. An increase in the number of minutes of exposure to quality instruction/intervention and/or the narrowing of the focus of instruction would be defined as “more intensive instruction.” Therefore, Tiers 2 and 3 are defined within the context of Tier 1. The number of minutes of instruction and the breadth of that instruction that defines Tier 1 in a school will be the basis for the criteria for Tiers 2 and 3. For instance, if ALL students receive 90 minutes of reading instruction in Tier 1 and that instruction includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, then Tier 2 would be defined as additional minutes of quality instruction and/or intervention that focuses on one or more of the five areas of reading, but not all. The “focus” would be in the area of greatest need for the student. In general, a four step process will help to define and differentiate the tiers: HOW MUCH additional time will be needed, WHAT will occur during that time, WHO is the most qualified person to deliver the “What” (instructional strategies) and WHERE will that additional instruction occur. Tier 3 will be the most “intensive” instruction the building can offer.

4. What does “instruction” look like in Tiers 1, 2, and 3?

Tier 1 The delivery of instruction in Tier 1 is focused on grade level/subject area/behavior standards using effective large and small group instructional strategies. Differentiated instruction occurs to a degree that is appropriate for the size and diverse learning abilities of the group and the instructional skills of the teacher. The number of minutes per day of Tier 1 instruction is based on district standards for what all students are expected to be exposed to for a particular content/subject area and is often determined by state guidelines or regulations. For instance, ninety minutes per day is the typical number of minutes that students in elementary grades receive instruction in literacy. Sixty minutes per day is the typical number of minutes of exposure to mathematics. The impact of Tier 1 instruction should result in approximately 80% of the students achieving grade-level expectations (e.g., proficiency) or making significant growth in the case in which the typical student is performing below grade/subject standards. Schools would be expected to develop school-wide targets and supports for the promotion of appropriate academic and social behaviors and the prevention of maladaptive or challenging behaviors based on evidence of behavior patterns and culturally competent expectations specific to their regional or local needs.

Tier 2 The delivery of Tier 2 instruction is focused on skills that pose a barrier to the acceleration of student learning. Typically, a “standard protocol” approach is used with Tier 2 instruction. Student-centered data (benchmark, progress monitoring, group diagnostic) are used to identify groups of students who share the same academic and/or

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

behavior need. The problem-solving process is used to develop evidence-based interventions to accelerate the development of those skills. The evidence-based instruction is provided to students typically in a group format. The determination of “who” provides the instruction and “where” the instruction is provided is based on a four-step process: HOW much time is needed each day to accelerate the skill development, WHAT instruction/intervention will be provided during that time, WHO will provide the instruction/intervention and WHERE will the instruction occur. No “rules” exist regarding the “who” and “where.” Therefore, Tier 2 instruction could be provided in the general education classroom by the general education teacher, in the general education classroom by a supplemental instruction teacher or outside of the general education classroom. The number of minutes of instruction must be greater than the number of minutes provided to typical students for that skill focus. Since academic engaged time (minutes per day of exposure to quality instruction) is the best predictor of rate of progress, acceleration requires minutes in addition to Tier 1. Any Tier 2 instruction provided to students must be integrated with Tier 1 content and performance expectations. Providers of Tier 2 instruction are encouraged to incorporate the instructional language and materials of Tier 1. The impact of Tier 2 instruction should result in approximately 70% or more of the students achieving grade-level expectations (e.g., proficiency) or making significant growth in the case in which the typical student is performing below grade/subject standards.

Tier 3 The delivery of Tier 3 instruction is focused on the skills that pose the greatest barrier to acceleration of student learning. Tier 3 instruction is characterized by the greatest number of minutes of instruction available in a building and the narrowest focus of that instruction. Typically, the instruction is provided to individual students or in very small groups. The same four questions are used to guide the development of the instruction (HOW MUCH, WHAT, WHO, WHERE). Instruction/intervention is developed using the four-step data-based problem-solving process applied to individual students (compared to problem-solving instruction for SKILLS in Tier 2). Data collected to inform Tier 3 instruction typically is individual student diagnostic data (academic and/or behavior). The total number of minutes per day of Tier 3 instruction is in addition to those provided in Tiers 1 and 2. If an “alternate core” approach is used, the total number of minutes is at least the equivalent of the typical number of minutes provided in Tiers 1 and 2 for that content area. Tier 3 is the most powerful instruction and is characterized by:

1. More instructional time
2. Smaller instructional groups (or individuals)
3. More precisely targeted at the appropriate level
4. Clearer and more detailed explanations are used during instruction
5. More systematic instructional sequences are used
6. More extensive opportunities for practice are provided
7. More opportunities for error correction and feedback are provided.

