

Flagler Schools Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Manual



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Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Introduction and Overview

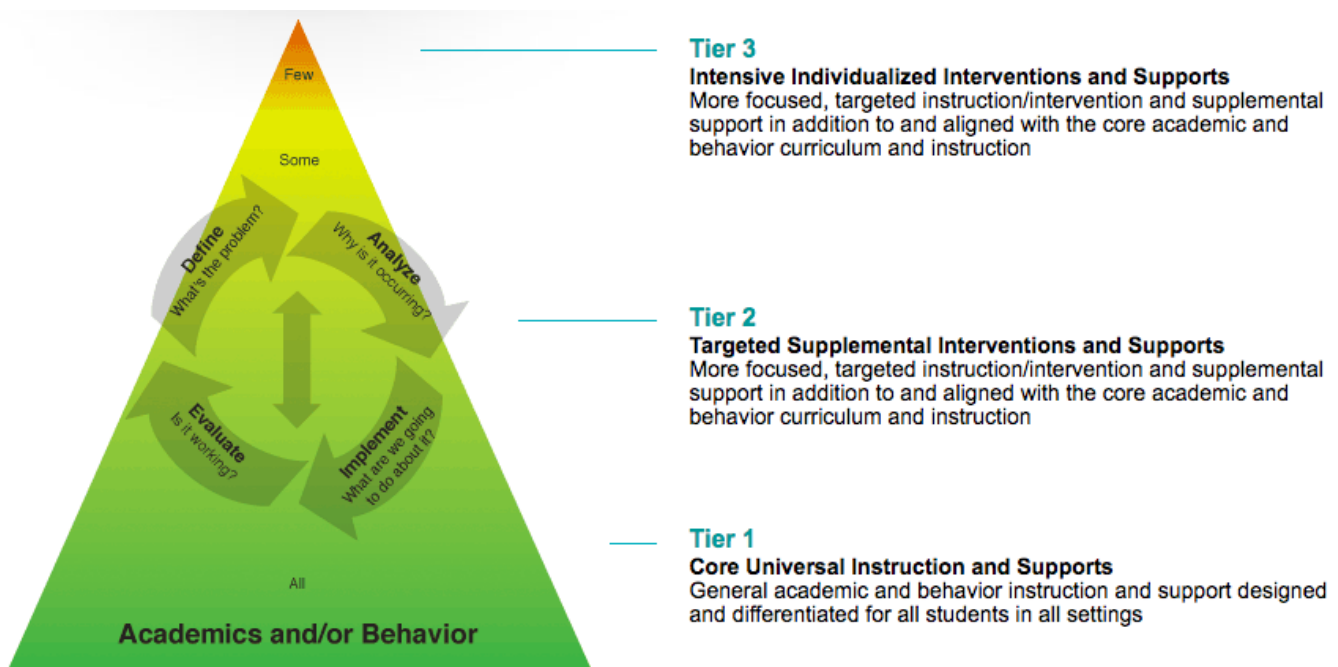


What Is MTSS?

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports is an **evidence-based model** of education that employs **data-based problem-solving** techniques to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention. This integrated instruction and intervention system is provided to students in varying levels of intensities—or tiers—based on student needs. This needs-driven decision-making model seeks to ensure that district resources reach the appropriate students (and schools) at suitable levels of quality and concentration to accelerate the performance of **ALL** students.

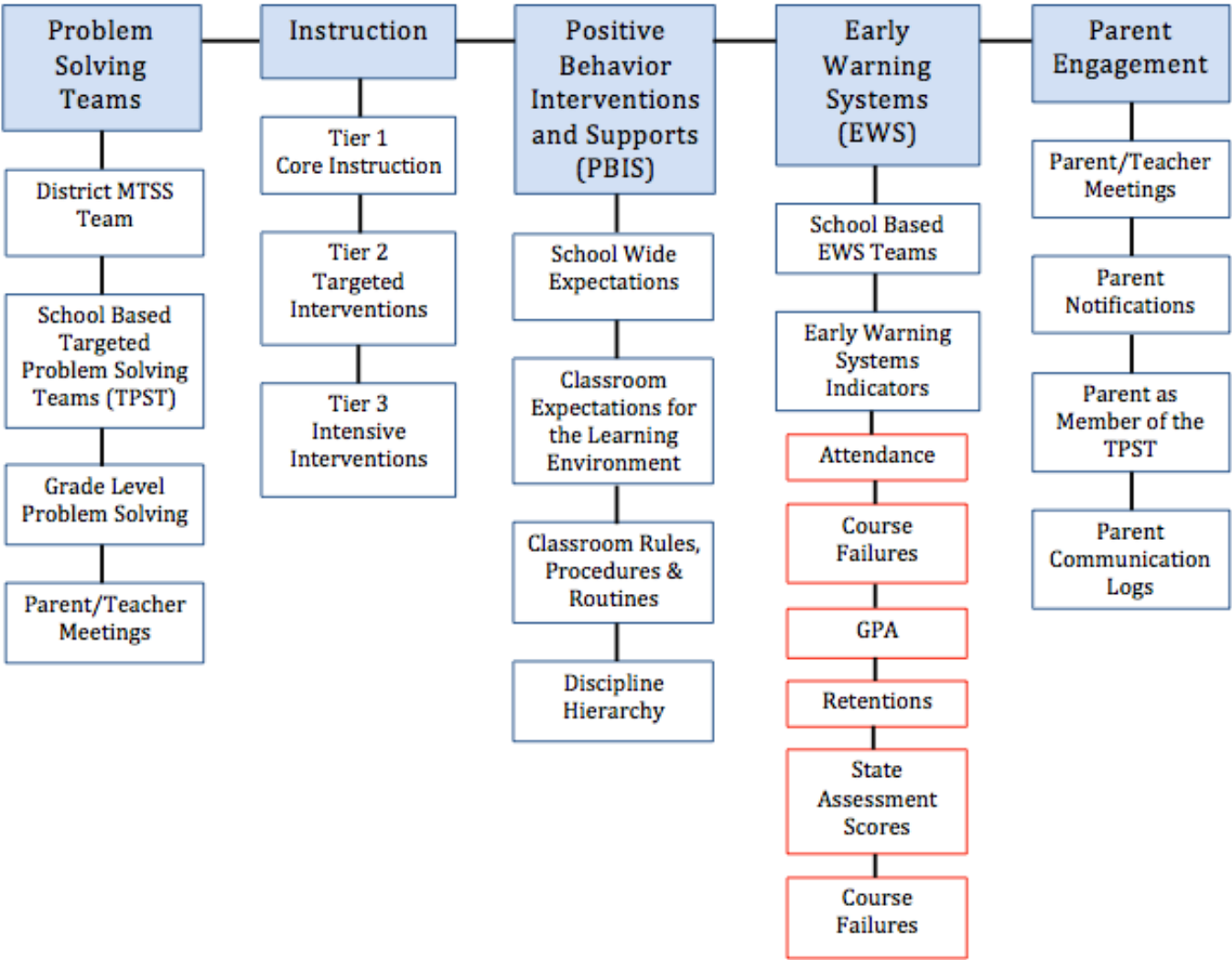
The MTSS framework is based on a continuum of increasingly intense, evidenced-based supports designed to meet the academic and behavioral needs of diverse learners. Three tiers define the levels and intensity of instruction and interventions available across the continuum—but none of these tiers are used to describe categories of students per se or specific instructional programs. Instead, the tiers refer to the types of instruction and intervention provided. The three tiers are illustrated and defined below:

Multi –Tier Model



Flagler Schools MTSS Framework Components

Flagler Schools MTSS Framework Components



Foundational Understandings for Effective MTSS Implementation

From the FLDOE Technical Assistance Paper: General Education Intervention Procedures

This section has been included to provide clarity to the most frequently asked questions that are unique to implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports in Flagler Schools. Please refer to the *FLDOE Technical Assistance Paper: General Education Intervention Procedures* at <http://info.fl DOE.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7505/dps-2015-152.pdf> for the complete document.

- **What is meant by “evidence-based” instruction and intervention?**
Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C.

Evidence-based instruction and intervention are practices for which there is research or data based evidence that the practice is effective in improving outcomes. The instructional methods and interventions that are selected for implementation with students should be informed by research, reflecting the emphasis in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that scientifically based instruction and research-based decision making are the cornerstone of effective educational practice. However, in addition to being validated by research, there should also be evidence that the instruction and intervention strategies are effective with students of a similar demographic group to that of the student receiving the intervention and for whom the instructional conditions are similar, and that the instruction and intervention result in measurable student growth.

- **What is data based problem solving?**

Data based problem solving is an ongoing, systematic process of analyzing and evaluating information to guide educational decisions and actions. The problem-solving approach contributes to effective student outcomes by accurately identifying the problem, analyzing relevant data to understand why the problem is occurring, designing and implementing interventions, and measuring the effectiveness of the interventions that are implemented. School-based teams engage in problem solving to inform instructional decisions and develop intervention supports.

Data based problem solving involves the following steps

- Step 1 - Define the problem and establish a goal by determining the discrepancy between what is expected and what is occurring. **Ask, “What’s the problem?”**
- Step 2 - Analyze the problem to determine why the discrepancy is occurring. **Ask, “Why is there a discrepancy between the current level of performance and the desired level of performance?”**
- Step 3 - Develop an intervention plan to achieve the goal, describe how student progress will be monitored and identify how integrity of implementation will be ensured. **Ask, “What are we going to do about it?”**
- Step 4 - Monitor student response to the intervention in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. **Ask, “Is it working?”** If not, how will the intervention plan be adjusted to better support the student’s progress?

- **Who should be members of the school based Targeted Problem Solving Team (TPST)?**

The composition of any TPST engaged in data based problem solving will vary based on the student and the nature of the presenting concerns. It is important that the membership reflects expertise and skills matched to the student's needs for effective problem solving and intervention design and implementation. The TPST should include personnel knowledgeable about the student; the grade-level academic and behavioral expectations; the academic and behavioral interventions; the problem-solving process, including data collection and analysis; screening, progress monitoring and diagnostic assessment procedures; the graphing and interpretation of student response to intervention; and data-based problem solving and multi-tiered supports. The core membership of a data based, problem-solving team should include the parent or legal guardian of the student; a school administrator, such as the principal or assistant principal; and, depending on the specific area of concern, school or district staff, such as general and special education teachers, reading, math and behavior specialists, and school-based student services personnel.

- **What is an appropriate length for an intervention?**

Rule 6A-6.0331(1)(e), F.A.C.

In accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(1)(e), F.A.C., instructional strategies and interventions must be delivered for a "sufficient period of time" (i.e., of sufficient duration to allow the team to gather adequate data to determine effectiveness). The determination of what is a sufficient period of time **cannot be arbitrarily established and applied across situations**, but must be decided individually based on a number of factors, including discrepancy in the student's level of performance and rate of progress in comparison with peers, intensity of the intervention, duration of implementation in a standard intervention protocol, and rate of progress that can realistically be expected. Interventions can vary in dosage and intensity across multiple dimensions, including length of intervention sessions (e.g., 5 minutes, 60 minutes), frequency (e.g., twice per day, once per week, every 30 minutes) and duration (e.g., three weeks, one grading period). In addition, some interventions are more intense in focus and delivery (e.g., specialized instruction in targeted skills delivered one-on-one or to a small group of students versus additional instructional time in the core curriculum delivered to a class of students). Interventions matched to the individual needs of the student implemented with fidelity and appropriate intensity for a sufficient period of time, are critical to an effective MTSS.

- **Who is responsible for implementing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in general education?**

Only teachers, educational specialists, or other professional staff members with training and expertise in the specific intervention procedures should provide intensive, individualized interventions (i.e., Tier 3). The school staff members responsible for implementing interventions will depend on the nature of the intervention and the level of support that the student needs. Teachers, paraprofessionals and other support staff may deliver interventions for which they have adequate training and experience. **As a general rule, the qualifications and training of implementers should match the level of student need.**

- **How often should data be collected and over what period of time?**

Data collection should match the nature and severity of the problem and the intensity of the instruction and intervention. Students receiving targeted (**Tier 2**) interventions may be monitored **biweekly** or even monthly. In contrast, students receiving intensive, **individualized interventions (Tier 3)** will be monitored more frequently (e.g., weekly) until sufficient data points are gathered to obtain a reliable slope.

- **How is fidelity of implementation evaluated and documented?**

Delivery of instruction or an intervention in the way in which it was designed is referred to as **“fidelity”** or **“integrity of implementation.”** Implementing an intervention with fidelity includes both adherence to the intervention’s core content components and competent execution using accomplished clinical and teaching practices. Within an MTSS, fidelity is important at both the school level (implementation of the problem solving process) and the teacher level (implementation of instruction and progress monitoring). It is important to note that the purpose of measuring fidelity is not to evaluate the individual implementing the intervention, but rather to increase the likelihood of a positive student response. The data based problem solving team should consider and include in the implementation plan the support needed for the intervention to be implemented with fidelity. Although there is no established or required method for evaluating and documenting intervention fidelity or integrity, it should be verified through multiple approaches that may include direct observations, self-reports, student work, etc. Any member of the problem-solving team may complete observations to support the individual implementing the intervention. In addition to observations, permanent products and completed checklists may assist in evaluating and documenting both treatment fidelity and the integrity of the problem-solving process. When developing intervention plans, teams should include a schedule of actions to take to verify fidelity and provide support to the individual(s) designated to implement the intervention.

- **What should be done if it is determined that an intervention is not being implemented with fidelity?**

The data based problem-solving process relies upon a team’s ability to make informed decisions based on the effectiveness of a given intervention. If a student’s response is questionable or poor, the problem-solving team must evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. If the intervention was not implemented as intended, or if an intervention has not been implemented with fidelity, the problem-solving team should identify the barriers to implementation and modify the intervention and support to increase fidelity. Supports for fidelity, such as training or coaching, should be included in the intervention plan, provided early in the process, and monitored on an ongoing basis. For example, assume that a reading curriculum is designed to be implemented in groups of no more than five students, in 30-40 minute sessions, five days per week. If a student is exposed to that curriculum, implemented as designed, for a reasonable period of time and limited or no progress is made, the problem-solving team may reliably determine that this intervention is not effective for this student. In contrast, if the group is made up of 10-12 students with instruction provided only three days per week, and the student does not make progress, the problem-solving team has no way of knowing whether the curriculum is effective. It was not implemented with fidelity, and as a result, the data on which decisions are based will not be valid or reliable. In the latter case, the team must make appropriate adjustments to the scheduling and assignment of students to the reading group or identify an alternative intervention that targets the area of concern and can be implemented with fidelity.

