

# PARENT AND FAMILY GUIDE TO A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

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

A multi-tiered system of supports is a framework for effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students. It is a prevention-based framework designed to improve learning outcomes through a layered continuum of supports (Three-Tiered Model).

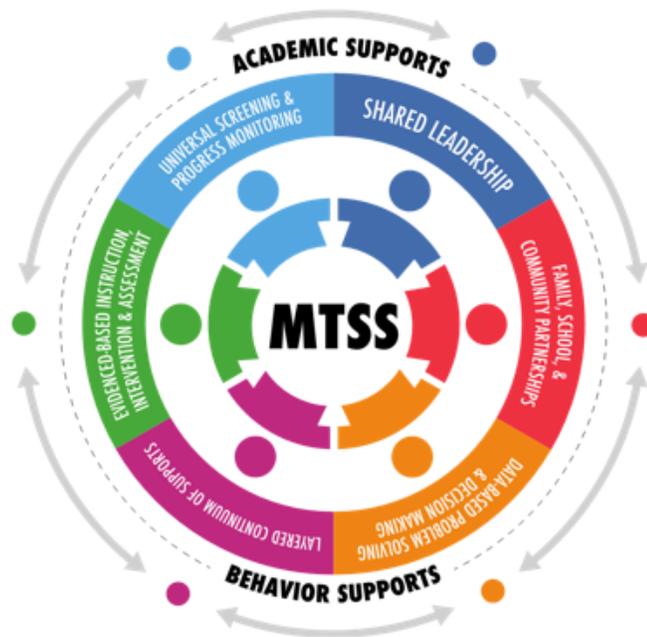
MTSS is.....	MTSS is not.....
A framework for supporting student improvement in both academics and behavior	A single curriculum or program
For ALL students including those who need enrichment	Just for struggling students
Flexible to meet the unique needs of districts and schools	A one-size fits all prescription
Data-informed and evidence based	Based on assumptions
A collaborating team of individuals working together to solve problems	The responsibility of one person
A framework for making decisions regarding interventions, or the need for increased supports/services	A pre-referral process for special education



## MTSS Consists of Six Essential Components:

- Shared Leadership
- Family, School, & Community Partnerships
- Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Layered Continuum of Supports (Tier I, Tier II, Tier III)
- Evidence-Based Instruction, Intervention, & Assessment
- Universal Screening & Progress Monitoring

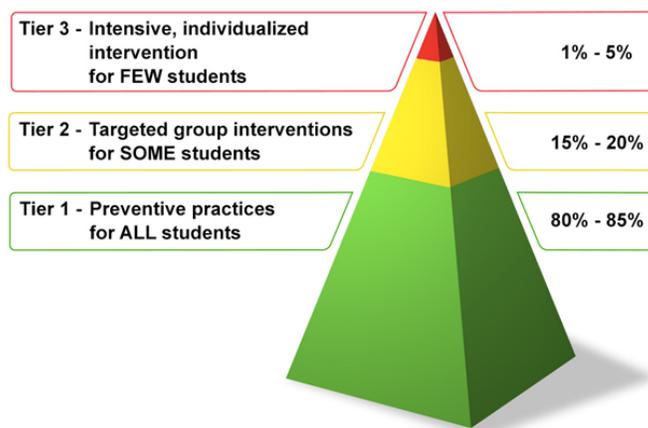
The essential components of a MTSS allow for a continuum of supports, working together endlessly, to improve student academic and behavioral outcomes by design, and redesign, of appropriate services through promotion of equitable practices.



## What is a Layered Continuum of Supports?

A Layered Continuum of Supports includes three tiers of instruction. Each layer of support increases with intensity from universal (ALL students) to targeted (some students) to the most intensive supports (few students).

- Tier I is the **UNIVERSAL** layer of support for ALL students and consists of high-quality classroom instruction provided by highly trained and qualified personnel. Tier I instruction occurs in whole group, small group, and individual settings. It is ongoing and cannot be replaced by an additional tier. It is layered by adding additional supports as needed.
- Tier II is the **TARGETED** layer of support for SOME students that consists of supplemental academic and behavioral supports provided in addition to core high-quality instruction.
- Tier III is the most **INTENSIVE** layer of support for FEW students and consists of the most intensive, targeted instruction and intervention specifically designed to meet the individual academic and behavioral needs of students.



