

Hendrick Hudson School District

MTSS District Plan



2024-2027

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I. Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

A. Introduction

MTSS is a general education initiative designed to address the needs of struggling and/or accelerated learners early in their educational experience. The language related to MTSS was included in U.S. education law with the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and incorporated into New York State Regulation 100.2.

MTSS begins with high quality research-based instruction in the general education setting provided by the general education teacher. Core classroom curriculum is aligned to the NYS Common Core Learning Standards and grade level performance indicators. MTSS is a multi-tiered process that provides instructional or behavioral support or extension to students by providing additional instruction based on individual weaknesses/skill deficits or demonstrated advanced learning in specific content areas. In remediation mode, each tier provides instruction with increased intensity such as smaller group size or increased instructional time focused on specific areas. The focus is on targeted intervention directed to the needs of the individual student rather than broad based instruction. MTSS aims to identify at-risk students in order to remediate specific deficits and avoid special education. For advanced learners in specific content, MTSS aims to provide learning opportunities through re-grouping on or above grade level.

Student outcomes drive instructional decision-making at every tier of the model. A systematic, data-based decision making (problem solving) method is used to decide not only what interventions to try but whether the implemented strategies are working for the student. Hendrick Hudson's MTSS process combines universal screening, progress monitoring, and high quality instruction for all students with interventions targeted at struggling students.

The four essential components of MTSS are:

- A school wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing academic failure
- Universal Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Data-based decision making for instruction, movement within the multi-level system, and disability identification (in accordance with Federal Law).

Across all three Tiers of instruction (see p. 5), all interventionists collaborate with the general education teacher and each other to provide continuity and congruence of instruction.

B. Appropriate Instruction

Appropriate instruction is defined in the "Response to Intervention: Guidance for New York State Districts – October 2010" as a core program that provides:

- High quality, evidence-based instruction to all students in the general education class provided by qualified teachers;
- Differentiated instruction to meet the wide range of student needs;
- Curriculum that is aligned to the NYS Common Core Learning Standards and performance

- indicators for all general education subjects; and
- Instructional strategies that utilize a formative assessment process. Instructional strategies based on scientific research identify those practices that demonstrate high learning rates and improved academic performance for most students.

C. Universal Screening

Academic screening assessments are conducted to identify students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening tests are typically brief, conducted with all students at a grade level, and followed by additional testing and short-term progress monitoring to verify students' risk status.

The iReady Assessment System for Reading and Mathematics will be the universal screening measure for all students K-8. Screenings will take place three times per year formally; informal additional assessments will be used to monitor progress throughout the school year (see 'Description of Services' section for more details).

After each benchmark period (fall, winter and spring), MTSS Teams at each building will convene. The teams are composed of the building principal, interventionists (which may include the school psychologist, academic intervention teachers, speech/language teachers, special education teachers, ENL teachers, and other teaching staff as appropriate) who will meet with classroom teachers to discuss the students' performance on the benchmarks.

Although teams will consider benchmarks and cut points (scores that separate the Tier considerations), they will also consider other factors, including the results of informal assessments, attendance, SEL concerns, along with any other information teachers provide. The teams will determine which students are not meeting benchmarks, and will then decide what type of monitoring and intervention a student needs, as part of the approach to assessment and intervention. The same review process exists for accelerated students. Upon review of the above-mentioned data points, the team will determine appropriate challenge steps in a particular content area, or overall.

Response to Intervention: 3 Tier Instructional Model Reference Sheet

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL, CORE INSTRUCTION (classroom teacher)

- Core content instruction and support
- Large group and differentiated instruction in small groups, daily
- General instruction/support to ALL students in ALL settings
- ALL students assessed 3 times per year with Universal Screener (iReady) and program-related benchmark assessments (ELA and Math)
- Progress Monitoring for small group instruction using District selected tools
- Evaluation of instructional program/delivery based on student data
- Teacher Teams (with common preps) meet 1x/month to discuss ELA data and 1X/month to discuss Math data with admins/Coaches/Academic Intervention Svcs (AIS) Support Specialists