- **What is the parent or legal guardian's role in the development and implementation of general education interventions across all tiers of instruction?**

The parent should be included in the problem solving process at the onset of academic or behavioral challenges in Tier 1/Core instruction. Rule 6A-6.0331(1)(a), F.A.C., requires that the parent or legal guardian be afforded opportunities to be involved in a data-based problem-solving process to address the student's areas of concern. Additionally, the school district must maintain documentation of parental involvement and communication of the student's response to intervention. Involvement by the parent or legal guardian increases the effectiveness of both academic and behavioral interventions. Assistance and input should be solicited from a student's parent or legal guardian as soon as difficulties are evident. Communicating with the parent or legal guardian on a regular basis facilitates collaboration between home and school. Providing the parent or legal guardian with student data enables them to better understand why particular interventions are needed; when, how and by whom they are being implemented; and how their child is responding to those interventions. To facilitate involvement by the parent or legal guardian, the rule requires discussion with the parent or legal guardian regarding the data used to identify the problem and monitor student progress, the student's response to instruction and interventions, modification of the interventions, and any anticipated future action to address the student's learning or behavioral areas of need.

All parent-initiated requests for evaluation for special education services must be honored and expedited in a timely manner in accordance with statute **Rule 6A-6-6.0331(3)(c)(2014)**. **All schools must provide parents with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities at the beginning of the evaluation process or any time by parent request.**

Critical Components of a MTSS Infrastructure

*Adapted from Florida's MTSS: A Multi-Tiered System of Supports
MTSS Implementation Components: Ensuring common language and Understanding*

This section has been included to provide clarity to the most frequently asked questions regarding the infrastructure of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in Flagler Schools. Please refer to Florida's *MTSS Implementation Components: Ensuring Common Language and Understanding* at http://www.florida-rti.org/educatorResources/MTSS_Book_ImplComp_012612.pdf for the complete document.

District and School Level Infrastructure

Leadership (SBLT, MTSS Facilitator, TPST, Grade-Level Teams and Parents)	Districts and schools should strive to maintain effective, actively involved, and resolute leadership that frequently provides visible connections between a MTSS framework with district and school mission statements and organizational improvement efforts.
Policies and Procedures (Academic, Behavioral and Early Warning Systems)	Alignment of policies and procedures across classrooms, grade levels, buildings, district, and state levels aid in establishing and maintaining fidelity of implementation.
Problem Solving (4 Step Problem Solving and 8 Step Problem Solving)	Ongoing efficient facilitation and accurate use of a problem-solving process to support the planning, implementing, and evaluation of the effectiveness of services.
Collaborative Partnerships	Establishing and maintaining strong, positive, and ongoing collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders who provide education services or intervention supports will result in positive impacts on student outcomes.
Data Systems (Performance Matters, Skyward, MTSS Spreadsheets, i-Ready, STAR)	Comprehensive, efficient, and user-friendly data-systems are essential for supporting decision making at all levels from the individual student level up to the aggregate district level.
Coaching Supports (Academic Coaches, TPST, Grade Level Teams)	Sufficient availability of coaching supports is needed to strengthen intervention supports and facilitate effective problem solving across all levels.
Professional Development (District PLC, School-Based PLC)	Ongoing data-driven professional development activities that align to core student goals and staff needs should be provided at the school and district level.
Communication of Outcomes	Communication of outcomes should be shared frequently with stakeholders and documented at the conclusion of each intervention cycle.

MTSS Evaluation Model for High Priority Elements

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 the schools and district staff possess the knowledge and skills to implement MTSS?
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.

Common Barriers of Implementation

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.
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.
Lack of training and support	The implementation of MTSS involves the use of existing and new skill sets and practices. The implementation of MTSS should be facilitated by a strong system of professional development and support (technical assistance and coaching). Implementation is hindered significantly by the absence of such a system.
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.
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.
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.
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.

Roles & Responsibilities of the School-Based Targeted Problem Solving Team (TPST)



The Role of the Principal within a MTSS

Systems Leader	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Schedules data chats throughout the year to ensure that instruction and interventions are informed by student data.2. Establishes a system of communicating student outcomes across the professional staff and with students and their parents.
Communicator of Systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Communicates and reinforces the expectation for data based decision-making: guides the school staff to frame their decision within the context of student need and relevant data.2. Communicates and reinforces the expectation that all Tier 2 and Tier 3 services will integrate Tier 1/Core standards for performance, instructional materials and practices to facilitate transfer of student performance from Tiers 2 and 3 back to Tier 1.3. Creates frequent opportunities to celebrate and communicate success.
Facilitator of Systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Models the problem-solving process: understands the 4-step and 8-step problem solving process for the purpose of guiding the staff in strategic problem solving.2. Facilitate the development of instructional schedules based upon student need.
Monitor of Systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensures that instruction and intervention support is provided to all staff.2. Ensures that instruction/intervention “sufficiency” and the documentation of the sufficiency occur for all students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 support.

The Role of the District MTSS Facilitator (T & L Specialist)

Communicator	Demonstrates 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.
Facilitator of Data Analysis	Supports schools in 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).
Knowledge Transmitter	Disseminates content knowledge to stakeholders about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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/behavior content areas
Problem Solving Facilitator	Facilitates team-based collaborative problem solving.
Builder of Capacity	Supports the leadership team and staff capacity to sustain a MTSS independently, effectively, and efficiently over time.
Faculty and Staff Trainer	Provides staff training and technical assistance in accordance with professional development “best practices” and in alignment with FLDOE professional development standards.
Progress Monitor	Assesses the impact of coaching and supports on student and staff performance outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Targeted Problem Solving Team

What is the TPST and who should be a member? *The engine that powers any school-wide Multi-Tiered System of Supports program is the MTSS Targeted Problem Solving Team (TPST). This group of school professionals meets with referring teachers to assist them in identifying their central concerns about struggling students and to design intervention plans to help those students achieve success.*

Targeted Problem Solving Teams may include but are not limited to: administration, guidance counselors, curriculum coaches, intervention specialist, ELL instructors, behavior specialists, staffing specialists, Title I instructors, speech & language pathologists, school psychologists, and classroom teachers. Individual schools will structure the assignment of responsibilities not designated to specific personnel based on the expertise and talents of their team members. Targeted Problem Solving Teams are fluid by nature. The members involved in various meetings will vary depending upon the needs of the students being addressed at each scheduled meeting.

While each TPST will be tailored to match school needs there are essential core principles that are critical to its success and should not be changed. These core elements include:

- **Diverse representation.** The TPST is composed of a mix of educational staff, including teachers. Teams whose membership is truly multidisciplinary possess the breadth of experience and professional skills to find superior solutions for behaviorally challenging or difficult-to-teach children. Also, having classroom instructors on the TPST increases its credibility with referring teachers.
- **Collegiality.** A philosophy must be prevalent that all members at the table provide equally valuable insight into the needs of the child.
- **Structured Problem-Solving.** The TPST follows a structured format when analyzing possible reasons for a student's academic or behavioral difficulties and planning interventions. Adopting a structured problem-solving approach when exploring, defining, and prioritizing the referring teacher's concerns helps the team make efficient use of time and increases the probability that it will select the right interventions to meet the student's needs.
- **School Focus.** The TPST team focuses its energies on helping the student in the school setting. Many students come from difficult circumstances, and may have factors in their medical background, family situation, home environment, or neighborhood that present potential barriers to school success. However, the TPST team realizes that it is not in a position to reengineer the student's life outside of school. Instead, the team works to identify strategies that will benefit the student within the school environment.
- **Research-Based Interventions.** The TPST recommends academic and behavioral strategies that have been researched and found to be effective in school settings. Schools have the responsibility to use scientifically validated intervention methods to prevent wasting time and effort, and to give students the best chance to be successful.
- **Parent Involvement.** Parents are kept informed of TPST meetings and are welcomed as full participants. Parents bring unique and valuable information about their child to TPST discussions. They must be invited to attend problem-solving meetings, and every effort should be made to ensure parental participation in the TPST meetings. If parents cannot attend a meeting, they should be sent a courtesy copy of the student's intervention plan. Parents must receive a copy of the MTSS Parental Notification Letter. The letter must be signed and become a part of the student's permanent record.

Roles and Responsibilities Defined

There are specific roles that must be filled in order for the TPST to function effectively. The personnel assigned to fulfill these roles may vary by school site depending upon the expertise and availability of personnel.

Coordinator:	Schedules students for TPST meetings, manages and monitors paperwork for completion and accuracy.
Facilitator:	Conducts the TPST meeting, ensures problem solving model is followed, documents and records information, asks clarifying questions, manages the pacing of the meeting.
Case Manager:	Monitors the student's progress through the MTSS process to ensure continuity in review of procedural compliance. Serves as the liaison to determine if the expertise of the behavior specialist is required to develop strategic behavior interventions at tiers 2 or 3. Determines that TPST decisions are adequately supported by data.
Data Analysis:	Format of the data collected will determine the appropriate personnel to provide analysis. This may include: classroom teachers, reading coaches, school psychologists, intervention specialists, Speech/Language Pathologists, ELL instructors.

Personnel Providing Information or Expertise:

The nature of the interventions provided for the student will determine the appropriate personnel to provide information and expertise. This may include: classroom teachers, reading coaches, school psychologists, intervention specialists, Title I instructors, ELL instructors

Responsibilities:

Below is a list of personnel and their possible roles in the MTSS process. Responsibilities printed in bold print are specifically assigned to these positions.

PERSONNEL	RESPONSIBILITIES	POSSIBLE ROLES
Administration and MTSS Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sets vision for problem solving process.● Responsible for allocation of resources.● Supports program evaluation.● Monitors staff support/climate.● Facilitates review of fidelity of implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● School leader
Guidance Counselor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Assist administration and staff to understand the familial, cultural and community components of students' response to instruction, learning and academic success.● As determined by the school site, may collaborate with teachers to track documentation and schedule students for TPST meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Coordinator● Facilitator● Case Manager

Academic Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to select, design, implement, and interpret whole school screening programs and dynamic assessments. • Participate in the design and delivery of professional development. • Support colleagues through mentoring and close collaboration to provide consistency in reinforcing skills. • Provide expertise on appropriate interventions for identified needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator • Case Manager • Data Analysis • Personnel Providing Information or Expertise • Support colleagues through mentoring and side by side coaching
Behavior Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Functional Behavior Assessments • Support the TPST in development of individual Positive Behavior Intervention Plans when needed as determined by the Case Manager. (As noted in the behavior section of the manual, this will most often occur when the PBIP developed at the beginning of Tier 2 is not producing desired results and an adapted behavior plan is being developed at Tier 2) • Observe students in the instructional environment in order to help identify appropriate intervention strategies, to identify barriers to intervention, and to collect Multi-Tiered System of Supports data. This may occur at tier 3 if the situation warrants the expertise of the behavior specialists, or at an earlier point if deemed necessary by the Case Manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Personnel Providing Information or Expertise

School Psychologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide consistent guidance, monitoring of procedural compliance, and overview of a student's progress throughout the MTSS process. To include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Determining when appropriate to bring in the behavior specialists to provide expertise on determining appropriate interventions for a student. b) Determining that TPST decisions are adequately supported by data. c) Engage in ongoing consultation regarding implementation issues as well as individual student needs. d) Identify team training needs and provide, or help the team obtain, relevant training (including training in applying progress monitoring procedures to decision-making). e) Assist staff in interpreting data as part of the ongoing decision-making process. f) Observe students in the instructional environment in order to help identify appropriate intervention strategies, to identify barriers to intervention, and to collect Multi-Tiered System of Supports data. g) Evaluate the student's relevant academic, behavioral, and mental health functioning. h) Provide small group tier 2 intervention for behavior on a schedule to be determined by the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case Manager
Staffing Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor components for compliance after receipt of consent for evaluation. ● Facilitate eligibility for ESE services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate process for ESE staffing

Speech/Language Pathologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Language screening at the beginning of Tier 2 (for referrals related to reading). • Explain the role that language plays in curriculum, assessment, and instruction. • Assist general education teachers with universal screening. • Provide expertise in language, its disorders, and treatment. • Consult and collaborate with teachers to meet the needs of students in initial MTSS tiers with a specific focus on the relevant language underpinnings of learning and fluency. • Interpret screening and progress assessment results to staff and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Personnel Providing Information or Expertise
Intervention Specialist/ELL Instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide push-in and/or pullout intervention for students. • Provide expertise on appropriate interventions for identified needs. • Serve as a resource and support for the classroom teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Personnel Providing Information or Expertise
Classroom Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, implement, document, and analyze evidence-based academic and behavioral interventions. • Differentiate instruction for a diverse classroom. • Engage in ongoing collaboration to address small group and individual student needs. • Collaborate with other school personnel in data collection and analysis. • Collect data within the instructional environment in order to help identify appropriate intervention and to collect Multi-Tiered System of Supports data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis • Personnel Providing Information or Expertise
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative member of the MTSS team • Provide relevant home/community information • Provides relevant medical/social information • Accesses appropriate community resources • Collaborates with school personnel in implementing interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative partner

Problem Solving in the Tiers of Instruction for Academics



The Problem-Solving Process

Student and teacher outcomes are significantly impacted by the degree to which continuous improvement occurs. Continuous improvements happen consistently when problem analysis and strategic problem solving take place. Whether you are evaluating the impact of Tier I/Core instruction or determining the need for more intensive support for student groups or individual students, it is most beneficial when school based teams engage in and follow a systematic problem-solving process. **Florida's PS-RtI model** includes a four-step problem-solving process. The four steps of the problem-solving process are as follows:



<p>Step 1 Define the problem or goal by determining the difference between what is expected and what is occurring. Ask, "What specifically do we want students to know and be able to do when compared to what they do know and are able to do?" When engaged in problem solving at the individual student level, the team should strive for accuracy by asking, "What exactly is the problem?"</p>	<p>Step 2 Analyze the problem using data to determine why the issue is occurring. Generate hypotheses (reasons why students are not meeting performance goals) founded in evidence-based content area knowledge, alterable variables, and instructionally relevant domains. Gather assessment data to determine valid/non-valid hypotheses. Link validated hypotheses to instruction/intervention so that hypotheses will lead to evidence-based instructional decisions. Ask, "Why is/are the desired goal(s) not occurring? What are the barriers to the student(s) doing and knowing what is expected?" Design or select instruction to directly address those barriers.</p>
<p>Step 3 Develop and implement a plan driven by the results of the team's problem analysis by establishing a performance goal for the group of students or the individual student and developing an intervention plan to achieve the goal. Then delineate how the student's or group of students' progress will be monitored and implementation integrity will be supported. Ask, "What are we going to do?"</p>	<p>Step 4 Measure response to instruction/interventions by using data gathered from progress monitoring at agreed upon intervals to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention plan based on the student's or group of students' response to the intervention. Progress-monitoring data should directly reflect the targeted skill(s). Ask, "Is it working? If not, how will the instruction/intervention plan be adjusted to better support the student's or group of students' progress?" Team discussion centers on how to maintain or better enable learning for the student(s).</p>

Adapted from <http://www.florida-rti.org/floridaMTSS/psp.htm>

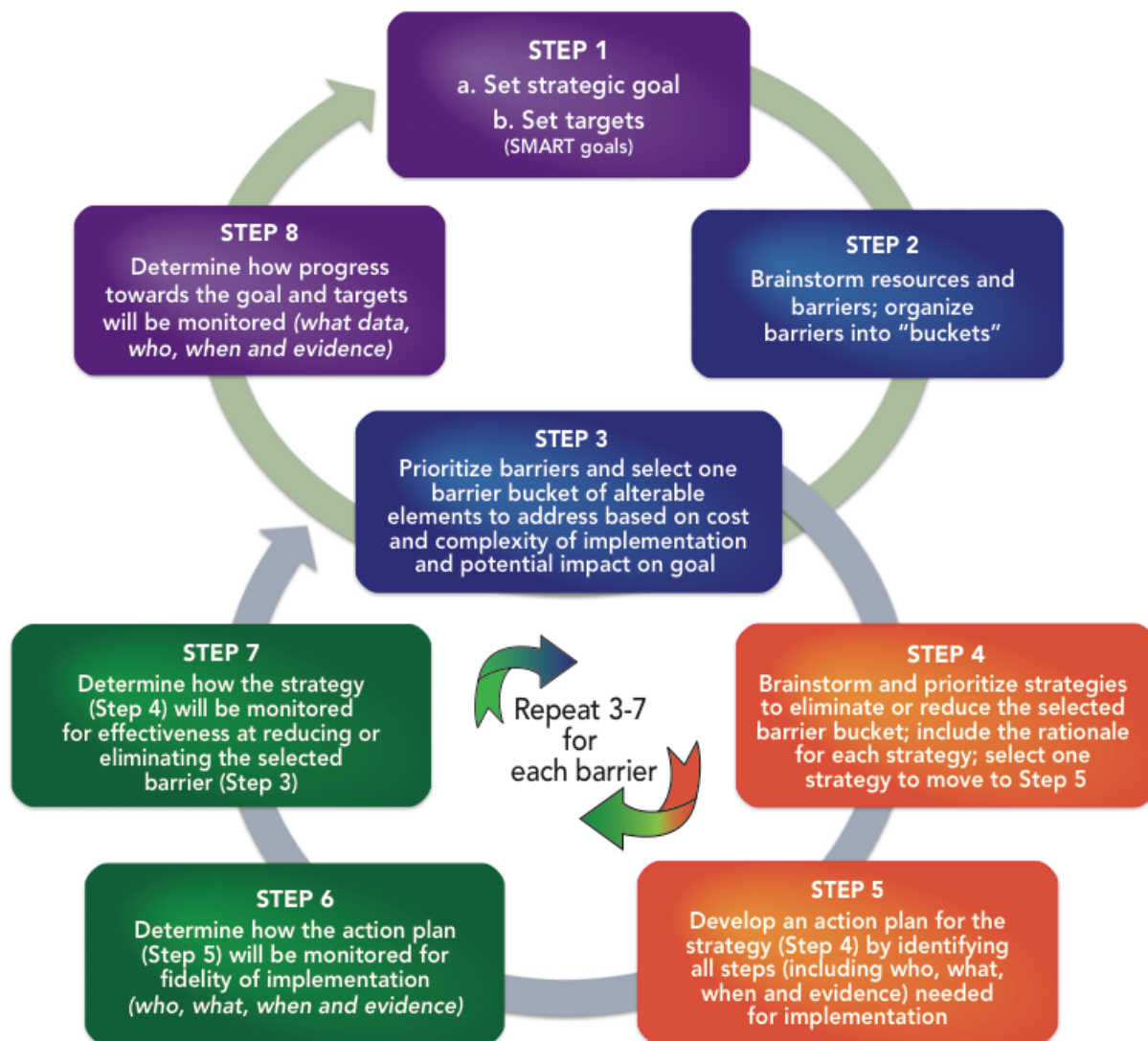
The Systems Level Approach to Problem Solving

The four-step problem solving process is best suited when problem solving for classroom interventions, small groups and individual student needs. There are times when problem solving is needed on a larger scale to assess the effectiveness of school and district-wide systems. The FLDOE *Facilitator's Tool for 8-Step Planning and Problem Solving* provides a systematic framework for addressing problems that may be occurring across grade levels, schools and the district as a whole. The diagram below is a visual representation of the process.

The complete facilitator's guide can be found at:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/attachments.siponline/production/downloads/136/FDOE_Guide_8SPPS_10_8_14.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJOJUUKNTH51LBL7A&Expires=1604513971&Signature=XUaWurEDm8SxehcxWu9wbBPnJrg%3D

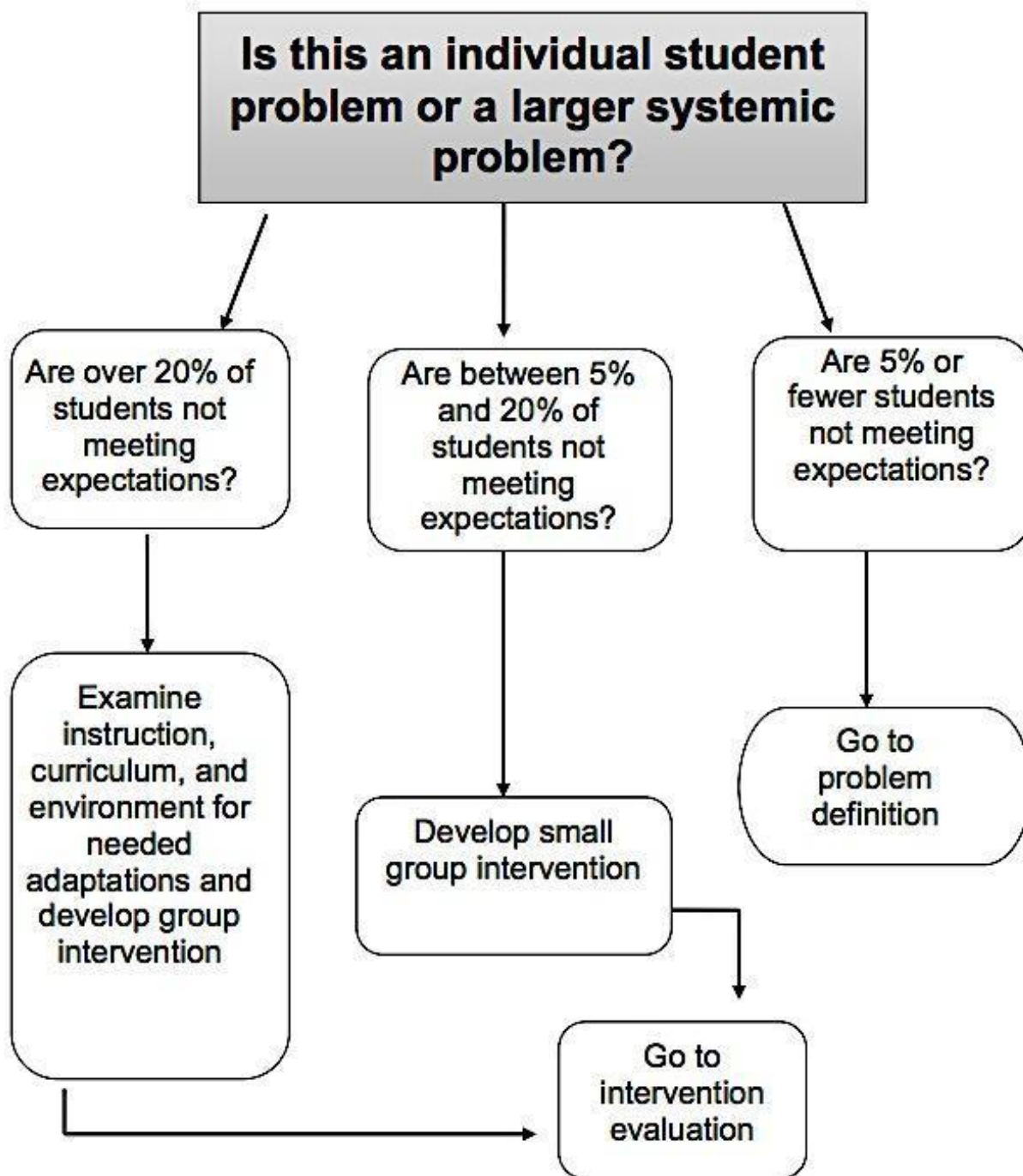
8-Step Planning and Problem-Solving Process FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



Additional tools and resources for problem solving and School Improvement Plan development can be found at <https://www.floridacims.org>.

The following diagram from *Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving* provides essential questions that can be used to support the TPST determining if an issue is reflective of a small group problem or a large group problem. The TPST can then proceed with the problem-solving process that best fits the situation.

**Decision-Making Rubric
for use with
Schoolwide Screening**



Tier 1 Instruction and Problem Solving

What is Tier 1/Core Instruction?

Tier 1/Core instruction is provided to **all** students. Tier 1/Core instruction involves general academic and behavioral instruction and support, including support for greater student engagement in learning, which is designed, provided, and differentiated for **all** students in regular instructional settings. This tier presumes that the core curriculum is rigorous, evidence-based, aligned to state standards, culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate, and is implemented with integrity for **all** students. Although the tier includes general instruction, it also refers to **differentiation of core instruction to address diverse student classroom needs**. This differentiation in Tier I instruction can be accomplished effectively by designing curriculum and classroom teaching around the **principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**. UDL removes or reduces barriers to learning by customizing and adjusting instruction and student supports to individual learning needs; and the use of technology can be particularly helpful in this effort. In the case of English-language learners, UDL refers both to the removal of barriers and the assurance that students have the English-language development supports that allow them full access to the core curriculum. And in the case of behavior, Tier I refers to the positive behaviors that are expected of **all students**. Meeting individual learning needs under UDL, however, should not be interpreted to mean that struggling students should be given below-grade-level work if they are behind. Instead, it means that teachers and administrators should plan and use lessons and tasks with scaffolds that build student knowledge and independence in daily Tier I/Core instruction, so that students learn how to handle the academic vocabulary, sophisticated language structures, and content present in the complex texts called for in the state standards.

--Adapted from Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban Students: Using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (2012)

Tier 1/Core instruction should include but it not limited to the following components:

- Standards-based instruction
- Research-based core curriculum for academics and behavior
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused and Gradual Release)
- Evidence-based instructional practices
- Data driven instruction with small group
- Universal screening 3 times a year (Examples: i-Ready Diagnostic, Star)
- Integration of Universal Design for Learning Principles

Failure to provide the following components could result in students being prematurely placed in Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention cycles and impede the fidelity of instruction. Helpful resources have been provided on the proceeding pages to guide the TPST in evaluating the effectiveness of core instruction. The GTIPs *Tier 1: Core Imperative Questions* and Flagler Schools *Tier 1 MTSS Procedural Flowchart* can be used by the TPST to ensure appropriate levels of instructional intensity occur within Tier 1/Core instruction.

Assessment in Tier 1/Core Instruction

Assessments in Tier I usually include formative and summative measures and can occur as frequently as daily, weekly, quarterly and at the end of the year. Examples of Tier 1 assessments are: mini formative assessments, quarterly benchmark assessments, universal screenings, state assessments, common district finals and end-of-course exams.

TIER 1 MTSS Procedural Flow Chart

TIER 1/CORE INSTRUCTION Components: ALL Students

- Standards-based instruction
- Research-based core curriculum for academics and behavior
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused and Gradual Release)
- Evidence-based instructional practices
- Data driven instruction with small group
- Universal screening 3 times a year (i-Ready Diagnostic, STAR)
- Integration of Universal Design for Learning Principles



If less than 80 percent of students in a class, grade level, sub-group, or district are at or near benchmark, the Targeted Problem Solving Team (TPST) reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of core curriculum and fidelity of instructional practices. If more than 80 percent of students in a class, grade level, sub-group, or district are at or near benchmark, proceed to analyze individual student data for students falling below benchmark expectations.

Refer to the **Tier 1/Core Imperative Questions** for more focused problem solving.



If data analysis indicates the student is making adequate progress toward meeting benchmarks, continue with TIER 1/CORE instruction.



If data analysis indicates the student is falling short of grade level benchmarks, the TPST supports the teacher in developing differentiation strategies to reduce learner barriers. The teacher also communicates with the parent/guardian about the student's need for strategic support and follows the [MTSS Procedures-ACADEMIC](#) or the [MTSS Procedures-BEHAVIOR](#).



The TPST meeting is conducted. Tier 2 interventions are determined with a rationale for the strategies selected and time durations. This information is documented in the MTSS Tier 2 Intervention Plan-ACADEMIC or MTSS Tier 2 Intervention Plan-BEHAVIOR.