## How Does a School/District Identify Students for MTSS Supports?

A student is considered for intervention supports if data indicates lack of adequate student progress. Multiple data points are utilized to determine the need for academic and/or behavioral supports. A team of individuals applies a problem-solving process in-order-to create a plan for students who need supplemental or intensive supports.

Districts and schools utilize available resources to determine how to meet the needs of ALL students. Decision rules regarding who will be placed in intervention are locally determined as the fidelity and integrity of intervention implementation must be considered by the team. When Tier II and Tier III numbers are elevated teams must consider the core instruction and what needs to be provided in the Tier I setting.

## Can My Child Progress Out of Intervention?

Intervention is a fluid process, and a student can move in and out of the tiers. For example, your child might begin the year at Tier III, move to Tier II, and finish the year at Tier I (or begin at Tier II, move to Tier I, and then back to Tier II). Tier placement is determined by the Teacher Support Team as data is analyzed throughout the year. Students are placed back at Tier I when multiple data points, including intervention progress monitoring reports, support that the student has made adequate educational progress.

## What if Interventions are Not Successful?

### Next Steps:

1. When data is reviewed and analyzed, a decision should be made regarding the success of the intervention plan. If it is concluded that the intervention plan was not successful the Teacher Support Team (TST) must decide if the intervention should be revised, goals adjusted, or the student should be referred to the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) for a Child Find Study. (Note: A referral to the MET may be requested at any time, by anyone, for any student. The MTSS process is not required for the evaluation process.)
2. Family, caregivers, teachers, or anyone who knows/works with/or encounters a child can make a referral for a Child Find Study if they suspect a disability is impacting a child's ability to learn.
3. Child Find is the district's responsibility to identify, locate, and evaluate all students suspected of having a disability.

## Questions Parents and Families Should Ask:

- What supports take place for my child in the classroom (Tier I)?
- What will be done during intervention time?
- Who will carry out my child's interventions?
- How often will my child receive intervention?
- How will my child's progress be monitored?
- When will I be updated on the results of the intervention(s)?
- How can I support my child at home?
- Are there any resources available?
- Does my child qualify for any accommodations in the classroom? On state testing?



## Additional Tips:

- Get to know your child's teacher(s), administrators, and intervention team.
- Contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns that you have.
- Have a clear understanding of grade-level benchmarks and what you can do to support learning at home.
- Attend conferences and meetings.
- Communicate what works/does not work at home during your TST meetings.
- Be open to recommendations.
- Provide written requests when asking for a Child Find Study.

## Opting Out of Intervention Services:

Academic and/or behavioral interventions provided as part of MTSS, and the three-tiered model, are general education supports that are layered to fit the needs of ALL students. Receiving intervention does not mean a child is receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). While best practice recommendation is for parents to attend TST meetings on a regular basis, parent permission is not required for a student to receive tiered supports as a means to maximize educational outcomes.

## Key Terms to Know:

**Child Find** is the district's responsibility to identify, locate, and evaluate all students suspected of having a disability. Students may be identified for a suspected disability regardless of tier, or placement, within the layered continuum of supports.

**Diagnostic Assessment** is a tool teachers can use to collect information about a student's strengths and weaknesses in an area. Diagnostic assessments provide information on why a student is struggling and the depth of the deficit.

**Evidence-based Interventions** are interventions that have been proven to be effective and improve student outcomes.

**Intervention** is explicit and systematic instruction provided for a student to help the student make appropriate educational progress by improving his/her academic and behavioral performance.

**Progress Monitor** is an assessment, provided at regular intervals, used to check student progress and determine if an intervention is successful.



**Teacher Support Team (TST)** is a dedicated and experienced group of school leaders responsible for reviewing data, creating, and implementing student intervention plans. This team assists in revising intervention plans as needed. Parents are a valuable resource to provide information that assists this team with intervention planning.

**Universal Screener** is a process in which academic and behavioral data are analyzed to determine whether a student is likely to meet, exceed, or not meet benchmarks. Universal screeners help determine who needs additional supports and what level of intensity is needed regarding intervention.

## Resources:

[https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Intervention/guidance\\_document\\_mtss\\_june2020.pdf](https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Intervention/guidance_document_mtss_june2020.pdf)

<https://www.interventioncentral.org/>

<https://dyslexia.yale.edu/>

<https://www.pbis.org/>

<https://www.understood.org/search-results/v1/search?query=intervention>

<https://intensiveintervention.org/>

<https://www.fcrr.org/>