5. What does assessment look like in Tiers 1, 2, & 3?

Tier 1 - Assessments at Tier 1 typically include both formative and summative measures and may occur as frequently as daily or weekly such as classroom mini-skill assessments (to assist with lesson planning) to quarterly benchmark assessments and/or end-of-year summative measures such as FCAT, end-of-course exams, etc., to monitor progress of all students and evaluate effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction and supports.

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Assessments used at Tier 1 should be able to answer specific questions in order to help guide problem solving efforts at Tier 1 and should align with evidence-based instructional practices and NGSSS adopted in the State of Florida that ALL students are expected to meet (see questions 2-4 above). Some of those questions are (but not limited to):

1. What percent of students are meeting grade level expectations and/or are “on-track” for promotion/graduation?
2. Is Tier 1 instruction for each grade level content or subject area effective (i.e., approximately 80% or more students are proficient or making significant growth)?
3. How effective have improvement plans (i.e., SIP) been at increasing the growth of all students in addition to reaching higher percentages of students reaching proficiency in content and subject areas?
4. Which students demonstrate significant gaps between their current performances on Tier 1 assessments in relation to grade level expectations of performance for a given point in time?
5. What is the relationship between Tier 1 formative classroom assessments or benchmark assessments and performance on summative measures (e.g., FCAT, end-of-course exams, etc.)?

Tier 2 - Assessments at Tier 2 are likely to be varied for different student needs.

The frequency of assessments can be as low as once a month to as frequent as once a week depending on the needs of the small group of students and the assessment parameters (e.g., FAIR vs. CBM). In addition, assessments of behavior at Tier 2 may occur each period or each day. Just as with Tier 1, Assessments at Tier 2 should be able to answer specific questions such as (but not limited to):

1. Which students require supplemental instruction or practice based on an analysis of their current needs in relation to Tier 1 standards of performance?
2. How should students receiving supplemental instruction be grouped together for small-group instruction (e.g., based on skill/content/subject area of need)?
3. Which students will be provided with a standard protocol approach to address common and recurring concerns for which there are ample evidence-based options for intervention/instruction?
4. Which students will need modified interventions or more in-depth problem solving (particularly problem analysis) in order to ensure an appropriate match between the instruction/service supports and the students’ needs?
5. Which students are demonstrating a positive response to the supplemental instruction/intervention being provided to them? Which are demonstrating moderate to poor responses to instruction/intervention (remember to check fidelity first for those not progressing)?
6. Are the majority of students within a given supplemental instructional group demonstrating a positive response to the instruction (i.e., is Tier 2 effective)?
7. What modifications are needed to increase positive student responses to instruction/intervention at Tier 2?
8. Which students may need more intensive services? And, which students may be ready to either address other areas of need or transition back to receiving Tier 1 instruction only?

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

9. Are students who are demonstrating progress at Tier 2 based on progress monitoring data also demonstrating progress on their Tier 1 assessments? If not, why not?

Tier 3 - Assessments at Tier 3 are intended to be very frequent and assess more micro-level skills to address significant learning challenges or barriers to reaching success at Tiers 2 and/or Tier 1. The frequency of assessments used at Tier 3 for monitoring progress should be based on the intensity of needs of the student and matched accordingly. A general rule of thumb: the more a student is behind Tier 1 expectations of performance and/or the less responsive a student is to previous interventions attempted, the more frequent and varied the assessments should be to ensure matched instructional supports to “catch-up” to grade level expectations. Many of the questions posed at Tier 2 are applicable to Tier 3, except the focus at Tier 3 is typically focused at the individual student level.

Additional questions to ask:

1. Is the student appropriately matched to the intervention plan(s) developed for the student?
2. Does problem-solving address the “whole student” in that likely both academic and behavioral needs are significant?
3. If the student is demonstrating a positive response to the intervention(s), then is the student also demonstrating improvements in Tier 1 assessment performance? If not, why not? What next goals/needs should be targeted? Does the student need Tier 3 services anymore (they may still need Tier 2 services)?
4. If the student is not progressing, is fidelity a concern? Does this student need a long-term (2 or more years) plan for “catching-up” to grade level standards (including transition plans between grades)?