Tier 1/Core Guiding Questions for Problem Solving

Tier 1: Core Instruction & Universal Supports	Are students provided with well-delivered, scientific, research-based core instruction? How is this verified?
	What assessment tools or processes are used to identify instructional needs and the student's response to instruction?
	Is the core instruction/support effective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What percent of students are achieving standards/benchmarks/behavioral expectations (approximately 80 percent or more)? • What percent of students in subgroups are achieving standards/benchmarks/behavioral expectations (approximately 80 percent or more)? • If addressing an individual student's needs, what percent of students in their subgroup are achieving benchmarks/standards/behavioral expectations (approximately 80 percent)?
	If core instruction is not effective, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the curriculum appropriately matched to the needs of the students? • Is support provided for implementation fidelity?
	To what extent is the school-based leadership team engaged in Tier 1-level problem solving in order to increase the effectiveness of core instruction/behavioral supports?
	How are parents and students involved or engaged in supporting effective core instruction/behavioral supports?
	What is the decision rule to determine if student(s) will require supplemental and more intensive, individualized intervention/support?

--Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

Tier 2 Instruction and Problem Solving

What is Tier 2/Targeted Instruction?

Tier 2/targeted instruction entails more focused instruction, interventions, and supplemental supports that are provided to **some (ideally 15% or less)** students who share common academic and/or behavioral needs. Tier II services are provided *in addition to*—not in lieu of—core instruction, are aligned with the state standards, and use, to a significant degree, core instructional materials and supplemental tools. But under Tier 2, students are assessed and their progress is monitored more frequently than are students receiving only Tier I instruction.

--Adapted from Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban Students: Using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (2012)

Tier 2/Targeted instruction includes but is not limited to:

- Standards-based instruction
- Research based supplemental curriculum in addition to core
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused and Gradual Release)
- Increased small group instruction
- Strategic interventions with an emphasis on skill deficits
- Increased progress monitoring and diagnostics (Examples: monthly and bi-weekly)
- Integration of Universal Design for Learning Principles

Helpful resources have been provided on the proceeding pages to guide the TPST in evaluating the effectiveness of Tier 2 instruction. The GTIPs *Tier 2: Core Imperative Questions* and Flagler Schools *Tier 2 MTSS Procedural Flowchart* can be used by the TPST to ensure appropriate levels of instructional intensity occur within Tier 2/Targeted instruction.

Assessment in Tier 2/ Supplemental Instruction

Tier 2 assessments are varied based on student need. The frequency of assessment could range from monthly to bi-weekly depending upon the duration and type of intervention.

TIER 2 MTSS Procedural Flow Chart

TIER 2/Targeted Instruction Components: Some Students (Ideally 15%)

- Standards-based instruction
- Research based supplemental curriculum in addition to core
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused and Gradual Release)
- Increased small group instruction
- Strategic interventions with an emphasis on skill deficits
- Increased progress monitoring (Examples: monthly and bi-weekly)
- Integration of Universal Design for Learning Principles



TPST Review TIER 2 Interventions and Student Data

Refer to the Tier 2 Imperative Questions for more focused problem solving.



If the response to intervention is positive which results in adequate progress being made towards meeting benchmarks, the TPST may decide to continue existing interventions or reduce the level of instructional intensity back to TIER 1/Core instruction.



If the response to intervention is questionable or poor which results in a rate of learning that is slow or inadequate to reach benchmarks, the TPST will determine if new interventions and/or increased intensity is needed. The parent must be actively involved in this process and frequently notified of student learning outcomes. The parent is invited to attend the TPST meeting.



A TPST meeting is conducted. A decision is made to continue Tier 2 targeted intervention or increase the intensity to TIER 3 intensive instruction after evaluation of all data points (MTSS Tier 3 Intervention Plan-ACADEMIC or MTSS Tier 3 Intervention Plan-BEHAVIOR) . Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions are determined with a rationale for the strategies selected and time durations. This information is documented in the Intervention Plan.

Tier 2 Guiding Questions for Problem Solving

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions & Supports	<p>What specific targeted intervention/support is planned to improve the performance of students who need additional instruction and support (more academic-engaged time, more focused intervention, smaller group, type of delivery, methodology, in addition to and aligned with core instruction, etc.)? Consider at least six pieces of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of additional time • Focus of the intervention and support • Specific instructional strategies/behavioral support • Method and frequency of progress-monitoring assessments • Evidence of fidelity • Sufficiency of intervention/support
	<p>How is the supplemental intervention implemented?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic-Engaged Time – How much more time is provided? • Curriculum – What is used? • Personnel – Who, when, and where is it provided? Are the highest levels of instructional expertise and skill matched to the students with the most significant needs? How is support provided to ensure fidelity of implementation? • Parents – How are the student’s parents involved or engaged in supporting the interventions?
	<p>How effective is the targeted instruction for groups of students who need additional instruction and support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assessments are used for ongoing data collection aligned with core instruction? • How frequently are assessments conducted? How frequently are they analyzed by the team? • How are the student’s parents engaged in the progress monitoring and analysis of level of performance and rate of progress? • How does the team determine whether the instruction/intervention is effective? • If the intervention is ineffective (poor or questionable student response), how does the team monitor and support implementation fidelity? • What is the decision rule to determine if student(s) will require more intensive, individualized intervention/support?

--Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

Tier 3 Instruction and Problem Solving

What is Tier 3/Intensive Instruction?

Tier 3/intensive instruction is the most intense instruction and intervention and is made available only to a **few (ideally 5% or less)** students based on their individual needs. Tier 3 is characterized by increased time, intensity, and individualized instruction. More frequent progress monitoring is needed. Assessment cycles could be weekly or even daily based on the intervention and student need.

--Adapted from Common Core State Standards and Diverse Urban Students: Using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (2012)

Tier 3/intensive instruction includes but is not limited to:

- Standards based instruction
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused, Gradual Release, UDL)
- Data-driven instruction
- Intensive Interventions
- Increased time and/or intensity
- Adjusted group sizes
- Individually designed instruction
- Diagnostic assessments
- Frequent progress monitoring (Example: weekly or daily)
- Universal Design for Learning Principles

Helpful resources have been provided on the proceeding pages to guide the TPST in evaluating the effectiveness of Tier 3 instruction. The GTIPs *Tier 3: Imperative Questions* and Flagler Schools *Tier 3 MTSS Procedural Flowchart* can be used by the TPST to ensure appropriate levels of instructional intensity occur within Tier 3/intensive instruction.

Assessment in Tier 3/Intensive Instruction

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 Tier 1 and Tier 2. The frequency of assessment used in 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 benchmark expectations and 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.**

--From Florida's MTSS: A Multi-Tiered System of Supports MTSS Implementation Components: Ensuring common language and Understanding

TIER 3 MTSS Procedural Flow Chart

TIER 3/Intensive Instruction Components: Few Students (Ideally 5%)

- Standards based instruction
- Instructional delivery framework (Examples: Learning Focused, Gradual Release, UDL)
- Data-driven instruction
- Intensive Interventions
- Increased time and/or intensity
- Adjusted group sizes
- Individually designed instruction
- Diagnostic assessments
- Frequent progress monitoring (Example: weekly or daily)
- Universal Design for Learning Principles



TPST Reviews of TIER 3 Interventions and Student Data
Refer to the Tier 3 Imperative Questions for more focused problem solving



TPST reviews intervention data. If adequate progress towards meeting benchmarks is occurring, the TPST may decide to continue Tier 3 instruction or reduce the level of instructional intensity to Tier 1/Tier 2 instruction.



TPST reviews intervention data. If all available interventions are unsuccessful (i.e., student will not meet benchmark at present rate of learning) OR intensity of instruction cannot be sustained indefinitely, consider referral for *eligibility*. Parental notification and consent must be obtained. The parent is invited to attend the TPST meeting. The parent must be provided with a copy of the *Parent Information for a Student Receiving Intensive Interventions* and *Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities*.



All eligibility documentation is prepared and submitted to ESE staffing for comprehensive evaluation and a decision is made to progress the intensity of instruction to Exceptional Student Education services or maintain Tier 3 interventions.

Tier 3 Guiding Questions for Problem Solving

Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Intervention & Supports	<p>What specific intensive, individualized intervention is planned to improve the level of performance and the rate of progress of the individual student (e.g., more academic-engaged time, more focused intervention, smaller group, type of delivery, methodology, in addition to and aligned with core/supplemental instruction)? Consider at least six pieces of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of additional time • Focus of the instruction/intervention • Specific instructional/behavioral strategies • Evidence of fidelity • Sufficiency of instruction/support • Method and frequency of progress-monitoring assessments
	<p>How is the supplemental intervention implemented?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic-Engaged Time – How much more time is provided? • Curriculum – What is used? • Personnel – Who, when, and where is it provided? Are the highest levels of instructional expertise and skill matched to the students with the most significant needs? How is support provided to ensure fidelity of implementation? • Parents – How are the student’s parents involved or engaged in supporting the interventions?
	<p>How effective is the intensive, individualized intervention for the student?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assessments are used for ongoing data collection? • How frequently are assessments conducted? How frequently does the team analyze them? • How, and to what degree, are the student’s parents involved or engaged in the progress monitoring and analysis of the student’s level of performance and rate of progress? • How unique is the student’s response in comparison to peers? • How do teams determine whether the intervention is effective? • What is the decision rule to determine any necessary adjustments to the instruction/interventions? • If the intervention is ineffective (poor or questionable student response), how does the team monitor and support implementation fidelity?

--Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

MTSS Decision Rules for Shifts in Instructional Intensity

Responses to Intervention

The decision rules used to determine movement within the tiers of instruction are based on a student's or group of students' response to instruction/intervention. In Flagler Schools, interventions are evaluated by TPST and determined to be **positive**, **questionable**, or **poor**. Refer to the following descriptions for each term.

- A **positive response** to instruction/intervention is implied when the gap between the grade-level benchmark expectation and observed performance is closing.
- A **questionable response** to instruction/intervention is implied when the rate at which the gap is widening slows considerably but is still widening, or when the gap stops widening but closure does not occur.
- A **poor response** to instruction/intervention is implied when the gap continues to widen with no change in rate of progress after the instruction/intervention has been implemented.

It is important to have a precise understanding of what an acceptable **rate of progress** is based on grade-level benchmark expectations. An acceptable **rate of progress** can be defined as the amount of growth over a specified time period by a student or group of students which enables the TPST to predict the student or group of students will "come in range" of grade level benchmark expectations within an appropriate time frame. A student scoring a 40, 65, and 73 on consecutive assessments for a particular set of standards is considered to be **maintaining an acceptable rate of progress** toward grade-level benchmark expectations. A student scoring a 30, 37, and 42 on consecutive assessments for a particular set of standards is considered to be making **unacceptable or slow progress** toward grade-level benchmark expectations.

Adjusting Instructional Intensity

How a student responds to instruction/intervention is the driving force to determining the intensity of instruction. Imagine a water pressure valve. The valve is adjusted to increase or decrease water pressure. If the wrong amount of water pressure is applied, permanent damages can occur. Adjusting the intensity of instruction should be done through the use of a very thoughtful process. Intensity of instruction is defined as doing one or more of the following things:

- **Narrowing the focus of instruction** (ex: instead of all components of reading, narrow the focus to phonics)
- **Small group size** (ex: small group vs. whole group; or very small group vs. average small group)
- **Increased time** (ex: 30 minutes 3X /week in addition to core)

What is an appropriate length for an intervention?

Rule 6A-6.0331(1)(e), F.A.C.

In accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(1)(e), F.A.C., instructional strategies and interventions must be delivered for a “sufficient period of time” (i.e., of sufficient duration to allow the team to gather adequate data to determine effectiveness). The determination of what is a sufficient period of time **cannot be arbitrarily established and applied across situations**, but **must be decided individually** based on a number of factors, including discrepancy in the student’s level of performance and rate of progress in comparison with peers, intensity of the intervention, duration of implementation in a standard intervention protocol, and rate of progress that can realistically be expected. Interventions can vary in dosage and intensity across multiple dimensions, including length of intervention sessions (e.g., 5 minutes, 60 minutes), frequency (e.g., twice per day, once per week, every 30 minutes) and duration (e.g., three weeks, one grading period). In addition, some interventions are more intense in focus and delivery (e.g., specialized instruction in targeted skills delivered one-on-one or to a small group of students versus additional instructional time in the core curriculum delivered to a class of students). Interventions matched to the individual needs of the student implemented with fidelity and appropriate intensity for a sufficient period of time, are critical to an effective MTSS.

-- Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

How is Eligibility Determined Under MTSS?

-- Adapted from *Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving*

Problem Solving and Eligibility

Districts and schools in Florida are required to use a problem solving process that determines whether a student is eligible or remains eligible for special education services and ascertains how a student responds to interventions. The state board rules listed below address these requirements in greater detail:

- General Education Intervention Procedures, Identification, Evaluation, Reevaluation and the Initial Provision of Exceptional Education Services ([Rule 6A-6.0331, Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C.](#))
- Exceptional Education Eligibility for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities ([Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C.](#))
- Exceptional Education Eligibility for Students with Language Impairments and Qualifications and Responsibilities for the Speech-Language Pathologists Providing Language Services ([Rule 6A-6.030121, F.A.C.](#))
- Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Emotional /Behavioral Disabilities ([Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#))

The use of the problem solving process is a shift from previous practice and was initiated in 2004 with the reauthorization of the federal IDEA and the corresponding regulations in 2006. The focus has now shifted from “identifying and diagnosing characteristics internal to the student and moves to identifying effective intervention and instruction.” The emphasis is no longer on disabling conditions. The following questions can be used to evaluate a student’s response to instruction/intervention and serve as a basis for special education eligibility decisions:

- What is the discrepancy between the student’s level of performance and the peer group and /or standard?
- What is the student’s educational progress as measured by rate of improvement?
- What are the instructional needs of the student?

Consent and Evaluation Requirements for Eligibility Determination

The State Board of Education (SBE) **Rule 6A-6.0331(1)**, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), *General Education Intervention Procedures, Evaluation, Determination of Eligibility, Reevaluation and the Provision of Exceptional Student Education Services*, permits districts to conduct academic and behavioral evaluations when planning interventions in the general education setting, **districts must clarify when parental consent is required and how to determine completion of the evaluation procedures when students are referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education. Parental consent for evaluation is required prior to conducting an initial evaluation for determination of eligibility for special education services.**

An evaluation can be defined as “a test or battery of tests that are scheduled and administered on a given date. An evaluation also refers to all procedures used to determine whether a student is a student with a disability and the nature and extent of special education and related services needed (**Rule 6A-03411(1)(I)**).

