

Kankakee School District #111

One Community, One District, One Vision for ALL Children!

Multi-Tiered System of Support Manual

Sept. 15 2015

Draft

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	4
What is a Multi-Tiered System of Support?	5
Why MTSS?	5
What MTSS is NOT	5
MTSS and Other Educational Initiatives	6
MTSS and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)	7
Essential Components	8
Multi-Level Instructional System	9
Tier 1	9
Tier 2	11
Tier 3	12
Assessments	14
Screening/Benchmarking	14
Diagnostics	14
Progress Monitoring	15
Summative Evaluations	15
Data-Based Decision Making Guidelines	16
Instructional Integrity	22
Parent Involvement and Communication	27
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	30
Glossary	36
MTSS Resources	40
Appendix	41

Acknowledgements

The following members of the District-Level Leadership Team contributed to the development of this manual:

Jennifer Hering, Student Support Services Supervisor

George Harris, King Middle School Principal

Cheryl O’Leary, Taft Principal

Jennifer Way, Mark Twain Principal

Chuck Hensley, Kankakee Junior High School Principal

Betty Peters-Lambert, Kennedy Middle Grade School

Cynthia Veronda, Steuben Principal

Sissy O’Connor, Edison & Aroma Park Principal

Deb Dilks, Montessori Principal

Nathan Ortman, District Learning Partner

Neal Grimes, District Learning Partner

Patricia Ferris, District Learning Partner

Debbie Tamez, District Learning Partner

Jaime Davis, District Learning Partner

Esther Young-Tate, District Learning Partner

Dr. Patricia Graczyk, University of Illinois at Chicago

The District-Level MTSS Team would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Patricia Graczyk for her ongoing support and many contributions to this manual.

Introduction

Kankakee School District 111 staff believes that increased student learning requires the consistent practice of providing high quality instruction matched to student needs. In a high-quality educational environment, student academic and behavioral needs are identified and monitored continuously by using documented student performance data to make instructional decisions. Unique needs are addressed, parents are informed and involved, and all staff work toward the common goal of raising achievement. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), formerly known as Response to Instruction/Intervention or RTI, is a general education framework through which a school creates a high-quality educational environment by screening the needs of all students; differentiating core instruction for all students; applying research-based interventions to address specific needs of students; and continually monitoring progress to ensure success. MTSS is a systemic, continuous improvement framework in which data-based problem-solving and decision making is practiced across all levels and tiers of the educational system to support students. High quality education requires collaborative efforts from all district staff, including administrators, general educators, special educators, bilingual/English Learner (EL) educators, paraprofessionals and parents to facilitate that process.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview for the MTSS practices in Kankakee School District 111 and explain the essential components of MTSS. This MTSS guidance document is designed to assist parents and district staff in understanding MTSS, its usefulness and value, and how it can be implemented. It is not intended to be a substitute for training but rather to increase understanding of the various aspects of the district's MTSS framework.

What is a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)?

MTSS integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavioral problems. With MTSS schools use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based instruction and interventions, adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on the student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning or other disabilities.

Why MTSS?

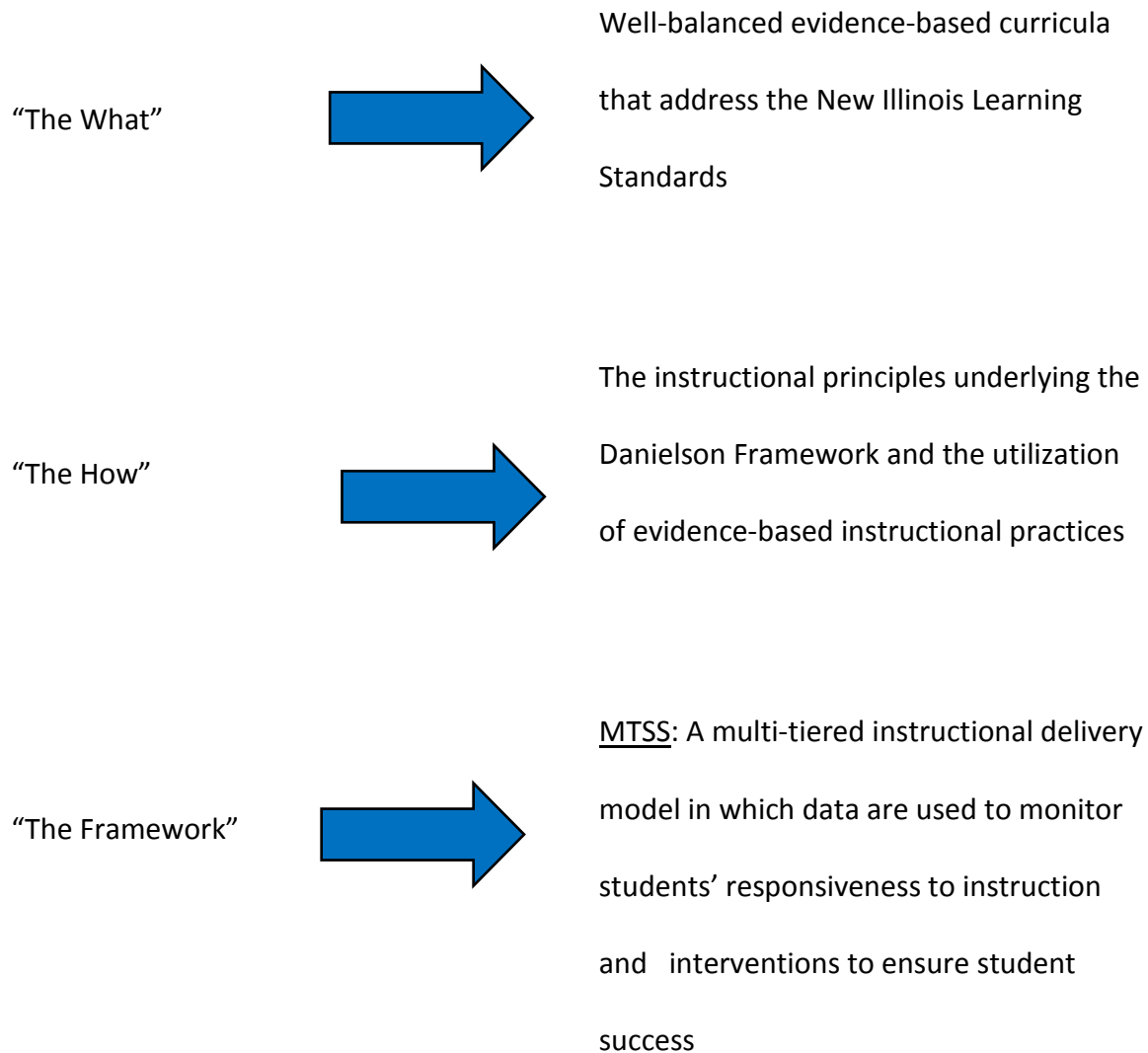
MTSS is built on the idea of intervening early to identify the deficits and maximize the effectiveness of grade-level curriculum and instruction. It is not an initiative or program, but rather a framework for providing high-quality curriculum and instruction to all students and additional intervention support for some students. The National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI) states that comprehensive MTSS implementation will contribute to more meaningful identification of learning and behavioral problems, improve instructional quality, provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, and assist with the identification of learning and other disabilities.

