



Behavior Support Services Handbook

Merced City School District Behavior Support Services

Nationally, schools are being asked to deliver “Safe, inclusive, and positive school climates that provide students with supports such as evidence-based tiered supports and social and emotional learning” (“Dear Colleague Letter” by Dept of Education & Justice, 2014).¹

Some of the supports that are specifically referenced:

- *The development and implementation of a comprehensive school and classroom management system*
- *Creating a positive educational environment*
- *Encourage students to accept responsibility*
- *Assist students in developing social and emotional competencies (e.g., self-management, resilience, self-awareness, responsible decision-making)*
- *Refer students with complex social, emotional, or behavioral needs for psychological testing and services, health services, or other educational services, where needed.*
- *Involve service providers in addressing disciplinary incidents; preventing future disciplinary concerns; reintegrating students who are returning from suspensions, alternative disciplinary schools, or incarceration; and maintaining a safe, inclusive, and positive educational environment.*

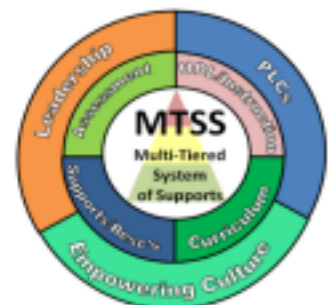
The state of California, Ed Code Ch. 5.5. Behavioral Interventions (56520.b.3)², states that character and behavior instruction must be a part of a student’s free and appropriate public education.

“(3) That when behavioral interventions, supports, and other strategies are used, they be used in consideration of the pupil’s physical freedom and social interaction, be administered in a manner that respects human dignity and personal privacy, and that ensure a pupil’s right to placement in the least restrictive educational environment.”

In order to provide behavior supports effectively, research based best practices should be implemented through the lens of response to intervention (RTI) or Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS); in a similar manner to academic intervention. RTI and MTSS are methods that integrate assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. “The four essential components of an MTSS/RTI framework are screening, progress monitoring, multi-tier prevention system, and data-based decision making” (Essential Components of RTI, 2010)³.

Students are supported through a MTSS/RTI framework by “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” (Griffiths et. al., 2007)⁴.

Merced City School District (MCSD) has adopted a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for both academics and behavior. Through our site’s tiered systems of intervention, students and staff are able to access services and interventions on multiple



⁵ Hannigan, J.D., & Hauser, L. (2015). “The PBIS Tier One Handbook: A Practical Approach to Implementing the Champion Model.” 2

levels based on a data driven analysis of student’s needs; while effectively using site resources and personnel.



MCSD’s MTSS model for behavior incorporates, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) framework to proactively address behavior management. Through the implementation of the PBIS Champion Model by Jessica Hannigan, MCSD sites have established a multi-tiered systems approach to behavior that promotes a positive school culture and the behavioral supports needed for all children to achieve both social and academic success. It is the application of these behavior-based systems that increase a school’s capacity to create an environment for teaching and enhanced learning (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015)⁵.

An effective multi-level prevention system provides access to increasingly intense levels of instruction and interventions: Tier 1 (available to all), Tier 2 (available to at risk students who need targeted supports), and Tier 3 (available to few students who require individualized supports).