An evaluation may consist of but is not limited to the following:

- All relevant **assessment tools** and **strategies** used to collect functional, developmental, and academic information about a student in order to determine specialized instructional need, and if the student is eligible as a student with a disability.
- Existing data on the student **prior to obtaining parental consent for evaluation**. Existing data could include:
 1. Classroom performance data
 2. Observations
 3. Interviews
 4. Screenings
 5. Progress monitoring
 6. Diagnostic assessments
 7. District and state assessments
 8. Any other additional assessments procedures prior to obtaining consent

The following criteria constitutes the need for obtaining consent for evaluation:

- When the student's response to interventions indicates that intensive interventions are effective **but require a high level of intensity and resources to sustain growth*** or performance (this is concluded by fading the intervention and measuring student response).
- When the student's response to interventions indicates that **the student does not make adequate growth** (measured by state-approved, grade level benchmark/standards or behavioral expectations) given effective core instruction and intensive, individualized, evidence-based interventions.
- When a parent initiates a request for an initial evaluation.
- Once the TPST suspects a disability. This could occur within ANY Tier of instruction and is not exclusive to Tier 3 Instruction/Intervention.

Parental consent is not required when evaluation and assessment procedures are used to inform instruction and intervention for general education (**Rule 6A-6.0331(1)**). All aspects of instruction/intervention and problem solving are to be met with fidelity prior to evaluation for eligibility. Failure to do so could result in the unnecessary delay of special education services.

What documents must be included in the referral packet when a student is referred for an eligibility staffing?

State Board of Education rules require that, for a student suspected of having a specific learning disability or language impairment, the documentation of the determination of eligibility must include a written summary of the **group's analysis of the data**. The written summary must incorporate the elements listed in Rule **6A-6.03018** and **6A-6.030121, F.A.C.:**

- a. The basis for making the determination
- b. Observations establishing the relationship between behavior and academic functioning
- c. Educationally relevant medical findings
- d. Data confirming the existence of a specific learning disability or language impairment, including performance discrepancy, rate of progress, and educational need
- e. The group's determination of the effect of other factors, and evidence that one or more of the factors is not the primary cause of the student's difficulty
- f. MTSS information documenting the intervention plan, student-centered data collected, the level of response of instruction/intervention, parent involvement, and required signatures

The written summary must reflect the professional opinion of the group responsible for determining eligibility. **The expectation is that the rationale and/or justification for the team's decision be clear from the evidence provided and the summary of the team's analysis of that evidence.** The only documents that should be included in the packet and delivered to the ESE office are those listed on the Flagler Schools MTSS Folder Dividers. Please note that there should be **one** set of graphs showing the student's responses for **EACH** tier. Please do not include copies of emails, notes from phone conversations that do not have a direct bearing on the MTSS process, or other miscellaneous documents to "pad" the referral packet. **If it doesn't provide data necessary for the eligibility determination, please do not include it in the packet.** If it is felt that the documents are relevant to any potential ESE eligibility decision, they should be paper clipped together and placed at the very back of the MTSS folder.

What happens when parental consent cannot be obtained or is refused for initial evaluation or reevaluation for Special Education Supports?

In accordance with Rule 6A-6.03311, if a parent of a student suspected of having a disability who is enrolled in public school or seeking to be enrolled in public does not provide consent for initial evaluation or the parent fails to respond to a request to provide consent, the school district may, but is not required to, pursue initial evaluation of the student by using mediation or due process procedures contained in Rule 6A-6.03311. The school district does not violate its child find obligations if it declines to pursue evaluation. **The district office must be notified of these occurrences and provided with evidence of all communication attempts. All due process and mediation procedures require district approval and district guidance.**

If the parent refuses to consent to the reevaluation, the school district may, but is not required to, pursue the reevaluation by using the consent override provisions of mediation or due process. The school district does violate its child find, evaluation or reevaluation obligations if it declines to pursue the evaluation or reevaluation. The informed parental consent for reevaluation need not be obtained if the school district can demonstrate that it made reasonable efforts to obtain such consent and the student's parent has failed to respond and district approval has been given. **The district office must be notified of these occurrences and provided with evidence of all communication attempts. All due process and mediation procedures require district approval and district guidance.**

Special Note:

Due process and mediation procedures are reserved for **extenuating circumstances only**. Every effort must be made to ensure the parent is included and well informed regarding all instructional decisions pertaining to general education instruction, curriculum, and all interventions leading up to eligibility and reevaluation.

How do ESOL/ELL and MTSS interface with one another?

When evaluating for Specific Learning Disability or Language Impairment eligibility determination, Flagler Schools has a “rule of thumb” that students who qualify for ESOL/WIDA services should receive those services for at least one full year before they are evaluated for SLD or LI. This is based on the fact that English language proficiency (or lack thereof) has a direct impact on the results of the tests that are used to determine the IQ/achievement discrepancy. In most instances, it is best to wait a sufficient period of time for ESOL services to improve the student's English language proficiency to make sure the test results are valid. As mentioned before, this is a “rule of thumb” or recommendation and not a mandate. Certain circumstances may warrant the need for earlier determination for special education services for an ELL student. They may include but are not limited to the following:

- Documentation of known previous medical conditions
- A parent’s requests for an assessment
- An incident or injury, with a medical professional’s request for an assessment/evaluation.
- Known brain damage
- Problems with hearing or vision
- Physical disability
- Cleft palate
- Cerebral palsy
- Brain injury
- Polio
- Post traumatic stress
- Documented severe malnutrition

With MTSS being the sole method for SLD determination, it is even more important to make sure the difficulty is not due to an English language proficiency issue and the problem solving process is thorough. **In addition, there is also no basis for delaying the student’s entry into the MTSS process until after twelve months of ESOL services have been completed.** MTSS interventions should be occurring concurrently with the ESOL services. Doing so, however, would mean that, in most cases, time on the tiers would need to be extended significantly, because language acquisition takes longer in most cases than a skill acquisition, in general. **However, waiting a full year to even begin the MTSS process with an ESOL student would potentially deprive that student of a year of extra support he or she could be receiving.**

Private Evaluations

With the change in the process for determining whether or not a student has a specific learning disability (SLD), IQ/Achievement/Process tests completed by private evaluators may not completely address the new eligibility criteria as provided in State Board Rules. The district is not in a position to dictate how private evaluators complete their assessments. However, the requirements as outlined in this manual must be documented. The private evaluator may document the process or the parents shall follow the intervention procedures established by the school district. Private evaluations will be considered as a part of the process.

Concurrent Evaluations

When parents request that the school district undertake an evaluation of their child, the district has two options:

1. Obtain consent to evaluate and immediately begin the evaluation process
2. Refuse to Evaluate, if there is no educational justification for completing and evaluation.

If the child is performing academically at an average level or above in all areas, and there are no significant emotional or behavioral issues interfering with learning, the district may consider refusing to evaluate the student. The TPST will review the request and make a determination as to whether or not an evaluation is justified. If they decide that one is not warranted, the school psychologist will complete a Prior Written Notice Informed Notice of Proposal or Refusal to Take a Specific Action letter, send it to the parents, and file a copy in the student's cum folder. **A decision such as this must be supported with ample evidence.** As a 'rule of thumb', Flagler Schools makes every effort to honor parental requests for the purpose of determining or ruling out a student's need for special education services.

If the child is performing below average in any area and/or there are significant emotional or behavioral issues interfering with the student's learning, the district should obtain consent to evaluate and begin the MTSS process immediately. In this situation, a TPST meeting should be scheduled ASAP, and a combined Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention plan should be developed, so that the student begins receiving all three tiers of interventions simultaneously. The process must be completed within 60-school attendance days (which roughly equates to three calendar months, depending on school vacations that may occur throughout the school year). By the end of the 60-school day period, a meeting must be held to review the data and make a determination as to eligibility for ESE services. If there is not enough data, the team may need to determine the child *ineligible* for ESE services, but if there is sufficient data to support an eligibility determination, then the team should not hesitate to do so.

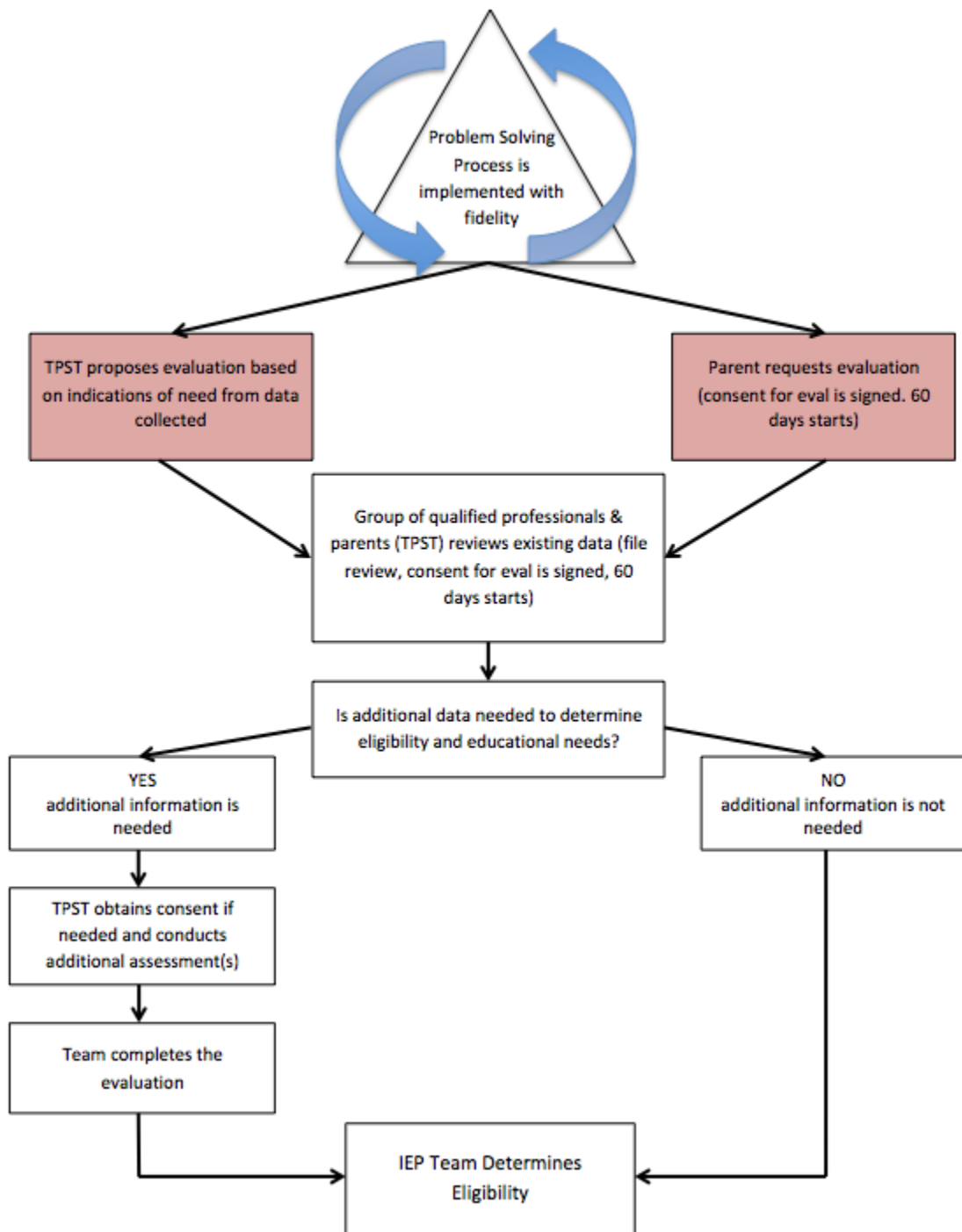
****All documentation that is required for the regular MTSS process is also required for the concurrent evaluation process, although the process itself is expedited.**

What circumstances constitute acceleration to eligibility prior to the completion of general education interventions?

In accordance with Rule 6A.6.0331, general education intervention requirements are not required of students suspected of being gifted or who are being considered for eligibility in accordance with Rule 6A.03020, F.A.C., for special education and related services for students who are homebound or hospitalized. The general education intervention requirements set forth in Rule 6A-6.0331 may not be required of students suspected of having a disability if a team that comprises qualified professionals and the parent determines that these general education interventions are not appropriate for a student who demonstrates a speech disorder or severe cognitive, physical or sensory disorders, or severe social/behavioral deficits that require immediate intensive intervention to prevent harm to the student or others.

-- most content Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

Eligibility Consent and Evaluation Flowchart



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:

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

Fidelity of Infrastructure

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

Fidelity of the Problem Solving Process

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.

Fidelity of Instruction and Intervention for Academics and Behavior

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).

Tier 1/Core	In Tier 1, 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).
Tier 2/3	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 (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.

The Impact of Attending to Fidelity

A deliberate emphasis on fidelity enables the teacher to:

- Establish functional relationships between instruction and student outcomes
- Replicate instruction/intervention
- Generalize to other settings and among other learners
- Target fidelity as a potential reason for unintended outcomes
- Detect and *prevent* poor instructional fidelity

Potential Data Source for Assessing Fidelity

- Self-Assessment of MTSS (SAM)
- Tiers 1/2 and Tier 3 CCCs
- Tier 1/2 Observation Checklist, Problem-Solving Team Meeting Checklist
- PBIS Implementation data
 - Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ)
 - PBS Implementation Checklist (PIC)
 - Benchmarks for Advanced Tiers (BAT)
- Walkthrough data, lesson plans
- Tier 2 and 3 intervention documentation worksheets

--Adapted from Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving

Problem Solving in the Tiers for Behavior



Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for Behavior

Multi-Tiered System of Supports, commonly referred to as MTSS, focuses on “the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions.” (NASDSE, 2007)

What are the core principles of MTSS for Behavior?

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) strategies can be applied to students’ social behavior, as well as to academic achievement. The core principles of MTSS remain the same regardless of the problem-solving target. A MTSS approach is based on three main components:

1. Continual application of a structured problem-solving process
2. Reliance on an integrated data system that is used to inform problem solving
3. Utilization of a multi-tiered model of support delivery that enables the efficient use of school resources.