What MTSS is NOT

MTSS is not a tutoring service. Decisions to provide students with supplemental instruction are based on educational need and data, not just staff or parental requests. While staff and parents can provide their own data and input to delineate the educational needs of their students, students are considered for supplemental instruction based on educational need and multiple sources of reliable and valid data. MTSS also is not a way to speed up the process of making a student eligible for special education services. While MTSS data are used by special education diagnostic staff when determining if a student has an educational disability, it is strongly suggested that school teams have made every effort possible to provide research-based instruction to address student needs prior to determining that there is an educational disability. Finally, MTSS is not a stand-alone program in a school that is separate from other educational initiatives. *MTSS is the underlying framework* for other initiatives that aim to ensure student academic and behavioral success.

MTSS and Other Educational Initiatives

How does MTSS relate to other major educational initiatives like the New Illinois Learning Standards and the Danielson framework? The best way to summarize its relationship is to think in terms of “the what, the how, and the framework.”

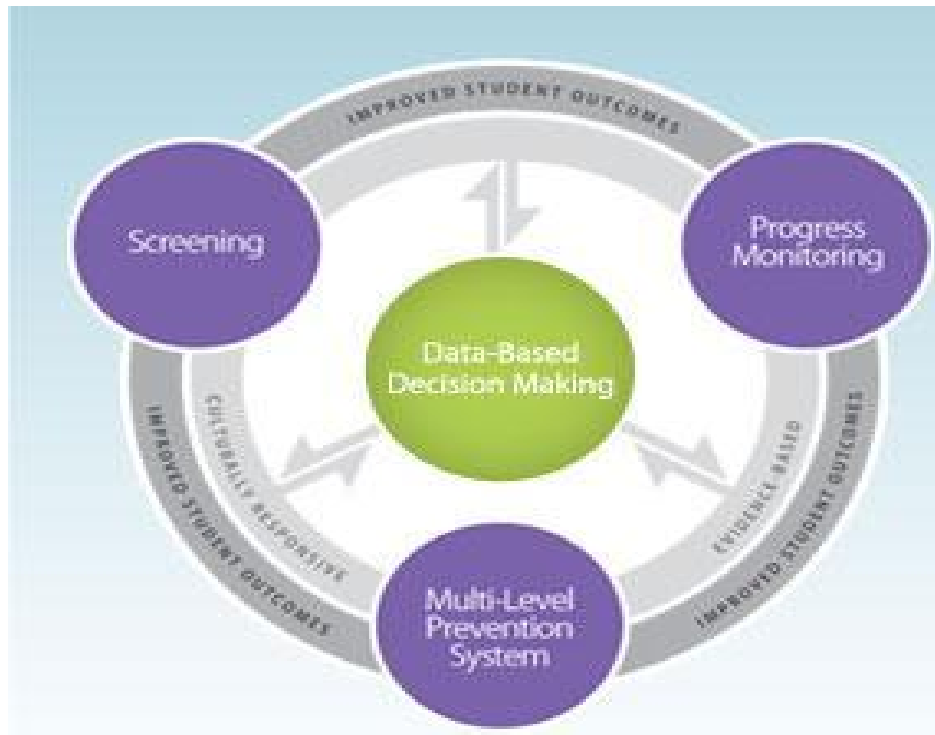


MTSS and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS utilizes a multi-tiered framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students.

The logic, tenets, and principles of PBIS are the same as those represented in MTSS with an academic focus (e.g., universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, data-based decision making, implementation fidelity, evidence-based interventions). Literacy and numeracy implementation frameworks are examples of the application of MTSS for academic behavior, and PBIS is an example of the application of MTSS for social behavior.

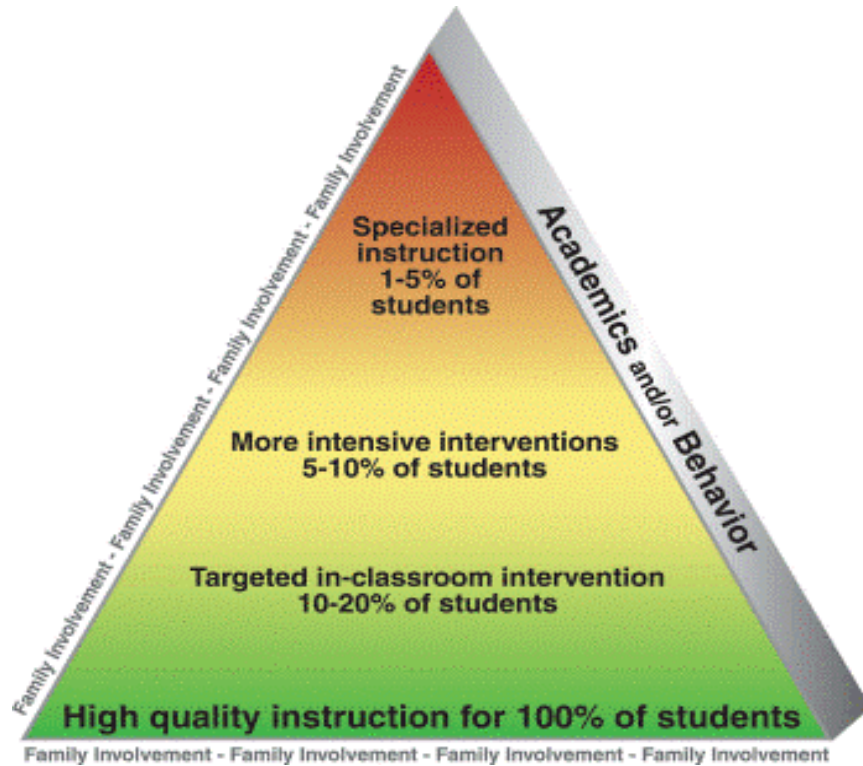
Four Essential Components of MTSS



1. A school-wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing school failure is established.
2. *Universal screening* (benchmarking) is a process that occurs three times during the school year. It involves administering brief assessments to all students in the Fall, Winter, and Spring of each school year.
3. *Progress monitoring* is used to assess students' performance over time, to quantify student rates of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, to evaluate instructional effectiveness, and, for students who are least responsive to effective instruction, to formulate effective individualized programming.
4. *Data-based decision making* for instruction is the process used to determine appropriate instruction for all students and movement within the multi-level system. It also helps determine when disability identification (in accordance with Illinois state law) needs to be conducted.