6. What is “fidelity” and how is it assessed?

There are three basic types of “fidelity” for districts and schools to support and/or integrate into instruction and intervention:

1. Fidelity of implementing the critical components of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS);
2. Fidelity of using the problem-solving process across all three tiers; and
3. Fidelity of implementing evidence-based instruction and interventions matched to specific need(s).

The first type of fidelity (District MTSS system) requires that the district and school(s) have provided the basic elements of the MTSS infrastructure. This includes the provision of professional development and support (technical assistance/coaching), data support (data sources and technology), leadership support (policies, expectations and evaluation) and program evaluation (on-going data collection to ensure integrity of implementation and support). Assessment tools have been developed in Florida to assess levels of implementation and educator perceptions of the fidelity of the MTSS system. These tools include (among others) the Self-Assessment of Problem-Solving Implementation (SAPSI), the Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ), the PBS Implementation Checklist (PIC), and the Benchmarks of Advanced Tiers (BAT) that can be used to determine implementation across buildings, educator perceptions (beliefs, skills, practices, and satisfaction) and a district

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

Needs Assessment Process. More information about these tools and processes can be found at www.floridarti.usf.edu and www.flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu.

The second type of fidelity focuses on the degree to which the four-step data-based problem-solving process is implemented appropriately. This is important because the development of instruction and interventions is based on this process. If the process is flawed, then the instruction and interventions developed as a result of the process will be flawed. Tools to assess the integrity of the problem-solving process are available at www.floridarti.usf.edu. These tools are designed to be used concurrently with the problem-solving process (Critical Component Checklists) and to assess the degree to which “products” contain critical elements of the problem-solving process.

The final type of fidelity focuses on the degree to which instruction and intervention are delivered in the manner intended and the degree to which instruction and intervention is integrated across the tiers of service delivery. This type of fidelity includes both “sufficiency” (the amount of the service delivered) as well as integrity (the degree to which the service was delivered as intended). In Tier one, the integrity of instruction focuses on the degree to which core instruction is delivered in the way intended, based on lesson study (or lesson planning), the presence of effective instructional strategies and the degree to which those instructional strategies are appropriate to the skill level and demographic characteristics of the students (language, abilities). Typically, the fidelity of Tier 1 is assessed through the use of walkthroughs by principals and peers and/or direct observation of the critical elements of the instructional process. Tools such as the Benchmarks of Quality and PBS Implementation Checklist allow for measurement of the fidelity of Tier 1 behavior supports and instruction. The sufficiency of instruction in Tier 1 is based on the degree to which teachers implement core instruction consistent with the time expectations for instruction in specific content areas each day (e.g., literacy, 90 minutes). Integrity in Tiers 2 and 3 focuses on a structured support system for Tier 2/3 providers. This system consists of regular meetings to determine student response to the intervention, barriers to the delivery of the intervention, and technical assistance to deliver the intervention as intended. Sufficiency is measured through the use of documentation templates that measure the degree to which the intervention was provided as intended (e.g., number of minutes or percentage of plan components) and the type of intervention, to name a few. For behavior, the Benchmarks of Advanced Tiers (BAT) can also assist with monitoring the fidelity of instruction/intervention that is provided at Tier 2/3.

7. How do we ensure fidelity of instructional/intervention services across the Tiers?

There are many strategies that can be used at the state, district, and school levels to increase the probability that appropriate levels of fidelity occur when designing and implementing evidence-based instruction and interventions for students. Identifying, promoting, and training school leaders and educators about evidence-based instructional practices that all students receive can result in maximum effectiveness of Tier 1. State, district, and school leaders should provide effective leadership and professional development to align and integrate multiple initiatives, and streamline procedures associated with supporting the use of a data-based problem-solving process with fidelity. Ensuring fidelity of educators’ use of the problem-solving process and implementation of evidence-based practices can be achieved by ensuring alignment between state, district, and school missions through development of MTSS implementation plans. State, district,

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

and school leaders can also use MTSS implementation data at each respective level to identify gaps in infrastructure or supports needed to sustain efficient and effective use of evidence-based practices at the school and classroom levels. Professional development opportunities should also be varied and designed to directly support educators on how to assess fidelity at each tier and utilize identified strategies for ensuring fidelity of implementing evidence-based instruction. For example, leaders can promote the importance of, strategies for, and assessment of fidelity in the conversations of Professional Learning Communities at the school and district levels. State or district leaders may also include development of policies that require documentation of fidelity as part of the data-based problem-solving process, and dissemination of specific methods that can be used at the building level to provide support for fidelity of instruction and intervention.