What is a structured problem solving process?

Flagler Schools, in accordance with the State of Florida, has adopted a four-step process that includes:

Problem Solving Steps:

Step 1: Problem Identification- What’s the problem?

Step 2: Problem Analysis- Why is it occurring?

Step 3: Intervention Design- What are we going to do about it?

Step 4: Multi-Tiered System of Supports- Is it working?

The four-step, problem-solving model of MTSS for Behavior looks very simple. First, problem behaviors of all students, groups of students or individual students must be identified. Next, it is critical to understand why those behavior problems are occurring. This step is the problem analysis. Based on an understanding of why the behavior is occurring, **school personnel and teams can develop effective and efficient interventions to address the problem behavior and then progress monitor whether students are responding to the interventions.**

Why is an integrated data system so necessary for problem solving?

The success of the MTSS for Behavior process is dependent on a number of critical features. First, the problem-solving approach requires the use of accurate data for decision-making at each level and step of the process. This means that schools have to have ways of collecting, maintaining, and accessing their data that are easy to use, relevant, and accessible to decision makers, and easily summarized in a way that’s understandable to teachers and parents.

The types of data collected will differ according to the focus of the problem-solving process. For example, problem solving at the entire school level requires the analysis of summary data that is based on the behaviors of the entire student body; while problem solving for an individual student requires the analysis of specific patterns of behavior for that student. Understanding which kinds of data to collect requires a deeper understanding of each level or tier of support.

What is School-Wide Positive Behavior Support?

A major advance in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on 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.). Positive behavior support (PBS) is an application of a behaviorally based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. In other words, PBS uses evidence-based practices to change school systems, school environments and ultimately the behavior of staff and students. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining universal (school-wide), supplemental (classroom and targeted groups), and intensive (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. Flagler Schools has implemented the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) framework at all of its schools.

Why is it so important to focus on teaching positive social behaviors?

In the past, school-wide discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehavior by implementing punishment-based strategies including reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Introducing, modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important part of a student's educational experience. **Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them, is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of School-Wide PBS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.**

What is a systems approach in School-Wide PBS?

An organization is a group of individuals who work together to achieve a common goal. Systems are needed to support the collective use of best practices by individuals within the organization. The School-Wide PBS process emphasizes the creation of systems that support the adoption and durable implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures, and fit within ongoing school reform efforts.

School-Wide PBS is an interactive approach that includes opportunities to correct and improve four key elements:

- Outcomes: academic and behavior targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators.
- Practices: interventions and strategies that are evidence based.
- Data: information that is used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions.
- Systems: supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of the practices of PBS.

Tier 1 Behavioral Instruction and Supports

What is Tier 1 MTSS for Behavior?

The goal of MTSS for behavior at the Tier 1 level is the prevention of problem behavior and promotion of positive behavior by establishing processes that should facilitate success for 80% of the student body. An effective Tier 1 system should reduce the number of students who need more expensive and time-consuming resources at Tiers 2 and 3. So, if more than 80% of students respond to Tier 1 supports, the school has maximized their resources and is able to meet the needs of more students more effectively. At Tier 1, data are collected to determine the effectiveness of universal (e.g. school-wide positive behavior support, comprehensive discipline plan) interventions.

Two questions should be answered at Tier 1.

1. Do 80% of the students in the school respond positively to the school-wide discipline plan?
2. Does the behavior level of the target student differ significantly from that of the peer group?
Alternatively, does a gap exist?

What is Tier 1: Universal Support?

Tier 1: Universal Support involves system-wide efforts to prevent new cases of a condition or disorder. As a system-wide Universal Support effort in schools, positive behavior support consists of rules, routines, and physical arrangements that are developed and taught by school staff to prevent initial occurrences of problem behavior. For example, to prevent injuries to students caused by running in hallways, schools may develop Universal Supports by

1. establishing and teaching the rule, “walk in the hallways;”
2. creating a routine in which staff station themselves in the hallways during transition times to supervise the movement of pupils; or
3. altering the physical arrangement, such as making sure that an adult is with any group of students when they are in the hallways.

What are we trying to prevent?

It goes without saying that we want to prevent the major “behavioral earthquakes” that we hear about in the news: violent acts against teachers or other students, theft, bullying behavior, drug use, and the like. **Research; however, has taught us that efforts to prevent these serious problems are more successful if the “host environment”—the school as a whole—supports the adoption and use of evidence-based practices.**

Practices that meet these criteria include teaching and rewarding students for complying with a small set of basic expectations for conduct, such as:

1. “Be safe,”
2. “Be responsible,” and
3. “Be respectful.”

These expectations translate into sets of rules that differ according to various settings in the school. Thus, on the playground “be safe” means stay within boundaries and follow the rules of the game. In hallways and on stairs, it means to keep your hands and feet to yourself and to walk on the right side. Some parents and educators believe that students come to school knowing these rules of conduct, and those who don’t follow them simply should be punished. **However, research and experience has taught us that systematically teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. It also establishes a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.** Finally, the use of Universal Support strategies has been shown to result in dramatic reductions in the number of students being sent to the office for discipline in elementary and middle schools. In effect, by teaching and encouraging positive student behavior (i.e., positive behavior support), we reduce the “white noise” of common but constant student disruption that distracts us from focusing intervention expertise on the more serious problems.

What are the components of a comprehensive Tier 1: Universal system of discipline or positive behavioral interventions and supports?

Effective school-wide behavioral systems have seven major components:

1. An agreed upon and common approach to discipline
2. A positive statement of purpose
3. A small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff
4. Procedures for teaching these expectations to students
5. A continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations
6. A continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior and
7. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis.

How do we know if Tier 1: Universal Support systems of discipline or positive behavior supports are effective?

It is essential that schools, when implementing a school-wide system of discipline or positive behavior support, monitor its effectiveness on a regular and frequent basis. Regular monitoring and evaluation are needed in order to:

- Prevent ineffective practices from consuming time and resources
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of current procedures
- Eliminate elements of the system that are ineffective or inefficient
- Make modifications before problem behavior patterns become too durable and resistant to change.

Different kinds of data can be used to assess the outcomes and fidelity of Tier 1 supports and include but are not limited to:

1. **Office discipline referrals** (ODRs) provide a school-wide measure of the impact of Tier 1 activities for all students.
2. **Out-of-school and in-school suspensions** (OSS/ISS) provide a measure of the impact of Tier 1 activities on students who may require Tier 2 and 3 support.
3. **Exceptional education referrals/requests for assistance** may provide a measure of whether classroom support processes are lessening the need for teachers to consider referrals for more intensive support.
4. **Faculty surveys** will provide a measure of the overall attitude and response of the faculty to changes in Tier 1 supports.
5. **Observations** of school settings including classrooms can provide data on the fidelity with which interventions are being implemented and the outcomes of those interventions.
6. **School Climate Surveys** can identify if staff, students and parents are pleased with the PBS process and outcomes (i.e., school is safer, students are able to learn, system is easy to implement, etc.).

These outcome data can be used in conjunction with other measures that determine the level of fidelity of a Tier 1 program (the degree to which procedures reflect best practice and are carried out as intended). Formal evaluations of fidelity, such as the Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ), School Evaluation Tool (SET), or custom measures are typically used at least once a year while additional tools can also be used to evaluate outcomes and fidelity on a more frequent basis.

So what are the decisions that the MTSS for Behavior team will need to make at Tier 1?

The first question is **“Did we do what we said we would do?” If Tier 1 procedures are not carried out the way they were designed (with fidelity), then schools cannot determine whether or not students are responding to the interventions. In this scenario it is unlikely that there will be a reduction in the overall number of students who need more intensive services.**

The second question is **“Did it work?”** Targeted Problem Solving Teams (TPST) will use their data to make this decision. **If all or most of the students are not responding to the Tier 1 intervention, then the Tier 1 supports may need to be reassessed and reworked.** Many of the interventions in Tier 1 will target all the school environments, but it is likely that the Tier 1 data analysis will identify the need for some classroom-level support and targeted training opportunities. For instance observations, ODRs, referrals for support and other data might indicate that many teachers and classrooms are experiencing behavior issues. Therefore, the entire school faculty would benefit from professional development activities that focus on classroom behavior

support. When a few staff members generate a substantial number of the disciplinary referrals, targeted support should be provided to those teachers.

What if Tier 1 Universal Supports don't work?

Tier 1: Universal support, through positive behavior support, does work for over 80% of all students in a given school (based on a criterion of the number of students who have one or fewer office discipline referrals per month). But obviously, it will not work for everyone. For a variety of reasons, some students do not respond to the kinds of efforts that make up Tier 1: Universal Supports.

Implementing systematic Tier 1: Universal strategies offer several advantages:

1. It reduces large numbers of office discipline referrals for minor problems.
2. Having a system for documenting the occurrence of problem behaviors (e.g., office discipline referrals) provides a way to determine which students need more intensive intervention. For example, one criterion for considering the need for moving into supplemental Support for a student or group of students might be four or more office discipline referrals in a month. Without Tier 1: Universal Supports, the number of students meeting this criteria; thus requiring additional help, may be much larger.
3. Finally, a Universal system determines whether the school is meeting the needs of all students, prior to the consideration of more intensive and expensive Tier 2 and 3 supports.

Are there other ways to identify students who may need additional support?

There will be some students who need additional support even after Tier 1: Universal Supports have been delivered and implemented with fidelity. How are these students, who require additional support, readily identified? ODRs (Office Discipline Referrals) are one way to identify these students'; ODRs will target *some* students in need of intervention, but may fail to identify a large portion of students who have additional mental health or behavioral needs. If schools are trying to implement MTSS with fidelity, they will need to develop a process for identifying students in need of supplemental supports who are not identified by ODR data.

Consistent with the MTSS philosophy, **screening measures** should be used to make sure we identify students who need additional support EARLY, and not wait for them to have ongoing problems.

Just as with academic screening tools, behavioral screening needs to:

1. Be easy to administer.
2. Be completed quickly,
3. Provide accurate data about students who need more intensive services,
4. Identify students with internalizing *and* externalizing mental health issues, and
5. Be administered up to 2-3 times each year, or on an as-needed basis for new students and students with sudden changes in their mental health status.

Screening/Progress Monitoring Tools

Flagler Schools utilizes the SRSS-IE (Student Risk Screening Scale-Internalizing and Externalizing). The SRSS-IE assessment is a universal screening tool that helps identify students who are at risk for behavioral problems. Teachers assess various risk factors for each student in their classroom to determine who is at-risk.

Responding to these students with additional support may prevent their behavior problems from escalating over time. In addition to screening for individual students, schools can use the SRSS-IE to look at school-wide data for program evaluation.

Once a student has been identified through a screening process, schools need to determine whether the student has been taught the school-wide expectations in context, and whether he/she has been rewarded for displaying those expectations. If not, then schools cannot assume the student is having a poor response to the Tier 1 interventions and the TPST should consult with these students' teachers to increase their use of the school-wide system.

Special Note: Any student who scores between 9-21 for Externalizing items; 4-15 for Internalizing items (elementary); and 6-18 for Internalizing items (middle/high school) MUST be referred to the school counselor/building-based MTSS Team for further review to determine the need and appropriateness of more intensive intervention.

How do we organize our school's team to provide effective MTSS for Behavior?

As schools move towards providing a more comprehensive and systemic system of behavioral supports for their students, they will need to investigate ways in which their staff members can work together more effectively and efficiently.

With MTSS, schools will need to identify a group of individuals (TPST) who can lead their school through the problem solving process at all tiers of service, for academic problems as well as behavior problems.

Tier 2 Behavioral Instruction and Supports

What are Tier 2 Targeted Supports?

If the target student's behavior differs significantly from that of the peers and the peer behavior meets school expectations, then the interventions move to Tier 2.

Tier 2 Targeted Supports are designed to provide additional or targeted interventions to support students who have access to Tier 1 Universal Supports and are not responding positively to them. Targeted Supports are more intensive since a smaller number of students within the middle part of the triangle are at risk for engaging in more serious problem behavior; therefore, needing more support. Common Targeted Support practices involve small groups of students or simple individualized intervention strategies. Targeted Support is designed to be used with students who are at risk of chronic problem behavior, but for whom high intensity interventions are not essential.

Targeted Support often involves targeted group interventions with a few students or larger groups (30 students or more) participating. Targeted Supports are an important part of the continuum of behavior support needed in schools and can be implemented by typical school personnel. Targeted Supports are also recommended as an approach for identifying students in need of more intensive, individualized interventions. Specific Targeted Supports include practices such as:

1. “Social skills club,”
2. “Check in/check out” and
3. The Behavior Education Plan.

How many students may need Tier 2 Targeted Supports?

Approximately 15% of your student body may need Tier 2 supports. This percentage is not absolute; schools with strong Tier 1 supports will have a reduced need for Tier 2 supports.

Can students receive individual behavior support plans at Tier 2?

Yes. Individual PBS plans at the Tier 2 Targeted Support level involve a simple assessment to identify the function a problem behavior serves (Functional Behavioral Assessment or FBA). This differs from the Tier 3 FBA in that the Tier 2 support plan is less comprehensive and is created by the TPST. It may be comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies that include a range of options such as:

1. Teaching the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors,
2. Rearranging the environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors can be encouraged, and
3. Monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing this simple plan over time.

This assessment and behavior planning process should be simple and involve a brief consultation with the student’s teacher(s) **and include one or more strategies which match the context of the classroom and the function** of the student’s problem behavior.

What differentiates Tier 2 Targeted Supports from other systems of positive behavior support?

The main difference between targeted and other levels of positive behavior support is the focus on supporting students at risk for more serious problem behavior. Targeted Intervention addresses the needs of students who require more support than is available for all students (i.e., Universal Support) and less support than is available for individual students who need flexible, focused, personalized interventions (Tier 3 Intensive Support). This means that Targeted Intervention allows teams to select features of the process (e.g., types of programs or interventions, data collection tools used, information gathered, and degree of monitoring) to provide more focused behavior support to students with behavior needs that do not require intensive, individualized plans.