Multi-Level Instructional System

A rigorous prevention system provides for the early identification of learning or behavioral challenges and timely interventions for students who are at risk for long-term learning problems. This system includes three levels of intensity and prevention, which represent a continuum of supports.



Tier 1

Tier 1 is typically represented by the “green” area of the MTSS triangle. At Tier 1 high quality core instruction should meet the instructional needs of most students. Instruction at the least intensive but broadest level of the MTSS framework typically includes the core curriculum and the instructional practices used for all students. At Tier 1 the school-wide discipline system emphasizes school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings such as hallways, restrooms, etc.

Tier 1 Components

Core Curriculum

- A well-balanced evidence-based curriculum aligned with the New Illinois Learning Standards
- An agreed upon evidence-based common approach to discipline, i.e., School-wide PBIS

Appropriate Instruction

- Differentiated instruction of academic content (e.g., flexible grouping, learning centers, peer tutoring)
- Accommodations to ensure all students have access to core instruction
- Culturally and linguistically inclusive
- Teaching expectations and rules in identified settings
- Effective classroom management practices

Universal Screening (Benchmarking)

- Determines whether students are performing at grade-appropriate levels
- Allows school personnel to intervene early
- Informs school personnel of the effectiveness of the core curriculum

Feedback and encouragement

- Frequent positive feedback on academic and behavioral performance
- Reinforcement of appropriate performance

The District Learning Partners may assist teachers in bolstering their core curriculum by providing support with any of the above four components. This may involve assisting with the implementation of classroom management techniques, conducting observations, providing feedback and encouragement, interpreting data to inform instructional decisions, assisting teachers in creating student groups according to need. DLPs may provide technical support for universal screening (benchmarking) and progress monitoring.

Tier 2

Tier 2 is typically represented by the “yellow” portion of the MTSS triangle. Tier 2 interventions are provided *in addition to* core academic and behavioral instruction and are matched to the student’s deficit area(s). Tier 2 Interventions are designed to be quick and efficient, and can be used with small groups of students as soon as their needs are identified. Tier 2 supports are an important part of the continuum of MTSS support needed in schools and can often be implemented by classroom teachers or other general education personnel. Student progress at Tier 2 is typically reviewed after a minimum of 6 weeks. The purpose of Tier 2 support is to “close the gap” between the identified student and his/her grade level peers.

Students may be identified as needing Tier 2 support through the universal screening process and/or consideration of other relevant data. Progress monitoring of students receiving Tier 2 interventions is conducted on a frequent basis (i.e., at least biweekly) to determine intervention effectiveness. If data indicate an intervention is not successful, the MTSS team will make appropriate changes and continue to monitor student progress.

Tier 2 Components

Academic Interventions

- Research-based interventions matched to student’s targeted deficit area(s)
- Documented attendance and progress monitoring data
- Small groups (5-8) that meet for a minimum of thirty minutes, three to five times a week, or as recommended by the intervention developer

Behavior Interventions

- Research-based interventions
- Documented attendance and progress monitoring data
- Consistent with school-wide expectations
- Behavioral interventions include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Check-In/Check-Out
 - SAIG- Social Academic Instructional Groups
 - Mentoring
 - Brief Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs)

Academic and Behavioral Interventions

- Continuous availability
- Student progress documented and monitored throughout the course of the intervention
- Progress reports sent home to parents during intervention period

Student responsiveness to Tier 2 interventions is also a way of identifying students in need of more intensive, individualized intervention. When students are not responding adequately to Tier 2 support, Tier 3 support may be considered by the team.

Tier 3

Tier 3 is often depicted as the “red” portion of the MTSS triangle. At Tier 3 interventions are provided *in addition to* core academic and behavioral instruction, and are more intensive, individualized, and matched to the student’s deficit area(s). Students receive Tier 3 support if, as mentioned above, they do not respond adequately to Tier 2 support or have such intensive needs that Tier 3 support is warranted without a trial of Tier 2 support. At the Tier 3 level, the student could be involved in a more intensive version of the intervention program used in Tier 2 (e.g., longer sessions, smaller group size, more frequent sessions, more frequent progress monitoring) or an intensive intervention specific to Tier 3. In other words, Tier 3 supports can be provided at different levels of intensity, depending on the student’s level of need.

The goal of intensive/individual support is to diminish problem behavior, to increase the student's adaptive skills and/or to increase academic functioning. As is true with Tier 2 support, the purpose of Tier 3 support is to “close the gap” between the targeted student and his/her grade level peers. Tier 3 supports should meet the needs of students with the most intensive and/or persistent problems in the most effective and efficient manner and in the least restrictive setting possible. Tier 3 student progress should be monitored frequently (i.e., at least weekly) using the appropriate progress monitoring tool.

Tier 3 Components

Academic Interventions

- Research-based interventions matched to student’s targeted skill deficit area(s)
- Intervention groups of five or less, five times per week, for at least 30 minutes per session, unless specified otherwise by the intervention developer
- Attendance and progress monitoring data documented on the Intervention Log

- Student performance charted regularly by staff providing interventions
- Progress reviewed regularly by the School Leadership Team
- Progress reports sent to parents every grading period (quarterly)
- Interventions and their duration documented on the Intervention Log

Behavioral Interventions

- Intensive/Individual Supports involve a process of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that investigates in greater detail why a behavior is occurring. The FBA is utilized in the development of a positive behavior intervention plan (BIP) that includes more intensive research-based interventions, closer and more detailed progress monitoring, and more staff time and resources dedicated to problem solving for individual students.
- The Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) should be comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies, including a wide range of options such as:
 - Guidance or instruction for the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors
 - Some rearrangement of the antecedent environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors encouraged
 - A focus on the consequences or events that immediately follow the behavior
 - Procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing the plan as necessary
 - In some cases, the plan may also include emergency procedures to ensure safety and rapid de-escalation of severe episodes

Assessments

Various types of assessments are necessary to ensure student success. These include assessments for benchmarking/screening, diagnostics, progress monitoring, and summative evaluations. It is essential that these assessments are reliable and valid for the purposes for which they are used. A brief description of each type of assessment used within the district's MTSS framework follows. In addition, each assessment is aligned with the corresponding step in the problem-solving process for which each assessment is appropriate.