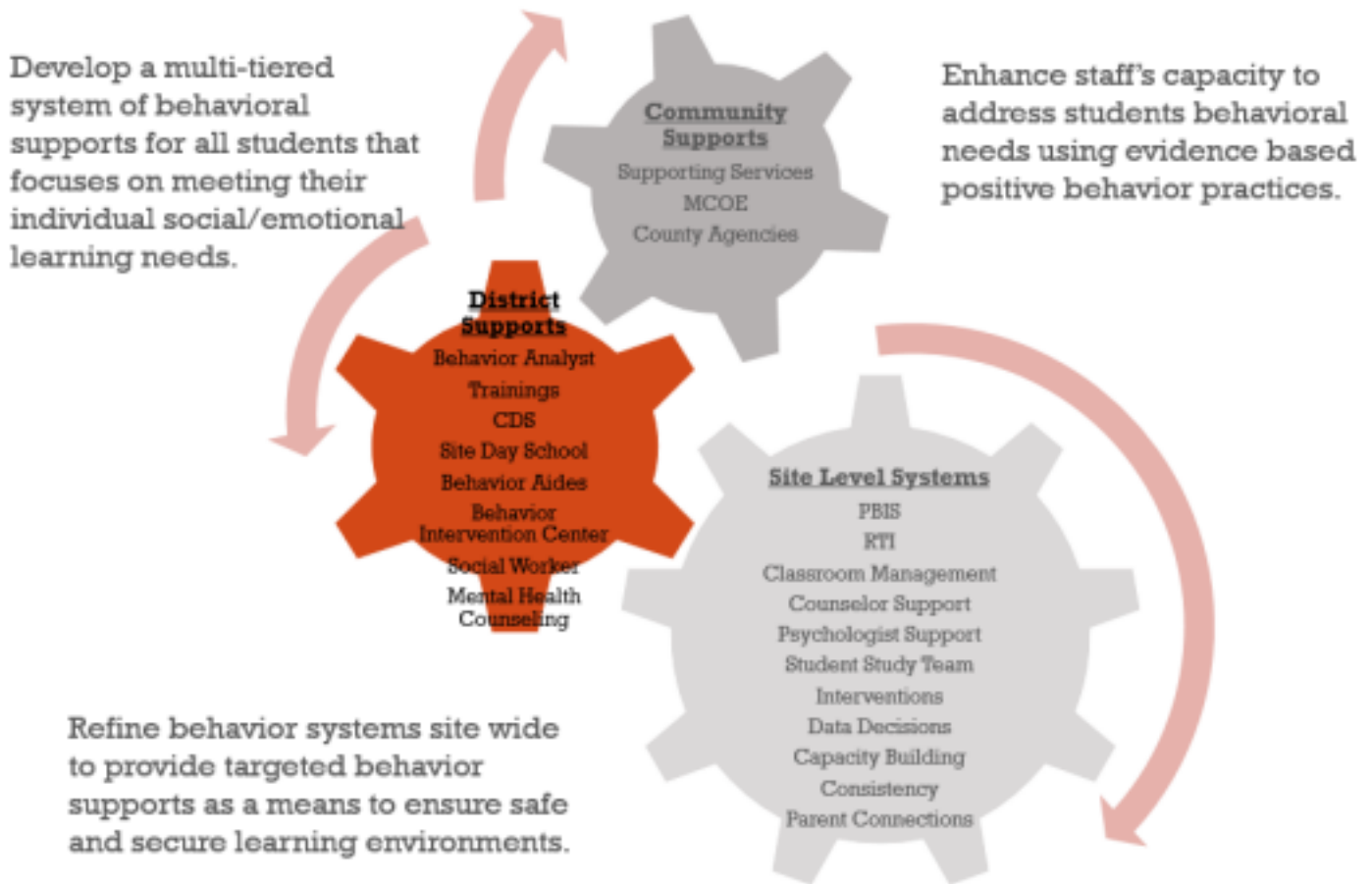
To support the MTSS process in the areas of screening and progress monitoring, MCSD charges the Student Success Teams (SST) or Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) teams with screening students when needs are presented, outlining goals to determine progress benchmarks, and by performing continual progress monitoring to ensure effective use of site and district resources while providing students with the least restrictive interventions and placements needed to support their continual success.

MCSD is committed to providing students and staff with high quality evidence based behavior interventions. Site staff use a data driven process to identify and implement interventions by working as a team whose target is to identify student success through measurable goals.

To ensure an efficient multi-tiered system of support an outline of MCSD’s Behavior Support Personnel staff roles and essential duties is also included. This is followed by a summary of MCSD’s Behavior Support Programs which provides information on accessing Community Day School, the Behavior Intervention Center, and Educationally Related Mental Health Services.

Finally, the MCSD MTSS Referral form completes this handbook. This referral form the access point for all behavior support services including: Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Social Workers, Title 1 Coordinator, and Community Day School. This BSS Handbook is a guide to help support the students who truly require Tier 2 or 3 behavior supports. A request for this type of behavior support should only be made after site supports have had been attempted with fidelity and using progress monitoring. MCSD is committed to continuing to support sites in developing and refine their implementation of a multi-tiered system of support to address our student’s behavior needs.

⁵Hannigan, J.D., & Hauser, L. (2015). “The PBIS Tier One Handbook: A Practical Approach to Implementing the Champion Model.”



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