When should a program of Tier 2 Targeted Supports be implemented and who should be involved?

Decisions to implement Targeted Supports are usually grounded in records of student behavior compiled by classroom teachers or other professionals. The decision to use Targeted Supports will be made by the school's TPST. Targeted Support should be a collaborative (rather than expert-driven) process. Tier 2 interventions should be research-based, easy to administer to small groups of students, and require limited time and staff involvement. The types of interventions applied within a school building should be dictated by the needs of its student population.

In addition, schools should rely on progress monitoring procedures to ensure that their interventions are effective and appropriate for the students. With effective progress monitoring in place, schools are, in essence, providing the research base for their selected interventions.

What are the key features of Tier 2 Targeted Supports?

Tier 2 Targeted Supports are implemented through a flexible, but systematic, process. Key features of Targeted Support interventions include:

1. Continuous availability
2. Rapid access (within 72 hr.)
3. Minimal implementation effort required from teachers
4. Consistent with school-wide expectations
5. Implemented with the awareness and assistance of all staff/faculty in a school
6. Flexible intervention based on assessment
7. A match between the function of the problem behavior and the intervention
8. Adequate resources for implementation
9. Continuous monitoring of student behavior for decision-making.

With limited resources, how do we prioritize the students who may need or benefit most from Tier 2 supports?

Initially, schools may not have the interventions, personnel, or resources to address the needs of every student identified in the school-wide screening process. Teams will need to develop a process for prioritizing students according to their level of need. Data that can inform this process include:

1. A teacher recommendation process
2. # Office Discipline Referrals (ODR's)
3. # minor classroom incidents
4. Academic level
5. Exceptional Student Education status
6. # absences, tardies
7. Parental input
8. SRSS-IE total Score between 9-21 for Externalizing items; 4-15 for Internalizing items (elementary); and 6-18 for Internalizing items (middle/high school)

Students with behavior concerns who are below grade level academically should receive interventions to address both areas of need. Students who do not meet priority criteria may be waitlisted and continue to receive Tier 1 supports until Tier 2 supports become available.

How do we know if we are implementing our Tier 2 Supplemental Support programs with fidelity?

Even the best interventions, if they are implemented poorly, will be ineffective in changing a student's behavior. **Teams cannot make decisions about whether an intervention was effective in helping a student unless the intervention was implemented as intended.** If interventions are being implemented in non-classroom settings, fidelity will need to be measured in two locations: first, to be sure the intervention is being implemented as intended in the non-classroom setting, and secondly in the classroom, to be sure a generalization plan is being followed.

For example, teachers of students receiving pullout, supplemental social skills lessons will need to know what skills are being taught during each session, so they can prompt for those skills and provide recognition as the student displays them in the classroom. Similarly, the facilitators of the pullout sessions will need to hear from the classroom teachers about their students' progress outside of the pullout group.

How do we know when a targeted intervention plan is effective?

Effective targeted interventions produce measurable changes in behavior and improvements in a student's quality of life (e.g., participation in integrated activities, improved social relationships, independence and self-sufficiency). Behavioral data continues to be collected on target students throughout Tier 2 interventions. Tier 2 interventions are continued when the data demonstrate that the behavior of the target student is moving closer to benchmarks or peer group expectations. Direct observations and frequent monitoring of progress are widely used methods for evaluating these outcomes, and determining adjustments that might be warranted when progress does not occur within a reasonable time.

Traditionally, evaluation of intervention effectiveness usually occurs only after a student has been receiving an intervention for several weeks. With MTSS for Behavior, students' progress under different interventions is tracked much more consistently, and with much more specific data. While teacher ratings may still be used as the primary data source, the ratings are given **at least** once each day, and a specific numerical value is assigned to them so that they may be graphed. This attention to detail allows for more timely and accurate decision-making. Progress monitoring tools should have the following characteristics:

1. They assess specific behaviors or skills that directly relate to the student's area of need
2. They can measure small amounts of growth over time
3. They can be completed efficiently
4. They can be administered repeatedly
5. They can be easily summarized in graphic format.

The **Behavior Report Card** (contact your School Psychologist or Behavior Specialist for a variety of examples) is one such progress-monitoring tool that can be used across the day with multiple teachers to track a student's progress in mastering replacement behaviors. The Behavior Report Card can also be adapted to collect student data on a wide range of Tier 2 interventions. Tier 2 Targeted Supports are designed to be quick and efficient, and can be used with small groups of students as soon as their needs are identified. Once the additional supports are delivered and the students are responding positively, they may fade back to only receiving Tier 1: Universal supports. Tier 2 interventions can be discontinued when data demonstrate that the target student's behavior is within peer expectations and is maintained by the universal intervention. Some students will continue to need the targeted supports in order to be successful in a general education environment. Tier 3

services may need to be considered if a student is not making progress in spite of repeated Tier 2 targeted interventions.

Tier 3 Behavioral Instruction and Supports

What is Tier 3 Intensive Support?

Intensive Supports are designed to focus on the needs of individuals who exhibit patterns of severe or extreme problem behavior. Students who require Tier 3 services generally require individually developed interventions delivered with a frequency and intensity that involve resources and personnel in addition to the general education teacher. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of positive behavior supports in addressing the challenges of behaviors that are dangerous, highly disruptive, and/or impede learning and result in social or educational exclusion. PBS has been used to support the behavioral adaptation of students with a wide range of characteristics, including developmental disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, as well as students with no medical diagnosis or Exceptional Student Education classification.

Intensive Support is most effective when there are positive universal and targeted systems in place. In addition, the design and implementation of individualized supports are best executed when they are conducted in a comprehensive and collaborative manner. The process of developing supports should involve the student with behavioral challenges and the supports should be tailored to the student's specific needs and circumstances.

The goal of Intensive Support is to diminish problem behavior and to increase the student's adaptive skills and opportunities for an enhanced quality of life. Tier 3 supports should also meet the behavioral needs of students with the most intensive and/or persistent problems, in the most effective and efficient manner, and be offered in the least restrictive setting possible.

What are the critical components of Tier 3 Intensive Supports?

Intensive Support involves a process of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that investigates, in greater detail, why a behavior is occurring. This FBA is utilized in the development of a positive behavior intervention plan (PBIP) 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. This FBA/PBIP differs from the Tier 2 FBA conducted by the TPST.

The PBIP should be comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies, including a wide range of options such as:

1. Guidance or instruction for the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors
2. Some rearrangement of the antecedent environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors encouraged
3. 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 (this is required when the target behavior is dangerous to the student or others—please review the Flagler County School District Policy on Manual/Physical Restraint), or major ecological changes, such as changes in school placements, in cases where more substantive environmental changes are needed. However, this action should occur only after Tier 3 interventions have been attempted and have been proven ineffective?

Tier 3 supports can be provided at different levels of intensity, depending on the student's level of need. Students with less intensive but frequent behavior problems may benefit from a simplified consultation process between the teacher and a skilled behavioral specialist, during which information for a brief FBA is collected and the formal problem-solving process is applied to the individual student.

Students with more intense behavior problems, or a continued poor Multi-Tiered System of Supports as determined through a brief consultation, may be supported through a more comprehensive process that includes a structured consultation with the student's teachers, which gathers specific information for a detailed FBA and the development of a more targeted and comprehensive PBIP.

In order for this process to be most effective, behavior specialists may need to have a role in training and coaching teachers and other school personnel in the individualized interventions, as well as assessing whether the interventions are being implemented as planned. The behavior specialist should determine whether the interventions match the context of the school and classroom so that they are likely to be implemented after direct consultation and coaching are discontinued.

What differentiates Tier 3 Intensive Supports from other systems of positive behavior support?

The main differences between Tier 3 Intensive Supports and other levels of positive behavior support are the focus and intensity of the interventions. The defining features of Tier 3 Intensive Supports (i.e., identification of goals, data collection and analysis, summary statements, multi-element plans, and a monitoring system) address the needs of individual children in a more comprehensive manner. Tier 3 Intensive Supports allow teams to vary features of the process (e.g., data collection tools used, breadth of information gathered, specificity and number of hypotheses generated, extent of the behavioral support plan, and degree of monitoring) to provide the most individualized behavior support possible.

When should a program of Tier 3 Intensive Supports be implemented?

IDEA requires that a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) be completed and a positive behavioral intervention plan (PBIP) be implemented when disciplinary sanctions result in extended periods (i.e., the first removal beyond 10 cumulative days and every change in placement) in which a student is removed from an environment or suspended (34 C.F.R. 300.520 (b) (c)). Individual systems of support are warranted in other circumstances as well (e.g., when problem behavior is interfering with educational progress, when students have chronic, durable problem behaviors that have not responded to previous Tier 1 and 2 interventions).

How do we identify students in need of Tier 3 supports?

Students are identified for Tier 3 supports when a poor response to interventions has been established at Tier 2. 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. Crisis situations and the severity of the problem behavior for a student may require that they receive the more intensive assessment and support resources at Tier 3 even if they have not had adequate exposure to Tier 1 and 2 supports.

When a student receives Tier 3 supports, he or she will continue to utilize supports that are offered as part of Tiers 1 and 2. However, schools may have to amend how those supports are utilized based on the Tier 3 problem-solving process and ongoing progress monitoring information.

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

In order to ensure that a behavior problem is not a result of a maladaptive classroom environment, schools have to consider how a student’s behavior compares to that of his or her peers. While this is readily accomplished with academic assessments, the process becomes much more challenging when applied to behavioral performance. At a minimum, schools need to investigate whether a student’s behavior is noticeably different from other students in their class. In doing so, it may be discovered that a classroom-level intervention is called for, as opposed to an individualized behavior plan. 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.

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

Tier 3 Intensive 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. It is also helpful to include people who have specific expertise in applied behavior analysis and intervention design. 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.

How should goals for Tier 3 Intensive Supports be determined?

Individualized positive behavior support focuses not only on decreasing specific behaviors of concern, but also building adaptive (and replacement) skills, and improving the individual’s overall quality of life. Goals should be based on a positive, long-term vision for the student developed with input from the student, the student’s family, and the support team.

How are Tier 3 Intensive Interventions implemented?

Tier 3 Intensive Interventions are implemented through a flexible, but systematic, process of functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention planning. The following problem-solving process illustrates the general steps of the process.

Step 1: Problem Identification (What’s the problem?)

Based on the available information, the team identifies the specific concerns and goals by determining:

1. What is the student doing that is problematic (observable behaviors)?
2. To what extent (frequency, intensity and duration) are these behaviors occurring?
3. What broad goals (academic/social behaviors to be decreased AND increased) does the team hope to achieve through intervention.

Members of the behavioral support team gather information through a variety of sources including review of existing records, interviews of support providers, and direct observation of patterns, antecedents, contexts, and consequences.

Step 2: Problem Analysis (Why is it occurring?)

The team uses the information to create summary statements or hypotheses that describe relationships between the student's behaviors of concern and aspects of the environments. These statements include:

1. When, where, and with whom the behavior is most/least likely to occur
2. What happens following the behavior (consequences-what they get or avoid), and
3. Other variables that appear to be affecting the person's behavior.

Step 3: Intervention Design (What are we going to do about it?)

A plan is developed, based on the summary statements, to address the behavioral concerns and fit within the environments in which it will be used and should include:

1. A measure of the student's strengths,
2. Clear goals for the intervention(s),
3. Adjustments to the environment that reduce the likelihood of problem,
4. Teaching replacement skills and building general competencies,
5. Contingent consequences to promote positive behaviors and deter problems, and
6. A crisis management plan (if needed). If the student has an IEP, the crisis management plan should be indicated in the IEP.

Step 4: Multi-Tiered System of Supports (Is it working?)

The team works together to ensure that the plan is implemented with consistency and is effective in achieving the identified goals. The team identifies the training and resources needed, determines how to evaluate outcomes (consistent data collection), determines who is responsible for monitoring implementation, and determines how often to review data-making adjustments in the plan, as needed.

How do we know when an individual plan is effective?

At Tier 3, fidelity of intervention implementation continues to be an important consideration for the school team. The school team will need to assess whether interventions are being done as often as necessary and as completely as necessary. Without clear measures of fidelity at Tier 3, it is impossible to assess a student's Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

Also, at Tier 3, progress monitoring must be done with greater frequency (at least weekly, sometimes daily, or throughout the day) and with more detailed information gathered. Effective Tier 3 interventions produce measurable changes in behavior and improvements in a student's quality of life (e.g., participation in integrated activities, improved social relationships, independence and self-sufficiency). Individual PBIPs include objective methods for evaluating these outcomes, and determining adjustments that might be warranted when progress does not occur within a reasonable time frame. However, the complexity of the progress monitoring cannot surpass the ability of the classroom teacher to measure behavior of one student while attending to the academic and behavioral needs of the entire class. For this reason, a behavior rating scale and other tools that can collect data on a student's progress both quickly and accurately may be utilized.

Can we ever fade supports at Tier 3?

Many students can be successful in a general education setting when provided appropriate function-based support. Once a student demonstrates a consistent pattern of success, teams should consider whether

elements of the PBIP can be reduced or gradually eliminated, without affecting the student's performance. Perhaps students can be successfully supported on Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions with a few additional supports. However, some students will need to continue to have a PBIP in place to support them; schools should continue progress monitoring these students to ensure their supports are appropriate and effective.

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

If a target student cannot maintain improved levels of behavior without the availability of intensive supportive services, then the student may be considered for special education eligibility as appropriate. For students with emotional and behavioral difficulties, special education eligibility usually is considered when a separate setting is required or the services of additional qualified personnel are required throughout the school day.

What is the time frame for the Behavior MTSS process?

Intervention plans are written with realistic goals implemented for a reasonable and realistic period of time. The term "reasonable and realistic period of time" has no specific definition and is left up to the team to determine, although in most cases, 6-12 months is probably a good rule of thumb. However, certain factors should be taken into consideration when attempting to determine a reasonable period of time for a particular student:

1. How far below expectations the student is performing (the further below expectations the student is performing, the longer it will take him/her 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. What else is going on in the student's life?

What should be done when there is a crisis situation?