8. What are “decision-rules” and how are they connected with assessing effectiveness of instruction/intervention?

Decision rules are used to determine the degree to which instruction and/or intervention has been effective at achieving the goals identified in Step 1 of the problem-solving process. Three levels of response to instruction/intervention are used to make the determination of effectiveness: positive, questionable and poor. A positive response to instruction/intervention is demonstrated by a significant improvement in the rate of student performance, such that the performance goal will be reached within a reasonable period of time (based on goal setting in the Problem Identification step of the data-based problem-solving process). A questionable response to instruction/intervention is demonstrated by improvement in the rate of student performance, but the level of that rate of improvement is less than desired to achieve the performance goal. A poor response to instruction/intervention is demonstrated by no change in the rate of student performance following implementation of the instruction/intervention and/or a drop in the rate of student performance. The degree to which the instruction/intervention was implemented with fidelity must be addressed prior to making any decisions about the continuation, modification, or a complete change in instruction/intervention based on the type of student response to instruction/intervention.

Initial recommendations regarding the provision of instruction/intervention can be aligned with student response to instruction/intervention. These recommendations provide a way in which decisions made in different school settings within a district can be consistent. The recommendation following a positive response to instruction/interventions is to continue with the instruction/intervention and the regular progress-monitoring schedule. If a response to instruction/intervention is questionable, the recommendation is to increase the intensity of the instruction/intervention (e.g., time, focus) for a specified period of time and to increase the rate of progress monitoring (if appropriate). When the response is poor, the recommendation is to return to the data-based problem-solving process to develop a new intervention.

9. What are the critical elements of the district and school infrastructure that must be in place to implement and sustain MTSS?

The following are critical elements that should be in place to efficiently and effectively implement and sustain a multi-tiered system of supports across a district:

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

1. Effective, actively involved, and resolute leadership that frequently provides visible connections between a MTSS framework with district & school mission statements and organizational improvement efforts.
2. Alignment of policies and procedures across classroom, grade, building, district, and state levels.
3. Ongoing efficient facilitation and accurate use of a problem-solving process to support planning, implementing, and evaluating effectiveness of services.
4. Strong, positive, and ongoing collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders who provide education services or who otherwise would benefit from increases in student outcomes.
5. Comprehensive, efficient, and user-friendly data-systems for supporting decision-making at all levels from the individual student level up to the aggregate district level.
6. Sufficient availability of coaching supports to assist school team and staff problem-solving efforts.
7. Ongoing data-driven professional development activities that align to core student goals and staff needs.
8. Communicating outcomes with stakeholders and celebrating success frequently.

10. What are the skills and activities that best define the role of “coaching” within a MTSS?

In the context of implementing and sustaining a MTSS at the school level, the following skills are needed to be available in the school (either provided by an individual “MTSS Coach” or as a set of activities and supports provided by the school-based leadership team) and sustained by state and district PD efforts:

1. **Demonstrating effective interpersonal communication skills** that build trust and relationships among all stakeholders to support implementation and use of a MTSS model and the problem-solving process with fidelity.
2. **Using multiple types and sources of data** accurately to inform problem-solving efforts at either the organizational (i.e., solving implementation problems) or student levels (i.e., solving student learning problems).
3. **Disseminating content knowledge** to stakeholders about:
 - a. Organizational change/Implementation processes
 - b. Three-tiered model of service delivery
 - c. 4-step problem-solving model
 - d. Knowledge about evidence-based instructional practices and curriculum in academic content areas
 - e. Knowledge about evidence-based instructional practices and curriculum in behavior content areas
4. **Facilitating team-based collaborative problem-solving processes.**
5. **Supporting leadership team and staff capacity** to sustain a MTSS independently effectively, & efficiently over time.
6. **Providing adult/staff training and technical assistance** in accordance with professional development “best practices” and in alignment with FLDOE professional development standards.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Implementation Components Common Questions

7. **Assessing the impact of coaching activities and supports** on student & staff performance and outcomes.