TIER 2: TARGETED, SUPPLEMENTAL INTERVENTIONS

- **Intervention IN ADDITION TO TIER 1**
- Uses scientifically evidence-based interventions with fidelity based on student data, addressing targeted skill deficits and maintains thorough progress monitoring data
- Small group (no more than 6)
- Parent notified on Entry
- Progress Monitoring weekly using District selected tools
- Evaluate effectiveness of instructional changes based on assessment data
- AIS Specialists attend MTSS bldg level meetings and meet monthly with admins to review caseload

TIER 3: INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS

- **Intervention IN ADDITION TO TIER 1 (Tier 2 drops)**
- Uses scientifically evidence-based interventions with fidelity based on student data, addressing targeted skill deficits
- Small group (no more than 3)
- Parent notified on transition to Tier 3
- Progress Monitoring NO LESS than once every week
- A student need not be required to go all the way through Tier 3 before being evaluated if evidence exists to support a disability and/or other long-term planning (504 plan, additional Tier 3 cycle, etc.)
- AIS Specialists attend MTSS bldg level meetings and meet monthly with admins to review caseload

D. Multi-Tier Service Delivery Model

a. Tier I Instruction: Classroom Instruction for All Students

Core instruction takes place in the general education classrooms and includes all students. Instruction is currently aligned with the NYS Common Core Learning Standards. Core instruction (Tier 1) includes differentiation based on the abilities and needs of all students. Teachers identify groups in their classes in order to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Differentiated learning activities (e.g., mixed instructional grouping, use of learning centers, peer tutoring) are utilized to address individual needs.

It is expected that teachers meet in grade level/common prep monthly meetings, with coaches/admins to discuss concerns and explore potential Tier 1 interventions together before bringing a student forward for an MTSS meeting.

Data for all Tier 1 interventions is collected on the Tier 1 Intervention Implementation Form by hand, by the teacher for each area of concern (ELA, Math, Behavior)

b. Tier 2 Instruction: Tier 1 plus Targeted Intervention

**THIS IS WHERE BRANCHING MINDS DOCUMENTATION BEGINS...
for Classroom Teachers and AIS Specialists.**

Tier 2 is a secondary intervention intended for those students who are not responding to core instruction at Tier 1. This supplemental instruction is provided **in addition to**, and not in place of, core instruction provided in Tier 1, **including interventions provided by the classroom teacher in small group work**. Tier 2 interventions focus on areas of student need determined from the results of the data tools used at each level of the District (see 'Description of Services').

Tier 2 Interventionists may include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom Teachers
- Reading Teachers
- ENL Teachers
- Related Services
- Other highly qualified interventionists, *as determined by the District in accordance with NYS AIS guidance*

The location of a Tier 2 intervention may be the classroom or an alternate location to be determined by the school. Group size is approximately 3 – 6 students. Frequency of intervention provided varies; however, generally it is no less than three times per week for a minimum of 20 – 30 minutes per session. The duration of the intervention may last anywhere from 4-6 weeks. Tier 2 interventions are supported by research and vary by curriculum focus, group size, frequency, and duration based on individual student's responsiveness.

c. Tier 3 Instruction: Tier 1 plus Customized Intervention

Tier 3 provides tertiary intervention intended for those students who are not responding to instruction at Tiers 1 and 2. The third tier of this model creates intensive instructional interventions to increase an individual student's rate of progress. This tier provides greater individualized instruction in an individualized or small group session. These services are considered **supplemental instruction to Tier 1** and are not intended to replace either level of intervention. Individual diagnostic assessments are conducted to determine specific patterns of skills that the individual has and does not have for the purpose of designing effective instruction to remediate the students' deficits.

It may be determined that Tier 3 instruction looks much like tutoring. The location of a Tier 3 intervention is usually outside of the classroom. The change from Tier 2 to Tier 3 requires a smaller group size and/or increased frequency or longer time at each session. Students who receive a Tier 3 intervention will be monitored for progress using weekly Progress Monitoring probes.

E. Progress Monitoring Guidance

Progress monitoring refers to the practice of re-assessing to determine student performance following the use of targeted interventions. Data resulting from progress monitoring is used to determine next steps for students on an individualized basis. Progress monitoring tools are selected by the district in collaboration with administrators and interventionists at each school and are appropriately matched to the intervention they are determined to measure.