Benchmarking/Screening (Step 1: Problem Identification)

Benchmarking (screening) assessments are brief measures that occur 3 times per year for the purpose of identifying students who may be at risk for not meeting expectations. Performance on benchmark assessments is compared to cut scores (criterion) or grade-level norms. Benchmark assessments also can help evaluate the effectiveness of instruction at each tier. For example, if less than 80% of students are scoring in Tier 1 core instruction needs to be strengthened. Benchmarking data can be used to identify problems at the district, school, grade, group, and individual student levels.

Diagnostic Assessments (Step 2: Problem Analysis)

Diagnostic assessments help identify a student's particular academic or behavioral needs so that instruction can be provided to address those needs. Some types of diagnostic assessments used in the district include: informal reading inventories, running records, record reviews, interviews, observations, behavior rating scales, and functional behavioral assessments. Diagnostic assessments are typically conducted as part of the Problem Analysis step in the Problem-Solving Process.

Progress Monitoring (Step 3: Plan Development and Implementation)

Progress monitoring involves a brief and systematic collection of data at regular intervals for decision making related to student performance. Formative assessments are another form of progress monitoring and are conducted throughout the year. Student progress is evaluated in relation to a goal.

Summative Evaluations (Step 4: Program evaluation)

Summative evaluations are typically given at the end of the school year to determine how well students mastered the critical skills for their grade level. The “critical skills” are those skills aligned with the New Illinois State Standards. Current summative evaluations used in the district include the Partnership for the Academic Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), Performance-based Assessments (PBA), and End-of-Year (EOY) assessments. Summative evaluations are typically considered as part of the Program Evaluation step in the problem-solving process at the district level, school level, grade level, group level, and individual level.

The *District Assessment Matrix* is included in the Appendix section of this document. The Matrix includes all of the assessments currently used in the district and the assessments are organized according to their usage as screening tools, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring tools, or summative evaluations.

Data-Based Decision Making Guidelines

Determining a student's needed level of support

Students who score at or above the AIMSweb default cut score for Tier 1 in reading or math should be considered for Tier 1 support. Students who score between the Tier 1 and Tier 2 cut scores should be considered for Tier 2 support in addition to Tier 1 core instruction. Students who score below the Tier 2 cut score should be considered for Tier 3 support in addition to Tier 1 core instruction.

For behavior, students who receive 0-1 Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs) should be considered for Tier 1 support. Students who receive 2-5 ODRs should be considered for Tier 2 support in addition to Tier 1 support. Students who receive 6 or more ODRs should be considered for Tier 3 support in addition to Tier 1 support.

For both academics and behavior, students also may be identified for Tier 3 supports when a poor response to interventions has been established at Tier 2 or when significant student needs have been identified. As part of this process, school teams need to ensure that students have had adequate exposure to Tier 1 and 2 interventions, and that those interventions have been carried out with fidelity. For some students, however, crisis situations and the severity of the problem behavior may require that they receive the more intensive assessment and support resources available at Tier 3 even if they have not had adequate exposure to Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports.

Frequency of Progress Monitoring

Students who score in Tiers 2 or 3 require more frequent progress monitoring.

- Students requiring Tier 2 interventions should be progress monitored at least bi-weekly*

- Students requiring Tier 3 interventions should be progress monitored at least weekly*

*Note: In some instances progress monitoring schedules may vary from these general guidelines on a case-by-case basis. For example, for some students requiring behavioral interventions daily progress monitoring may be warranted.

Goal-setting

Students who score in Tier 2 on Fall Benchmarks in reading and/or math will be progress monitored using grade level curriculum-based measures (CBMs). Student goals should be set to be in Tier 1 (at the 50th percentile for their grade level) by May of the same school year. This requires that their weekly rate of improvement (ROI) be set higher than that of the typical student at that grade level so Tier 2 students are able to close the gap between their achievement and grade-level peers.

Students who score in Tier 3 on the Fall Benchmarks in reading and/or math will be administered Survey Level Assessments (SLAs – See Glossary) to determine their Present Level of Performance (PLOP), i.e., their normative level of achievement. Once their PLOP is established then ambitious goals need to be set for them at their goal level of performance. For example, if a 5th grade student's PLOP is 2nd grade and the team sets the student's goal to be in 4th grade materials by the end of the current year, then the student should be progress monitored using 4th grade level CBMs. To set ambitious goals, teams should consult the **AIMSweb Rate of Improvement (ROI) Growth Norms** to determine recommended ROIs for these students based on their *grade* and *initial* score level. Teams should use the 85th percentile ROI for each student's *initial* level to set goals for the student. *(Please refer to the AIMSweb ROI Growth Norms included in the Appendix.)*

For both Tier 2 and Tier 3, appropriate goal-setting for reading and math requires that students' ROIs be set higher than those of the typical student at their normative level of achievement.

This is necessary so that students warranting Tier 2 or Tier 3 support can “close the gap” between their achievement and that of their grade level peers.

For students with behavioral needs teams should consider a variety of factors when setting student goals. These factors include, but are not limited to, the following: baseline data; goals recommended by PBIS (e.g., for Check-In/Check-Out it is recommended that the student’s goal be set at 80% or more of possible daily points); frequency, intensity, and/or duration of the interfering behavior; grade level behavioral expectations; and/or individual characteristics of the student and setting.

Instructional Decision-Making Using Graphs

Six to eight data points are needed to have reliable data.

- If teachers are concerned about certain students, they should progress monitor those students more frequently to get more stable data on which to make instructional decisions. They also can consult with a District Learning Partner on ways to use data to ensure effective lesson planning and instruction.
- However, as noted above, progress monitoring should not occur more often than once a week except in instances where behavior is being monitored.

If students have 4 consecutive data points considerably **below** their aim or goal line, teams need to review student progress to determine next steps. The overarching guiding question to ask is: Why aren’t students making adequate progress toward their goals? Teams are encouraged to bring in additional data from other sources to help inform their decisions.

Examples of additional guiding questions are:

- Is supplemental instruction aligned with student needs and being implemented with fidelity?
- Is attendance an issue? Is vision or hearing impacting academic performance?

- Is the student's problem a "can't do" (i.e., skill deficit) or a "won't do" (i.e., performance deficit)? If it's determined to be a "won't do," what type of reinforcer(s) might be helpful? That is, what motivates the student? (Note: Determining the function of the behavior can help teams determine effective reinforcers.)
- Does the student need a different intervention or a more intensive dose of the current intervention?
- Is the student bilingual or an English Learner (EL)? If so, have we taken their language status and cultural factors into consideration in determining appropriate interventions?
- If a student has academic needs, could s/he also have social or emotional needs that require additional support? Similarly, if a student has behavioral needs, could s/he also have academic needs that require additional support?

