Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Handbook

Academic | Behavioral | Social-Emotional Supports

Acknowledgements

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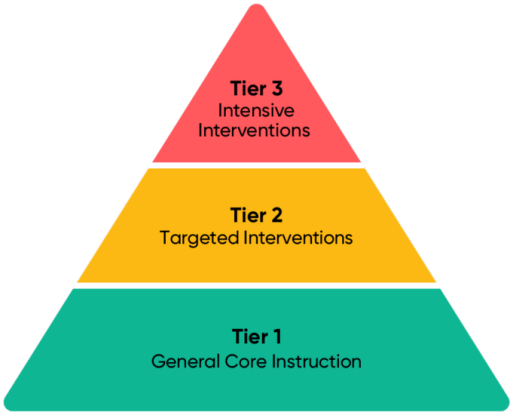
1. MTSS Overview, Core Beliefs, and Framework

MTSS is a proactive, data-driven framework designed to meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students through layered levels of support. The framework emphasizes prevention, early intervention, equitable access to high-quality instruction, evidence-based practices, and fidelity of implementation.



Core Beliefs and Guiding Principles

- All students can learn and achieve.
- Early intervention improves outcomes.
- Data drives instruction and intervention.
- Collaboration among educators, families, and communities is essential.
- Equity and inclusion are central to all practices.

2. Tiered Continuum: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3

Tier	Students	Core purpose	Monitoring / team action
Tier 1: Universal/Core	All students	High-quality standards aligned instruction, schoolwide PBIS, SEL, differentiation, and universal screening.	Review universal data and adjust core instruction and systems.
Tier 2: Targeted/Supplemental	Students needing additional support	Small-group, evidence-based intervention aligned to a specific academic, behavioral, or social-emotional need.	Progress monitor every 2-3 weeks when appropriate; review plan and family communication.
Tier 3: Intensive/Individualized	Students with significant or persistent need	Individualized intervention with increased frequency/duration, smaller group size, and team problem solving.	Progress monitor weekly/biweekly as appropriate; consider SAP and further evaluation when data support is needed.

Decision Rule

Supports are layered and fluid. Movement across tiers should be based on student need, intervention response, fidelity of implementation, and team review.

Problem-Solving Cycle

Step	Question	Documentation
Define	What concern is supported by data?	Screening data, teacher data, observations, attendance/discipline, and work samples.
Analyze	What skill, context, instruction, or environment may affect performance?	Team notes and review of Tier 1 systems and fidelity.
Plan	What intervention matches the need, and who will deliver it?	Intervention plan with baseline, goal, frequency, provider, tool, and review date.
Implement	Was the intervention delivered as designed?	Fidelity checklist and service/progress monitoring log.
Review	Is the student meeting the goal or needing a change in support?	Progress summary, team decision, family communication, and next review date.

3. MTSS Teams and Role Clarity

Team / role	Primary responsibilities
Administration	Review building-wide data; monitor school improvement plans, non-negotiables, and fidelity checks; identify and address policies, systems, and practices that influence outcomes.
Coaches and specialists	Support curriculum and MTSS implementation; support lesson planning, instruction, assessment, literacy planning, and teacher-led professional development.
MTSS Core Team / SAP Team / Teaching Team	Assign and monitor evidence-based individual supports; record baseline, goals, exit criteria, and progress; recommend instruction adjustments; communicate with families and teachers; determine whether further testing should be considered.

- Bring current data and implementation notes to meetings.
- Begin with strengths and Tier 1 considerations before intensifying support.
- Document decisions, owners, timelines, family communication, and review dates.
- Use data to continue, fade, intensify, or change support.

4. Elementary MTSS Procedures and Data Review

Academic Supports

- Evidence-based curricula and differentiated instruction.
- Intervention blocks are built into schedules.
- Reading/math intervention programs aligned with student need.
- Benchmark assessments at beginning, middle, and end of year testing windows.

Area	Elementary / K-5 data examples
ELA	Acadience Reading; PASI; PSI; CDT for grade 3.
Math	Acadience Math K-2; HMH Growth Measure; Spring Math grades 3-5; CDT for grade 3.

Elementary Flow

- Analyze Tier 1 and universal screening data to adjust instruction and identify grade-wide needs.
- Use the Elementary Tier 1 Screening and Intervention Form (SIRF) to document concerns and plan supports.
- For Tier 2, the classroom teacher provides intervention, documents progress and communicates with the parent/guardian.
- Review data after an appropriate intervention period and determine whether support should continue, adjust, fade, or intensify.
- For Tier 3, the intervention specialist implements the plan as determined by the team, with continued family communication and data review.
- If progress remains insufficient, gather data and documents for SAP referral and team review.

5. Secondary MTSS Procedures and Data Review

Academic Supports

- Evidence-based curricula and differentiated instruction.
- Intervention blocks built into the schedule, including TLT, where applicable.
- Reading/math intervention programs aligned with student needs.
- Beginning, middle, and end-of-year universal screening review data meetings.