The results of progress monitoring are required for all MTSS Team Meetings and in any consideration of increasing/decreasing intervention. Parents are entitled to this information as it relates to any student movement within the Tiers.

Student responsiveness to interventions is assessed in two ways:

- Learning rate compared to the student's prior levels of performance and peer growth rates in a similar learning target
- Level of performance as compared to expected performance

It is helpful to take into account the following considerations when supporting ELLs through an MTSS model:

- **Teaching should be culturally responsive:** The student's prior experiences should be considered, including home language background and socio-cultural background.
- **Interplay of English Language Learning & Reading Instruction:** Teachers should consider the relationship between a student's language proficiency and his/her literacy skills. Reading fluency and comprehension may be strongly determined by vocabulary and linguistic proficiency of both the first and second language.
- **Interplay of English Language Learning & Math Instruction:** Linguistic proficiency and vocabulary comprehension are important when understanding math concepts. Several concepts of math are not necessarily universal.
- **Additional Variables:** Within RTI/MTSS problem-solving, **literacy and oracy (in both home and new languages), culture, and educational history** are variables to be considered when assessing and planning instruction for ELLs. In all three tiers, these variables stay consistent.
- **English Language Learning:** core instruction for all LEP/ELL students must always include English language learning as well.
- **Matching Instruction to Student Need:** Differentiated instruction should be used for ALL students; however, differentiated instruction for ELLs should consider the student's level of English proficiency and prior educational experiences in addressing cultural and linguistic differences. When determining appropriate instruction/intervention, the following list applies to **all levels** of ELL students:
 - Consider the amount and type of ELL instruction the student received in the past and in the present
 - If applicable, consider the amount and type of home language instruction in the past and in the present
 - Ensure that the language(s) used for intervention matches the language(s) used for core instruction
 - Consider the impact of language and culture on instruction and learning
 - Contact the family for guidance and feedback
 - Ensure that certified ELL teachers serve on the RTI/MTSS instructional decision-making team

F. Decision Making Model

The District employs a problem solving model in the MTSS process. Each school has an MTSS Team to which a student is 'referred' when a classroom teacher recognizes a lack of progress/accelerated understanding in either an academic or behavioral area. The process involves the team and the referring teacher walking through a series of questions related to the student:

- Conceptualize the problem (**Is there a problem? What is it?**)
- What variables may be influencing the problem (**Why is it happening?**)
- Delivery of targeted or individualized interventions (**What can we do about it?**)
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention (**Did the intervention work?**)

In this team meeting, appropriate interventions are determined, as well as the Tier placement in which those interventions will take place. Sufficient time must always be provided to determine if an intervention is working. The frequency, duration and intensity of interventions should be based upon student performance data, not a specified period of time. Effective data-based decision making includes:

- appropriate progress monitoring based on Tier of service (see earlier notes)
- a minimum of 4-6 data points in this progress monitoring process
- comparison to grade appropriate learning trajectory
- discussion of intervention fidelity

The District must develop rules/criteria to determine when -

- students are not responding adequately to instruction and need supplemental intervention
- students are responding adequately and no longer need support
- an intervention needs to be changed
- students **may** require special education referral (only after all Tier options have been exhausted)

The MTSS Team schedules follow-up meetings within 4-6 weeks of the initial meeting to review progress monitoring and make next step determinations. Schools may decide to assign an MTSS team member to follow up with the Tier interventionist before the next meeting. This collaboration would examine the fidelity of the intervention usage and review interim data points for progress monitoring.

G. MTSS Team Roles

- **Administrator/Principal:**
 - oversees the administrative details of the plan in their building
 - schedules/facilitates the building meeting
 - assigns staff to work with teachers and/or students
 - informs parents of student moves through the Tiers
- **Classroom Teacher:**
 - provides targeted Tier 1 interventions
 - keeps documentation on student progress in each intervention
 - attends MTSS meetings and keeps in touch with parents

- **Special Education Teacher:**
 - consults with classroom teachers on Tiered interventions
- **ENL Teacher, as needed**
- **Reading/Math Specialist:**
 - helps choose, use, and interpret student screenings
 - helps select teaching materials and methods
 - helps monitor students' progress
 - works with parents on things to do at home
- **School Psychologist/Social Worker:**
 - participates in team meetings
 - provides training and consultation to other MTSS team members
 - assists with behavior plans for individual students, if needed
- **Speech Language Therapist:**
 - administers student screenings and participates in team meetings
 - works with students whose language issues are affecting their academic skills
- **School Nurse:**
 - provides any needed insight into existing/potential student physical limitations such as eyesight, hearing, etc.