11. What are the sets of skills required of a principal and what activities best define the role of a principal?

Leadership is an integral part to successful implementation of large-scale innovations and the effective management of change. The building principal is critical to the implementation of any process introduced at the school level. The general leadership skills of building principals have been identified through school based research over many years. These general leadership skills include: effective communication, facilitation of relationships and a positive, collaborative climate, inclusion of school and community based stakeholders, and a focus on celebrating positive outcomes. The implementation of a MTSS system requires these, and additional skills, to ensure consistent implementation of the process and positive student outcomes. It is important that principals receive professional development and support to develop and maintain these leadership skills. In addition, it is important that the district leadership team creates and supports a professional learning community (PLC) for principals implementing MTSS. Building Principal Leadership skills specific to the implementation of MTSS include:

1. Models a problem-solving process: understands the 4-step process and uses the process to guide staff problem solving.
2. Communicates and reinforces the expectation for data-based decision-making: guides the school staff to frame their decisions within the context of student or other relevant data.
3. Communicates and reinforces the expectation that all Tier 2/3 services will integrate Tier 1 standards for performance, instructional materials and practices to facilitate the transfer of student performance from Tiers 2/3 to Tier 1.
4. Schedules “Data Days” throughout the year to ensure that instruction/interventions are informed by student data.
5. Facilitates the development of instructional schedules based upon student needs
6. Ensures that instructional/intervention support is provided to all staff.
7. Ensures that instruction/intervention “sufficiency” and the documentation of that sufficiency occur for all students receiving Tiers 2/3 support.
8. Establishes a system of communicating student outcomes across the professional staff and with students and their parents.
9. Creates frequent opportunities to celebrate and communicate success.

12. What are the most important or highest priority elements of a program evaluation model?

Program evaluation should both inform how MTSS is implemented and provide information on the practices that relate to improvements in student academic, behavioral, and social-emotional outcomes. Data collection and analysis should be guided by critical questions key stakeholders have about school and district functioning. Examples of critical questions to ask include:

1. How much consensus is there among educators for the implementation of MTSS?
2. Do school and district staff possess the knowledge and skills to implement MTSS?

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3. To what extent are educators implementing evidence-based instruction and intervention across grade-levels, content areas, and tiers with fidelity?
4. What steps of problem-solving are being implemented with fidelity?
5. How are students performing compared to grade-level expectations?
6. What other factors may be contributing to MTSS implementation and student outcomes?

Asking questions such as these allows key stakeholders to prioritize what data to collect and develop methods and procedures for gathering the information. A variety of methods, tools, and procedures exist for collecting program evaluation data regarding MTSS implementation that can be adapted for local use once the critical questions to be answered are identified.

13. What are some likely reasons that implementation succeeds or fails at either the district or school levels?

Many reasons exist for the failure of a systems change effort, such as MTSS. Some of the most important of those reasons are:

1. **Failure to achieve consensus** - Until and unless the district/school staff understand and agree with the need for the change and believe that they have the skills (or will have the support to attain them), a system change effort is likely to fail.
2. **School culture is ignored** - Every district and school has a history that informs its practices, values, and beliefs. MTSS is a framework that organizes implementation processes, not a prescription. Each district/school must incorporate those beliefs, values, and practices into the development of its implementation plan.
3. **Lack of training and support** - The implementation of MTSS involves the use of existing and new skill sets and practices. The implementation of MTSS will be facilitated by a strong system of professional development and support (technical assistance and coaching) and hindered significantly by the absence of such a system.
4. **Lack of feedback to implementers to support continued implementation** - The implementation of any systems change process can be anxiety producing, particularly when that change process occurs concurrently with the on-going requirements of daily work. The frequent feedback of implementation data along with student outcome data to the staff will enable district and school leaders to provide specific staff support to sustain implementation momentum.
5. **Unrealistic expectations of initial success** - System change processes often are implemented in a time of crisis where district and/or community leaders expect immediate results. Although expectations for quick success are understood, expecting too much too soon will result in lack of goal attainment and present a real threat to sustaining the energy and morale of the implementers.
6. **Failure to measure and analyze progress** - The frequent use and reporting of data will demonstrate that progress is being made and that the rate of progress is consistent with initial expectations. Unless this occurs, unrealistic expectations likely will create the opportunity for failure.

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7. **Participants not involved in planning** - Systems change involves the lives of everyone in the system undergoing that change. MTSS cannot be implemented successfully using a “top-down” method. It is critical that all stakeholders are involved from the beginning to help contribute to and inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of the MTSS process.