If students have 4 consecutive data points considerably **above** goal line, teams should review student progress and determine next steps. Examples of guiding questions teams can use include the following:

- Does the student continue to need the level of support we are currently providing?
- Should we begin to phase out interventions?
- Should we set a more ambitious goal for the student?
- If the student is in Tier 3, should the student receive Tier 2 support instead? If a student is in Tier 2 should the student be moved out of Tier 2 support and should his/her progress be monitored in the core instruction (Tier 1) more frequently to ensure the student's success without the additional support that has been provided?
- Does the student moving out of Tier 2 support continue to have needs within the classroom (Tier 1)? Do classroom data/observations/work samples show continued needs? Are accommodations or differentiated instruction warranted to ensure student success?
- Does the classroom teacher need support to ensure continued success for the student? If so, what should that support look like?

Individual Problem-Solving (IPS)

Students who score in Tier 3 and are not making adequate progress should be referred for Individual Problem-Solving (IPS). Problem-Solving Teams (PST) should include parents and relevant school-based professionals such as an administrator, classroom teachers, social worker, school psychologist, and reading specialist / literacy coaches. Problem-solving teams will review the students' progress, following the four-step problem-solving model.

- **Step 1 is Problem Identification.** For this step the team will identify the discrepancy between the student's present level of performance and his/her expected level of performance.
- **Step 2 is Problem Analysis.** For this step the PST will generate hypotheses regarding reasons for the student's lack of adequate achievement and decide whether further information is necessary to test their hypotheses. RIOT is an acronym teams can use to determine what type of additional data should be collected. RIOT can remind teams that additional useful data could come from **R**everviewing relevant records, **I**nterviewing key informants, conducting **O**bservations, or through additional **T**esting.
- Based on results of Step 2, **Step 3 involves designing and implementing an intervention.** At this step the team should also specify how intervention fidelity will be monitored.
- **Step 4** involves evaluating the **effectiveness of the intervention.** For this step teams should specify a realistic but ambitious goal for the student, the date by which the goal should be achieved, how the student's progress toward the goal will be monitored, and when the student's progress will be reviewed again. When the chosen date arrives, teams need to determine whether the intervention is helping students "close the gap." If the intervention isn't helping a student achieve their goals, then the team can re-initiate the Problem-Solving Process until they find a more effective intervention. In most cases, if the intervention was implemented with fidelity, then a referral to the Student Assistance Team should be considered.

- The MTSS team should consider a referral to the Student Assistance Team (Special Education) for Tier 3 students who do not show an adequate rate of improvement even though they had received intensive Tier 3 intervention support implemented with integrity in addition to core instruction.

Note: The district's Individual Problem-Solving Paperwork is included in the Appendix.

Timeframes for Interventions

Intervention plans are written with ambitious yet realistic goals and are to be implemented for a reasonable and realistic period of time. The term “reasonable and realistic period of time” has no specific definition and is left to the team to determine. Certain factors should be taken into consideration when attempting to determine a reasonable period of time for a particular student or group of students:

1. How far below expectations the student(s) is/are performing (the further below expectations, the longer it will take them to catch up to peers)
2. The particular skill to be learned (some skills naturally take longer to learn than others)
3. The intensity of the instruction provided
4. The point in the school year at which the interventions are first implemented (sometimes “reasonable and realistic” means that the interventions will need to continue into the next school year before benchmarks can be expected to be achieved)
5. Other possible stressors in the students’ lives

Instructional Integrity

Instructional integrity, also known as treatment fidelity, has been defined as the degree to which educational instruction or intervention is implemented as planned, intended, or originally designed. One of the primary tenets of the MTSS framework is that evidence-based interventions are implemented with integrity. In essence, the validity of MTSS instruction depends on the thorough and effective implementation of instruction and interventions. If instructional integrity is not ensured, educators are unable to determine if the student's progress is traceable to the instruction or intervention used. More important, if a student fails to make progress in response to a scientifically validated intervention, it is critical to ascertain whether the intervention, which has been established as effective for other students with similar needs, was implemented with sufficient integrity. Failure to check the fidelity of the instruction or intervention can lead to a potentially erroneous conclusion that the student's academic deficiencies are the result of a disabling condition, such as a specific learning disability.

MTSS Leadership Teams at the District and School Levels

Kankakee District Leadership Team

The Kankakee District Leadership Team is essential for ensuring consistency and effective implementation of MTSS across all district schools. The team meets at least monthly and is responsible for providing district level MTSS guidance, appropriate professional learning opportunities, and completing and updating the district MTSS plan. The DLT consists of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, K-12 Building Principals representation, Director of Student Support Services, Student and Support Services Supervisor, District Learning Partners, CSI support person(s), community member and staff representation for all subgroups.

- Annually monitor the progress of the District's implementation of MTSS using the Self Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI-D) and develop an action plan based on results.
- Review data regularly and create additional district wide goals and plans

Kankakee District Leadership and Planning Team

The Kankakee District Leadership and Planning Team is essential for ensuring consistency and effective implementation of MTSS across all district schools. The team meets at least monthly and is responsible for providing district level MTSS guidance, appropriate professional learning opportunities, and completing and updating the district MTSS plan. The DLT consists of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, K-12 Building Principals, Director of Student Support Services, Student and Support Services Supervisor and District Learning Partners.

- Help ensure that teachers and support staff receive the training, support, and materials necessary to differentiate core instruction to meet the individual needs of all students
- Help ensure that teachers and support staff receive the training, support, and materials necessary to implement research-based interventions in the general education setting
- Annually monitor the progress of the District's implementation of MTSS using the Self Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI-D) and develop an action plan based on results.
- Review data regularly and create additional district wide goals and plans

School Leadership Teams

Membership on SLTs is designated by the principal and provides support to teachers and other school personnel as the school strives to accommodate the needs of all students. This school team includes member(s) from Instructional Leadership team, the School Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and others designees based on building needs. Typically this team is made up of the building principal, general education teacher, special education teacher, PBIS team representative, Project Choices team representative, paraprofessional, clerical, parent, and community member (s) .