H. Parent Notification/Information

Parents are essential to a child's success in school. When a child needs supplemental instruction/accelerated learning, school staff will describe that instruction to the parent. School staff may also ask the parent to tell them anything that they think may affect their child's learning (i.e. frequent absences, trauma, problems with friends, etc.) and work with the school to design an effective intervention for their child. Parents are encouraged to partner with the school to provide extra practice to develop skills.

A school district's process to determine if a student is responding to research-based core instruction shall include written notification to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about:

- The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided pursuant to the structure and components of the MTSS program selected by the school district;
- Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
- The parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services. [8NYCRR 100.2(ii) (1) (vi)]

Parents should be notified of their right to request an evaluation for special education services at any time. In the event a student is referred for an evaluation to determine if the student has a learning disability, the parent will have received appropriate data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction. [8NYCRR 200.4(j) (1) (ii) (b)]

II. Academic Intervention Services

A. Overview

Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are student support services, which supplement instruction provided in the general curriculum, and are designed to assist students in meeting proficiency with the Common Core Learning Standards. Under an MTSS Plan, AIS is one support option within Tier 2 and Tier 3 services. Intervention in these tiers is intended to assist students who have not met or who are at risk of not meeting the designated performance levels on State assessment in English Language Arts (grades 3-12), Mathematics (grades 3-12), Content Support at Secondary is provided through AIS.

AIS is available to students with disabilities on the same basis as non-disabled students. The services for students with disabilities shall be provided consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The NYS Education Department defines additional instruction as the provision of extra time for focused instruction and/or increased student-teacher instructional contact time. The regulations also indicate that services may vary in intensity depending on the student's needs, but must be designed to respond to student needs as indicated through State Assessment results and/or the district-adopted or district-approved procedure that is consistent throughout the district at each grade level.

NYSED Guidance for AIS requires that the District use a procedure that considers multiple measures of student performance must be used for deciding which students shall receive AIS. The district/school-developed procedure must be applied uniformly and equitably at each grade level.

These multiple measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Developmental reading assessments for grades K-6;

2) New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT);

3) Benchmark and lesson-embedded assessments for reading and math in grades K-6 based on teacher designed and selected assessments;

4) Common formative assessments that provide information about students' skills;

5) Unit and lesson assessments for ELA, mathematics, science, social studies and Languages Other than English (LOTE) for grades 7-8; and/or

6) Results of psychoeducational evaluations based on a variety of assessments and inventories. After the district/schools considers a student's scores on multiple measures of student performance, they will decide whether the student must receive AIS.

B. Description of Eligibility and Services: K-5, 6-8, 9-12

K-5 MTSS Services

Eligibility Criteria

At the K-5 level, students are eligible for additional support services based on the following criteria:

- Lack readiness/early literacy skills (K-2)
- Performing one or more grades below expectations in a given curriculum area
- Social/Emotional/Behavioral Needs
- Speech/Language/OT/PT Needs
- Attendance
- At risk of not meeting proficiency on NYS ELA/Math assessments as determined by NYSTP Performance Levels

Academic Data Tools

At the K-5 level multiple measures are used to determine when a student meets eligibility criteria. In addition to the district's universal screener, all students at the K-5 level are assessed with the following tools:

- Into Reading Assessment Tools
- Eureka Squared Assessment Tools
- Universal Screener results in ELA and Math
- BIMAS SCREENER FOR SEL/SPEECH/OT/PT, AS NEEDED
- NYSTP (ELA, Math, Science) as appropriate to the grade level
- Report card performance

Explanation of Services

The Tier of service provided is determined through the building's MTSS Team and is based upon the level of student need in any given area of concern (ELA, Mathematics, Behavior). The possible type of services include:

- **Tier I** – additional small group support is provided within the home classroom by the classroom teacher
- **Monitoring** – classroom teacher and specialist check on student progress informally
- **Consultation** – classroom teacher collaborates with a specialist to develop/monitor classroom intervention
- **Tier 2** – additional small group instruction is provided by a specialist/classroom teacher through a push in or pull out scheduling
- **Tier 3** – intensive small group instruction is provided by a specialist with increased frequency and/or a smaller group

Frequency and Duration of Service

Dependent upon the Tier of student need, the frequency and duration of service will vary from:

- 1 – 6 times per week/cycle
- Minutes per session are related to the intervention used
- Service may begin and end at any time during the school year

Exit Criteria:

At a convened MTSS Meeting, student progress is assessed at Tier of service through the re-administration of the Data Tools listed above. A student is considered to have reached the exit criteria for their area of need when they approach the grade level benchmarks established by each Data Tool. Multiple measures data must be examined and overwhelmingly suggest achievement of goals has been met.

6-8 MTSS Services

Eligibility Criteria

At the 6-8 level, students are eligible for additional support services based on the following criteria:

- Universal Screener results for ELA and Math
- NYSTP (ELA, Math) as appropriate to the grade level
- Report card performance
- Attendance
- Social/Emotional Needs

Academic Data Tools

At the 6-8 level multiple measures are used to determine when a student meets eligibility criteria. In addition to the district's universal screener, students at the 6-8 level are assessed with the following tools to determine support need:

- Running Record (ELA)/Key Math (Math)
- Universal Screener results in ELA and Math
- BIMAS SCREENER FOR SEL, SPEECH/OT/PT, AS NEEDED
- NYSTP (ELA, Math, Science) as appropriate to the grade level
- Classroom/Report card performance

Explanation of Services

The Tier of service provided is determined through the building's MTSS Team and is based upon the level of student need in any given area of concern (ELA, Mathematics, Science, Behavior). The possible type of services include:

- **Tier 1** – additional small group support is provided within the home classroom by the classroom teacher
- **Monitoring** – classroom teacher and specialist check on student progress informally
- **Consultation** – classroom teacher collaborates with a specialist to develop/monitor classroom intervention
- **Tier 2** – additional small group instruction is provided by the student's subject teacher through a separate period
- **Tier 3** – intensive small group instruction is provided by a specialist with increased frequency

Duration of Services

Dependent upon the Tier of student need, the frequency and duration of service will vary from:

- 1 – 5 times per week
- Minutes per session are related to the intervention used
- Service may begin and end at any time during the school year

Exit Criteria

At a convened MTSS Meeting, student progress is assessed at Tier of service through the re-administration of the Data Tools listed above. A student is considered to have reached the exit criteria for their area of need when they approach the grade level benchmarks established by each Data Tool. Multiple measures data must be examined and overwhelmingly suggest achievement of goals has been met.

9-12 MTSS/AIS

Eligibility Criteria

At the 9-12 level, students are eligible for additional support services based on the following criteria:

- Regents Performance
- Universal Screener (ELA or Math)
- Attendance
- Social/Emotional Needs
- Report card performance
- Risk of not meeting proficiency on NYS Regents Assessments, as determined by local benchmarking results.

Academic Data Tools

At the 9-12 level multiple measures are used to determine when a student meets eligibility criteria. If a student is determined to be at risk, the student may be assessed with the following tools:

- Informal Reading Inventory
- Key Math
- Universal Screener results in ELA and Math
- BIMAS SCREENER FOR SEL, SPEECH/OT/PT, AS NEEDED
- Report card performance

Explanation of Services

Support service is determined through the building's MTSS Team and is based upon the level of student need in any given area of concern (ELA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Behavior). The possible type of services include:

- AIS Math and/or AIS Literacy (considered for content support)
- Counseling

Duration of Services

Dependent upon the Tier of student needs, the frequency and duration of service will vary from:

- 1-5 times per week
- 30-40 minutes per session
- Service may begin and end at any time during the school year

Exit Criteria

At a convened MTSS Meeting, student progress is assessed at Tier of service through the re-administration of the Data Tools listed above. A student is considered to have reached the exit criteria for their area of need when they approach the grade level benchmarks established by each Data Tool. Multiple measures data must be examined and overwhelmingly suggest achievement of goals has been met.