Grade band	Secondary data examples
Grades 6-8	ALEKS, CDT, Keystones, HMH Growth Measure.
Grades 9-12	ALEKS, IXL, CDT, Keystones.

Secondary Flow

- Review Tier 1 and universal screening data to identify grade-wide needs in academics, attendance, and/or discipline.
- Use SIRF/data review forms to identify students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.
- The teacher/team identifies interventions and resources and documents the intervention plan.
- Tier 2/Tier 3 data are reviewed to determine whether support should continue, fade, change, or intensify.
- For individual concerns, the counselor sends the SAP Teacher Input Form and gathers data for team review.
- The SAP Team may recommend a teacher meeting, family meeting, new strategies, referrals, or further evaluation when warranted.

6. Behavior Supports: PBIS, CICO, DBRC, and Social Skills

Behavior interventions should be delivered in an instructional format, similar to academic intervention. Strong Tier 1 behavior systems, explicit teaching of expectations, reinforcement, and consistent routines provide the foundation for Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.

Support	Key features / benefits
PBIS / Tier 1	Clearly defined expectations, schoolwide teaching of behavior, positive reinforcement systems, and SEL/social skills instruction for all students.
Check-In/Check-Out (CICO)	Positive adult contact, daily goal setting, feedback, reflection, and connection to school-wide expectations.
Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC)	Structured feedback, progress-monitoring data, home-school communication, goal setting, and support for self-management.
Social Skills Instruction	Direct instruction in communication, self-monitoring, problem-solving, and goal setting, with practice opportunities in a supportive setting.

Daily Routine Snapshot

CICO morning check-in	CICO end-of-day check-out	DBRC feedback
Review goals, set positive tone, check supplies, distribute DBRC.	Review day, collect DBRC, discuss strategies, record data, send positive message home.	Teacher gives discreet, specific feedback at designated times and records the rating using the DBRC scale.

7. Logistics, Fidelity Checks, and Implementation Tools

Guiding Questions Before Implementation

- How many students will receive Tier 2 support?
- How many CICO mentors are needed?
- Is there time in the master schedule for intervention delivery?
- Which staff members have the qualities needed to provide behavior interventions?
- When and how will staff receive training?
- How will fidelity, data entry, and family communication be monitored?

CICO Fidelity Checklist

Check	Morning routine	Check	Afternoon routine
[ ]	Occurs before the school day begins.	[ ]	Occurs at the end of the day.
[ ]	Mentor asks about morning/previous evening.	[ ]	Mentor asks how the day went.
[ ]	DBRC is distributed and goals reviewed.	[ ]	Student turns in DBRC.
[ ]	Skills and strategies are reviewed.	[ ]	Scores and missing data are reviewed.
[ ]	Supplies are checked.	[ ]	High scores, choices, and needs are discussed.
[ ]	Student is sent to class with positive message.	[ ]	Data are recorded and student is sent home with positive message.

DBRC Feedback Checklist

Check	Teacher feedback behavior
[ ]	Teacher requests the form from the student.
[ ]	Teacher states the observed behavior and records the number using the DBRC scale.
[ ]	If behavior is below the goal, teacher states the goal and behavior needed to meet it.
[ ]	If behavior meets the goal, teacher provides specific positive acknowledgement.
[ ]	Teacher speaks discreetly using an instructional tone.

8. Appendices: Staff-Ready Templates

Appendix A: Student Support Request Snapshot

Field	Staff entry
Student / Grade / Teacher	
Primary concern	Academic / behavior / social-emotional / attendance / other
Data reviewed	Benchmark, progress monitoring, classroom assessment, discipline, attendance, observation, work samples, family input
Current Tier 1 supports attempted	
Requested team action	Review data / plan Tier 2 / plan Tier 3 / SAP consideration / family meeting

Appendix B: Intervention Plan Template

Element	Plan detail
Target skill or behavior	
Baseline data	
Measurable goal and exit criteria	
Intervention and materials	
Provider / location / schedule	
Progress-monitoring tool and frequency	
Family communication plan	
Review date and team decision	

Appendix C: Progress Monitoring Review

Review question	Evidence / notes
Was the intervention delivered with fidelity?	
Is the student making adequate progress toward the goal?	
What data show improvement, no change, or regression?	
Do supports continue, fade, intensify, or change?	
What is the next review date and owner?	

Appendix D: SAP Referral Packet Checklist

Check	Packet item
[ ]	Completed SAP referral/teacher input form.
[ ]	Universal screening and progress monitoring data.
[ ]	Intervention plans, dates, providers, and fidelity notes.
[ ]	Attendance, discipline, and/or behavior logs when relevant.
[ ]	Parent/guardian communication documentation.
[ ]	Work samples, observations, or other relevant evidence.

Appendix E: Family Communication Log

Date	Contact method	Summary	Next step

Annual Review Reminder

This handbook will be reviewed annually with district/building leadership and MTSS/SAP representatives to update assessment names, staff roles, data links, graphics, and building-specific procedures.