Progress reviewed regularly by School Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT will be responsible for overseeing the following:

School-based MTSS team determines if student needs to:

- Developing, monitoring, and evaluating the annual SIP
- Review data and create building wide goals and plans
- Assess the effectiveness of current programs and activities
- Participate in data-driven decisions about school and grade level data for student-level progress
- Annually monitor the progress of the School's implementation of MTSS using the Self Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI-S) and develop an action plan based on results

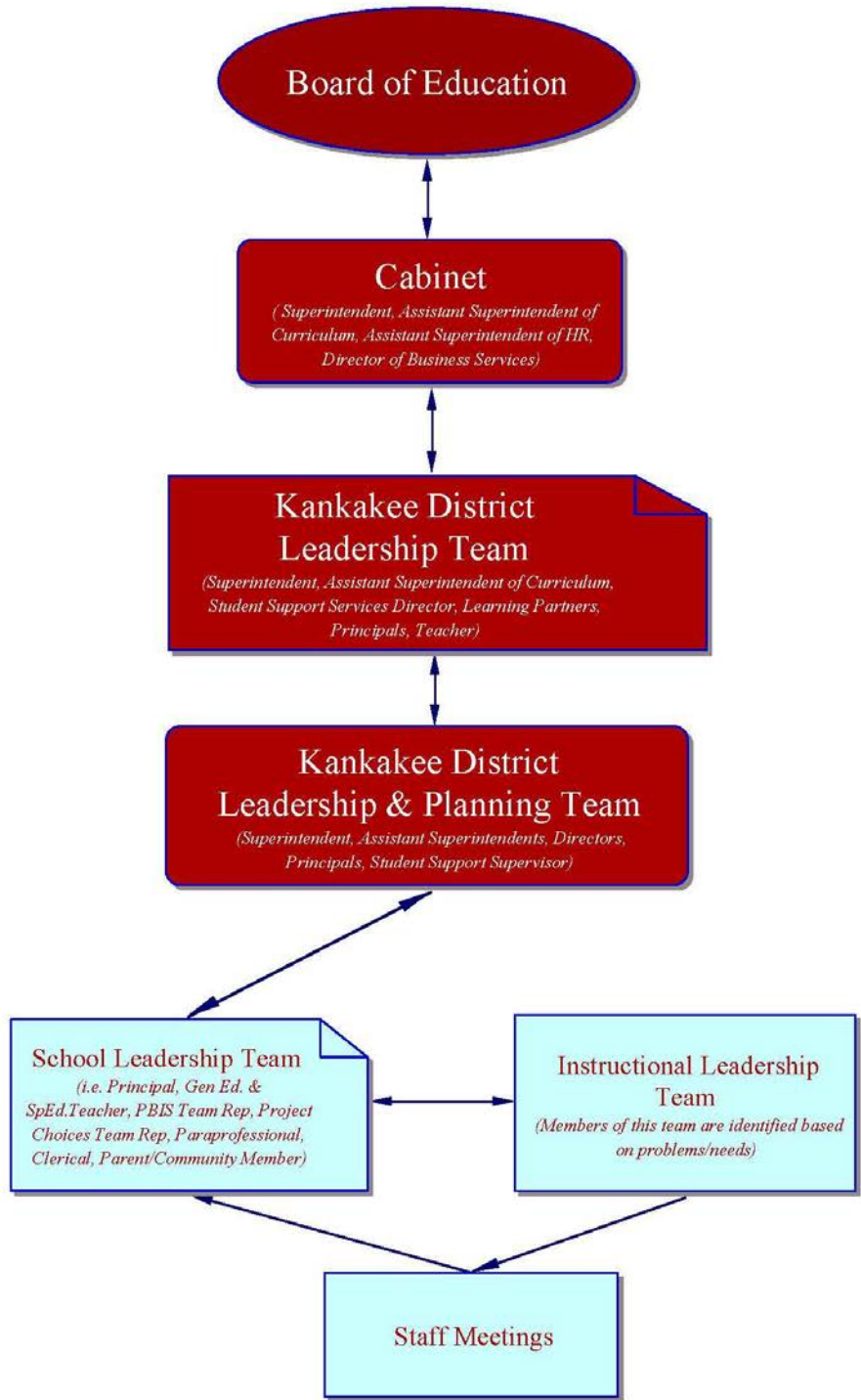
Instructional Leadership Team

The Instructional Leadership Team is responsible for student and school progress in the areas of behavior and academics. Throughout the school year, the team will meet at least monthly and is responsible for monitoring data, ensuring fidelity of the intervention process, and making decisions about student instruction based on an analysis of data. The team's responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assist school personnel to identify (through universal screening data) students who may need additional support or assessment
- Facilitate the intervention process
- Assist teachers in monitoring the progress of students receiving interventions
- Assist with analyzing data related to academic and behavioral interventions

- Participate in data-driven decisions about grade, class, and student-level progress
- Review progress monitoring data to determine whether a domain meeting may be appropriate
- Conducts Individual Problem solving for Tier 3 students who are making inadequate progress
- Interventions monitored for integrity and fidelity
- Intervention adjusted based on student's response to intervention
- Adjustments in interventions reviewed within 4-6 weeks
- Intervention and start dates documented in Intervention Log
- MTSS team identifies students to be referred for Tier 3 intervention based on results of the academic and/or behavioral data that has been collected
- MTSS team identifies students who no longer need Tier 2 support
- Continue Tier 3 interventions
- Discontinue Tier 3 interventions and return to Tier 2 and Tier 1 instruction
- Be referred to the Student Assistance Team (Special Education) for possible special education evaluation

Communication Flow Chart



Parent Involvement and Communication

Effective MTSS implementation cannot occur without parental involvement. Parents are considered essential members of the MTSS/Problem-Solving Team at the district, school, and individual student levels. Parent involvement is actively encouraged within the district in a variety of ways that are briefly described below.

Staying informed, asking questions - Parents are encouraged to keep in close communication with their children's teachers. It is important that parents not only feel comfortable and confident in responding to teacher requests but also in asking teachers and other school personnel questions. The following are questions that parents might ask regarding MTSS supports:

- What can I do to help my child?
- Are you using a Multi-Tiered System of Support to provide instruction based on student needs?
 - a. What does it look like for academics?
 - b. What does it look like for behavior?
- Are you providing instruction and interventions that are evidence-based? How do you identify evidence-based instruction and interventions?
- How do you ensure fidelity of instruction?
- How do you ensure that teachers receive adequate training in a particular curriculum or approach that they are using in their classrooms?
- What type of benchmarking (screening) assessments are you using? How will I be informed of my child's benchmarking results?
- What are the criteria for Tier 2 support?
 - a. How is Tier 2 support provided? What does it look like?
 - b. How often do you progress monitor students receiving Tier 2 support?

- c. How will I be informed of my child's progress monitoring results?
- What are the criteria for Tier 3 support?
 - a. How is Tier 3 support provided? What does it look like?
 - b. How often do you progress monitor students who need Tier 3 supports?
 - c. How will I be informed of my child's progress monitoring results?
- How can I get help for my child if he/she is having trouble in school? What steps will you take if my child isn't doing well?
- If my child isn't doing well with Tier 3 supports, what will happen next? What are the options?
- What should I do if I think my child might have a disability that is causing him/her to have trouble in school?