Tier 3 Intensive 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 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. In certain instances some students may have an acute onset of emotional/behavioral characteristics where the severity of the emotional/behavioral manifestations requires immediate ESE services (Extraordinary circumstances, Rule 6A-6.030116FAC). An example could be a student coming from a residential hospital facility with a significant mental health diagnosis and a history of intensive support services in restrictive settings or a recent emotional trauma, which produces a need for immediate emotional and/or behavioral supports. **The need for such immediate ESE services should be infrequent and closely monitored.**

* Much of the content of this technical assistance paper was borrowed from the www.pbis.org and the <http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/> websites with permissions from the authors.

Establishing Early Warning Systems (EWS) in a Multi-Tiered System of Supports



What Is an Early Warning System?

Why do schools need an Early Warning System (EWS)?

Research shows that students at risk of falling off track could graduate on time if they were provided with the **appropriate** supports early enough and if those supports **were sustained**.

Allensworth, E. M., & Easton, J. Q. (2005, June)

What is an Early Warning System?

A System which:

- Utilizes predictive data
- Identifies off-track or at-risk students
- Targets interventions
- Reveals patterns and root causes
- Includes preventative systems that are beneficial for all students

Florida PS/RtI Project

While EWS provides means for identifying at-risk students, schools and districts must engage in data-based problem solving to identify the **root causes** for indicators and match evidence based interventions to student needs and monitor the effectiveness of the interventions in order to truly improve student outcomes.

Is an Early Warning System a requirement of the law?

Yes. The following statute (**1001.42(18)(a)(2)**) clarifies the expectations of an EWS:

(a) School improvement plans. —

1. The district school board shall annually approve and require implementation of a new, amended, or continuation school improvement plan for each school in the district. If a school has a significant gap in achievement on statewide, standardized assessments administered pursuant to s. [1008.22](#) by one or more student subgroups, as defined in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. s. 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); has not significantly increased the percentage of students passing statewide, standardized assessments; has not significantly increased the percentage of students demonstrating Learning Gains, as defined in s. [1008.34](#) and as calculated under s. [1008.34](#)(3)(b), who passed statewide, standardized assessments; or has significantly lower graduation rates for a subgroup when compared to the state's graduation rate, that school's improvement plan shall include strategies for improving these results. The state board shall adopt rules establishing thresholds and for determining compliance with this subparagraph.

2. A school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 shall include annually in its school improvement plan information and data on the school's early warning system required under paragraph (b), including a list of the early warning indicators used in the system, the number of students identified by the system as exhibiting two or more early warning indicators, the number of students by grade level that exhibit each early warning indicator, and a description of all intervention strategies employed by the school to improve the academic performance of students identified by the early warning system. In addition, a school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 shall describe in its school improvement plan the strategies used by the school to implement the instructional practices for middle grades emphasized by the district's professional development system pursuant to s. [1012.98](#)(4)(b) 9.

(b) Early warning system.

1. A school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 shall implement an early warning system to identify students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who need additional support to improve academic performance and stay engaged in school. The early warning system must include the following early warning indicators:

- Attendance below 90 percent**, regardless of whether absence is excused or a result of out-of-school suspension.
- One or more suspensions**, whether in school or out of school.
- Course failure in English Language Arts or mathematics.**
- A Level 1 score on the statewide standardized assessments** in English Language Arts or mathematics.

A school district may identify additional early warning indicators for use in a school's early warning system.

2. When a student exhibits two or more early warning indicators, the school's child study team under s. [1003.02](#) or a school-based team formed for the purpose of implementing the requirements of this paragraph shall convene to determine appropriate intervention strategies for the student. The school shall provide at least 10 days' written notice of the meeting to the student's parent, indicating the meeting's purpose, time, and location, and provide the parent the opportunity to participate.

The following chart can be used to support the School-Based Leadership Team and the Targeted Problem Solving Team in identifying the critical EWS Indicators by grade-level.

Indicator	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Attendance	Missed 10 % or more of instructional time	Missed 10% or more of instructional time	Missed 10% or more of instructional time In ninth grade with one or more absences within the first 20 days
Referrals and Suspensions	Two or more behavior referrals AND/OR One or more referrals with suspension defined in s.1003.01. (5) F.S.	Two or more behavior referrals AND/OR One or more referrals with suspension defined in s.1003.01. (5) F.S.	Two or more behavior referrals AND/OR One or more referrals with suspension defined in s.1003.01. (5) F.S.
Course Failures	Not proficient in reading by third grade	Failed a mathematics course Failed an English Language Arts course Failed two or more courses in any subject	In ninth grade with two or more failed courses in any subject In ninth grade and failed to progress on-time to tenth grade
Credits (units) GPAs (Middle and High School)			Grade point average less than 2.0
Retentions	Retained pursuant to s.1008.25 (4)(c), F.S.		

Florida PS/Rtl Project

The indicators listed above can be used to aid problem-solving teams in identifying how to prioritize student support using the following categories:

- On track (no indicators)
- Off track (one indicator)
- Extremely off track (two or more indicators)

Engaging in the Problem Solving Process

To engage in problem solving, having the right data is crucial. It is critical when analyzing data to always have these three questions in mind.

- What does the data tell us?
- What does the data not tell us?
- What data is needed for further analysis?
- Does the data indicate a systems issue or an issue occurring among a limited group of students?
- Does the data indicate a student in need of immediate interventions?

EWS Data Indicating a Systems Issue

ELEMENTARY																
Student Name	Grade Level	Birth Date	Gender	Race / Ethnicity	ELL	Referrals	Exclusionary	Days Present	Days Absent	Tardy	Early Dis.	APR 3-12 PC	Percentage	FCAT 2.0	2.0	2.0
JO	03	070520	M	Hispanic	LY	Y	K	155	23	0	7	2			C	4
JANE	03	082720	M	White		Y		157	23	0	0	1			C	5
JEFF	03	080620	M	Multi			K	178	2	0	0	2			B	4
JORDAN	03	121020	M	Black				177	3	0	0	1			C	4
MICHAEL	03	011820	F	White		Y		178	2	0	0	4			B	4
MATTHEW	03	071620	F	White				174	6	0	3	2			B	4
EMILY	03	072520	M	Black				179	1	12	9	40	2	196	D	12
FRED	03	021720	M	Asian	LY			162	18	0	0	24	3	208	C	4
SYNTHIA	03	092520	F	White				176	4	0	8	23	2	199	F	4
DEBBIE	03	112120	F	Black		Y		162	18	0	0	59	3	201	C	6
JUDI	03	012920	F	Black				52	1	3	0	74	3	203	B	8
PENNY	03	022720	M	White				178	2	0	0	29	4	221	C	8
PAM	03	080620	M	White			Z	180	0	1	7	64	4	224	B	7
JIM	03	121820	F	White		Y	L	168	12	2	5	99	5	235	A	8
JOHN	03	122820	M	Black				164	2	0	4	23	2	207	B	3
CHARLIE	03	082220	F	White				160	20	5	7	58	3	208	C	3
MARGA	03	052220	M	Black				174	6	7	0	25	3	219	B	3
MARY	03	101120	F	Multi		Y		167	13	0	0	72	4	225	F	3
KATHY	03	121120	F	White				157	23	0	0	95	4	226	C	3
KIM	03	102720	F	Black				180	0	0	0	90	4	230	C	3
KARA	03	081520	M	White				173	7	4	6	89	4	232	C	3
ROGER	03	121720	M	White		Y	L	172	8	3	3	30	4	232	F	3
FISHBA	04	112520	M	Black				136	37	2	9	73	5	240	C	3
MARTH	04	060920	F	White				158	22	1	15	63	5	269	D	3
KISHA	05	070919	F	Asian	LY	Y	W	168	12	2	4	10	1	166	D	0
LATASHA	05	012520	F	Black				178	2	0	12	13	1	193	F	7
SIMON	05	040419	F	Black				163	12	0	5	15	1	182	B	0

Possible Actions:

Determine if the student is "off track" or "extremely off track"

Identify root causes

Apply the 8-Step Problem Solving Process

EWS Data Indicating a Student Issue

HIGH SCHOOL DATA SUBSET																			
Student ID	Name	Grade Level	Birth Date	Gender	Race / Ethnicity	EL	F / Lunch	EST Code	Days Absent	AP1% Percentile	AP2% Percentile	AP3% Percentile	AP4% Percentile	AP5% Percentile	AP6% Percentile	AP7% Percentile	AP8% Percentile	AP9% Percentile	AP10% Percentile
1					Black		N	V	41	25	62	32	2	227	D	F	D	2	0.7
2									8	44	36	39	1	220	C	B	F	D	2.1
3	09	0720							31	12	15	18	1	189	D	F	D	5	1
4	09	0927	1996	M					2	20	25	25	1	213	D	D	F	3	0.67
5	09	0201	1997	F	White				24	4	17	4	1	251	C	D	F	D	1.2
6	09	1007	1996	F	Asian	LY	Y		1	29	48	33	1	213	F	B	D	8	2.1
7	09	0606	1996	F	Black	LY	N		23	46	44	33	1	234	C	F	D	1	1.2
8	09	0202	1996	M	Black		Y		19	15	29	20	1	220	F	F	C	8	2
9	09	1104	1995	F	Hispanic	LY	Y		19	25	34						F	10	1.5
10	09	0916	1996	M	White		N		9	33								4	3.8
11	09	1219	1995	M	Black	LY	N		7									0	2.1
12	09	1113	1993	F	Black		Y	C	5	4								15	1.5
13	09	0927	1996	M	Black		Y		3	20	35	35	1	212	D	D	F	2	0.67
14	09	0506	1995	M	White		Y		3	12	32	33	2	222	C	D	C	1	2.1
15	09	0915	1996	M	Black		Y		2	36	13	40	1	220	D	B	F	1	1.9
16	09	0712	1997	F	Hispanic	LY	Y		38	38	41	64	1	221	F	F	F	14	0.5
17	09	0202	1996	M	Black		Y		19	15	29	20	1	220	F	F	C	8	2
18	09	0126	1996	F	Black		Y	K	1	12	33	36	1	211	F	C	D	0	1.5
19	09	0113	1997	F	White		N		1	29	28	50	1	220	B	B	C	2	3.1
20	09	1006	1995	F	Black		Y		1	14	15	33	1	216	C	B	C	2	2.9
21	09	0123	1996	F	Black	LY	Y		0	13	20	38	1	221	B	B	C	1	3.1
21	09	1209	1995	F	Black		Y		0	27	52	39	1	217	D	C	D	0	0.019
23	09	0531	1996	M	Black		N	K	0	42	49	35	1	218	D	A	D	2	2.5

Possible Actions:

Identify root causes systems issues

Apply the 4-Step Problem Solving Process

More Indicators
Higher Level of Risk

Florida Department of Education
(2012)

Parental Involvement



The Parent as a Member of the TPST

Parent involvement is a key component of an effective MTSS infrastructure in a school or district. Parents should be invited to engage in the problem-solving process at all tiers of instruction. Parental engagement in the MTSS process is critical for student success. Parental input is a requirement of both ESEA and IDEA. Schools and districts have a responsibility to keep parents informed and support them in understanding student data, benchmark expectations, and the problem solving process.

Parental Engagement in Tier 1

Different kinds of information should be shared with parents at different tiers of instruction. Specific to Tier I instruction, data reflecting student progress within the core academic and/or behavioral curricula should be shared with parents of all students. During parent-teacher conferences, graphs of student progress should be provided with explanations regarding student performance. Strategies and materials for home instruction also should be shared. Also, parents may want to use a participation form to help them record notes during problem-solving meetings.

Parental Engagement in Tier 2

Students receiving Tier 2 targeted instruction, in addition to the core academic and behavioral curricula, must be progress monitored more frequently. Reports of student progress also must be shared with parents more frequently at this level. Obtaining parent input and engaging parents at this phase is critical for student success. Parents should be offered specific support regarding skills that need improvement. It might be helpful to provide the parent with written documentation of what data has been collected, the intervention plan(s) put in place to improve skills, and how the plan(s) are monitored. For students receiving additional support through tutoring, schools should make efforts to communicate with the parents/tutor to help bridge the understanding of deficit skills and evidence-based interventions that are being used to address the areas of concern. This helps to ensure that the targeted intervention being provided is aligned with the core instruction and supports.

Parental Engagement in Tier 3

Students receiving Tier 3 intensive interventions for specific academic or behavioral skills are progress monitored most frequently. Parents should be invited to participate in the problem-solving meetings to analyze their child's progress (response to the Tier 3 interventions) and help make decisions about their instruction. Schools should encourage parents to document services that are being provided outside of the school day. Parents should also be provided with detailed graphs and clear explanations of their child's response to instruction/intervention over time. If the team involved in problem solving is considering the need for evaluation procedures to potentially access special education resources, parents also must be informed of their procedural due process rights under IDEA.

*******Important Notification*******

All parent-initiated requests for evaluation for special education services must be honored and expedited in a timely manner in accordance with statute **Rule 6A-6-6.0331(3)(c)(2014)**. **All schools must provide parents with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities at the beginning of the evaluation process or any time by parent request.**

From the Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem-Solving

Helpful documents have been provided by the Florida Department of Education. Parents may reference the ***Parents Guide to Multi-Tiered System of Supports*** and ***Parent Information for Students Receiving Intensive Interventions***.

Appendix

MTSS Forms - Academic

[MTSS Procedures - ACADEMIC](#)

[MTSS Parent Letter](#)

[Parent Guide to MTSS](#)

[MTSS Student Observation Form](#)

[MTSS Cumulative File Review](#)

[MTSS Request for Tier 2 or 3 Support-ACADEMIC](#)

[MTSS Tier 2 or Tier 3 Intervention Plan-ACADEMIC](#)

[MTSS Change of Tiers Parent Letter](#)

MTSS Forms - Behavior

[MTSS Procedures - BEHAVIOR](#)

[MTSS Parent Letter](#)

[Parent Guide to MTSS](#)

[MTSS Student Observation Form](#)

[MTSS Cumulative File Review](#)

[MTSS Request for Tier 2 or 3 Support-BEHAVIOR](#)

[MTSS Tier 2 or Tier 3 Intervention Plan-BEHAVIOR](#)

[MTSS Change of Tiers Parent Letter](#)

[Student Risk Screening Scale-Elementary \(SRSS-IE\)](#)

[Student Risk Screening Scale-Secondary \(SRSS-IE\)](#)