Participating in meetings at their children's school - The more informed parents are, the more confident they become in their ability to help their children be successful in school. One of the best ways to become informed is for parents to actively participate in meetings at their children's school. These meetings can take a variety of forms. During parent-teacher conferences parents are able to learn how their child is progressing in school, to share important information about their children, and to ask the teacher specific questions about their student. Additional opportunities include family events that focus on academics and social emotional development.

Supporting their child's learning at home - There are many ways that a parent can support their child's learning at home. Here are a few suggestions:

- Provide a quiet well-lit space to do homework
- *Teach* your children to value their education
- Encourage your child to read, read, read!
- Visit the public library regularly

Finally, there may be times when a child's needs extend beyond what the school and the parents can do to help. In those cases, parents can help their child by seeking appropriate community resources for assistance. If parents are unsure what resources are available to address their child's needs, often school personnel such as the school principal, school social worker, school nurse, or school psychologist may be of some assistance.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is at the heart of an MTSS framework?

The purpose of an MTSS framework is to provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, identify students with learning or behavioral problems, and ensure that they receive appropriate instruction and related supports. The goals of MTSS are to (a) integrate all the resources to minimize risk for the long-term negative consequences associated with poor learning or behavioral outcomes, and (b) strengthen the process of disability identification.

What impact does MTSS have on students who are not struggling?

An important component of an effective MTSS framework is the quality of the core curriculum, where **all** students receive high-quality instruction that is culturally and linguistically responsive and aligned to the new Illinois State Standards. This allows teachers and parents to be confident that a student's need for more intensive intervention or referral for special education evaluation is not due to ineffective classrooms instruction. In a well-designed MTSS, Tier I core instruction should be effective and sufficient for at least 80% of the student population.

What are culturally and linguistically responsive practices?

The use of culturally and linguistically responsive practices by teachers and other school staff involves purposeful consideration of the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors that may have an impact on students' success or failure in the classroom. Attention to these factors, along with the inclusion of cultural elements in the delivery of instruction, will help make the

strongest possible connection between the culture and expectations of the school and the culture(s) that students bring to the school. Instruction should be differentiated according to how students learn, building on existing student knowledge and experience, and be language appropriate. In addition, decisions about Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions should be informed by an awareness of students' cultural and linguistic strengths and challenges in relation to their responsiveness to instruction.

What are differentiated learning activities?

Teachers use student assessment data and knowledge of student readiness, learning preferences, language and culture to offer students in the same class different teaching and learning strategies to address their needs. Differentiation can involve such activities as mixed instructional groupings, co-teaching, peer tutoring, learning centers, and accommodations to ensure that all students have access to the instructional program. Differentiated instruction is NOT the same as providing more intensive interventions to students with learning problems.

Is MTSS a special education program?

No. MTSS is a general education initiative. Special education is an important component of a comprehensive MTSS framework, however. All school staff (i.e., principal, certified staff, paraprofessionals, social workers, counselors, psychologists, etc.) should work together to implement their MTSS framework and make decisions regarding appropriate intensity of

interventions for students. Movement to less intensive levels of the framework should be a high priority, as appropriate.

What does MTSS have to do with identifying students for special education?

IDEIA 2004 allows states to use a process based on a student's response to scientific, research-based interventions to determine if the child has a specific learning disability (SLD) and Illinois has endorsed this approach. In an MTSS framework, a student's response to -- or success with -- instruction and interventions received across the levels of an MTSS framework would be considered as part of the comprehensive evaluation for SLD eligibility. AN RTI approach is not mandatory in determining eligibility for other handicapping conditions, but it is recommended.

Can students move among the tiers of an MTSS framework?

Tier 1 refers to core instruction provided to all students. However, students also can move across other levels of an MTSS framework based on their success (response) or difficulty (minimal response) at the level where they are receiving intervention, (e.g., according to their documented progress based on data). Also, students can receive intervention in one or more academic areas at Tier 2 or Tier 3 while still receiving core instruction at Tier 1.

How do we know when Tier 1 instruction is effective?

Tier 1 instruction can be considered effective when it's addressing the needs of at least 80% of the students. An effective Tier 1 system should reduce the number of students who need more extensive and time consuming resources at Tiers 2 and 3.

How do we know when Tier 2 supplemental instruction and supports are effective?

Tier 2 supplemental supports can be considered effective when: no more than 15% of your student body needs Tier 2 supports, the majority of students in Tier 2 are meeting or exceeding the rate of improvement needed for them to reach grade level by the end of the year, and less than 5% of students are in Tier 3. If greater than 15% of students require Tier 2 support, schools need to determine how to bolster or strengthen their core curriculum. If a majority of students in Tier 2 are not making adequate progress, then appropriate changes in Tier 2 support should also be considered.

How do we know when Tier 3 supplemental instruction and supports are effective?

Tier 3 supplemental supports can be considered effective when the majority of students receiving Tier 3 supports are making adequate progress.

How do we know when an *individual* Tier 3 plan is effective?

A Tier 3 plan is deemed effective for an individual student when the student's rate of improvement meets or exceeds what is needed for the student to meet his/her goals.

Why is it important to consider "peer comparisons" at Tier 3?

To ensure that a behavior and/or academic problem is not a result of the classroom environment, schools have to consider how a student's behavior/rate of learning compares to that of his or her peers. In most cases it is unlikely that more than 1-2 students in a general education classroom should require Tier 3 supports (should be less than 5% of students if Tiers 1 and 2 are in place and effective). If many students are struggling academically and behaviorally in a classroom, there are likely to be systems or classroom issues that need to be addressed before more intensive interventions are considered.

Can we ever fade supports at Tiers 2 or 3?

Yes. Many students can be successful in a general education setting when provided appropriate support. Once a student demonstrates a consistent pattern of success, teams should consider whether elements of the Tier 2 or 3 interventions can be reduced or gradually eliminated without negatively affecting the student's performance. For additional information, see the previous section titled "Data-Based Decision-Making Guidelines."

What may be done if a student does not respond to Tier 3 supports?

If a student is making insufficient progress with Tier 3 supports the student should be considered for individual problem-solving (IPS). If the student cannot sustain improved levels of behavior and/or academic skills without the availability of intensive supportive services or is suspected of having needs that exceed general education supports, then the student may be considered for a domain meeting to determine if an evaluation for special education eligibility is appropriate.

Who should be involved in functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention planning?

Tier 3 Intensive/Individual Supports are most effective when approached as a collaborative (rather than expert-driven) process. Support teams including the student and his/her family, educators, and/or other direct service providers should be involved in assessment and intervention. It is critical that personnel charged with implementing the plan be involved in the team process. In general, support teams should include people who know the student best, have a vested interest in positive outcomes, represent the range of environments in which the student participates, and have access to resources needed for support.

What differentiates Tier 3 intensive/individual supports from other systems of positive behavior support?

- Complex FBAs conducted
- BIPs developed in accordance with the results of the FBAs
- BIPs are monitored, evaluated, and re-assessed as necessary

What should be done when there is a crisis situation?

Tier 3 Intensive/Individual Supports is a process that takes time, planning, organization and consistency to be effective. When severe episodes of problem behavior occur, it is important to provide a rapid response to ensure the safety of all involved and produce a rapid de-escalation of the behavior. To support Tier 3 Intensive/Individual Supports safe crisis management procedures are needed and should be planned thoroughly in advance. It is important to remember that the goals of crisis management procedures are to ensure the safety of the student and all others, and to de-escalate the problem as rapidly as possible in the least intrusive manner so as to reduce the probability of future occurrences.

Glossary

Accommodations: Change made to instruction and/or assessment that does not change the expectations for performance or change the construct that is being measured.

Accommodations provide access to buildings, curricula, and assessments.

AIMSweb: AIMSweb is a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to staff and parents via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention

Aim-line: Line on a graph that illustrates a student's expected rate of progress over time

Benchmarking (Screening): A screening assessment that occurs 3 times per year for the purpose of identifying students who may be at risk for not meeting expectations

Core Instruction: The delivery of the core curricula. The core curricula is deemed critical and usually made mandatory for all students of a school or school system. Core instruction and curricula must be scientific and research based and aligned with the New Illinois Learning Standards.

Cut Scores: Cut points that specify the score at or below which students would be considered for intervention

Danielson Framework: A comprehensive and coherent framework that identifies those aspects of a teacher's responsibilities that have been documented through empirical studies and theoretical research as promoting improved student learning

Decision-making Guidelines: A set of guidelines to assist schools in the effective implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support.

Differentiated Instruction: According to the National Center on Response to Intervention, differentiated instruction refers to strategies used by teachers to adjust the curriculum, the teaching environment, or instructional practices to align instruction with the needs of individual students. Four aspects of the curriculum may be differentiated: content, process, products, and learning environment.

Diagnostic Assessment: Identifies or pinpoints a student’s particular academic or behavioral needs so that instruction can be provided to address those needs

Evidence-based: A practice/strategy/program that is based on rigorous research designs, has demonstrated a record of success for improving student outcomes, and has undergone a systematic review process using quality indicators to evaluate levels of evidence

Instructional Integrity: The degree to which an intervention or treatment is implemented as planned, intended, or originally designed – also referred to as treatment fidelity

Modifications: Alterations that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS): A synonym for Response to Intervention (RTI); a systemic, continuous- improvement framework in which data-based problem-solving and decision making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students

New Illinois Learning Standards (formerly referred to as Common Core State Standards): A set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS): A framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students

Problem: A data based discrepancy between what is expected (e.g., standards or norms) and what is occurring (current performance)

Problem Solving: A systematic four step process: problem identification, problem analysis, plan development and implementation, and plan evaluation to facilitate effective decision-making.

Problem Solving Team: Group of education professionals coming together to consider student-specific data, brainstorm possible strategies/interventions, and develop a plan of action to address a student-specific need

Progress Monitoring: The systematic collection of data at regular intervals for decision making related to student performance. Student progress is evaluated in relation to a goal

Response to Intervention (RTI): An educational framework that integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavioral problems; a previous term that has been replaced with Multi-Tiered System of Support

Scientifically-based Instruction: Curriculum and educational interventions that have been proven to be effective for most students based on scientific study

Summative Assessment: Occurs after instruction; used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, achievement of school goals, and curriculum alignment

Survey Level Assessment (SLA): Survey Level Assessments are conducted to determine the grade level at which a student in Tier 3 should be progress monitored. The process is as follows: First the student is administered the AIMSWEB benchmark probes at his/her grade level. If the student scores in Tier 3, then proceed to administer the AIMSWEB probe for the grade level below the student's current grade level. If the student scores at or above the 10th percentile for that grade, stop. This will be the grade level at which he/she should be progress monitored. But, if the student scores below the 10th percentile, then go down one more grade and administer an AIMSWEB probe for that level. If the student scores above the 10th percentile for that grade level, stop. This will be the grade level at which the student should be progress monitored. Repeat this step until the student scores above the 10th percentile. The highest level

at which the student scores above the 10th percentile is the level at which the student should be progress monitored.

Note: In the case of R-CBMs, 3 probes per grade level need to be administered and the median score is considered the indicator of the student's performance at each grade level. When the median score for the 3 probes is above the 10th percentile for that grade level, that grade level is the level at which the student should be progress monitored.

MTSS Resources

- Illinois RTI Network (I-RTI) (www.illinoisrti.org)
Description: Provides educational materials related to RTI topics to school personnel and parents
- National Center on Response to Intervention (www.rti4success.org)
Description: Evidence-based tools and assessments on tiered instruction, progress monitoring, and screening available under “Tools/Interventions” tab; considerations and ideas for teachers available for RTI stakeholders in Center’s library
- Florida Center for Reading Research (www.fcrr.org)
Description: Reading interventions available for Pre-K through Grade 12; Instructional materials for practitioners in grades K-5 available; information on progress monitoring and assessments
- Center on Instruction (www.centeroninstruction.org)
Description: Resources and research articles available on developing and implementing RTI in schools
- What Works Clearinghouse (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>)
Description: Practice guides on reading, mathematics, behavior and a variety of other topics available under “Publications and Products” and reviews of the evidence base for published interventions
- Best Evidence Encyclopedia (www.bestevidence.org)
Description: Provides summaries about the evidence supporting educational programs for children grades K-12
- RTI Action Network (www.rtinetwork.org/essential/assessment)
Description: Articles on progress monitoring and data-based decision making are available
- National Center on Intensive Intervention (www.intensiveintervention.org)
Description: Many resources available to help students in Tier 3 supports.

Appendix

Tier 1 Review Meeting Template

RCBM/MAZE Matrix

AIMSweb ROI Growth Norms

AIMSweb Default Criterion Cut Score Table

Reading MTSS Flowchart

Math MTSS Flowchart

Behavior MTSS Flowchart

Intervention Logs

Individual Problem Solving Form

District Reading Intervention Matrix

District Math Intervention Matrix

District Behavior Intervention Matrix

District Assessment Matrix

Instructional Integrity Checklists