



MTSS

Multi-tiered System of Supports



**A Reference Manual
2025-2026**

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Overview of Multi-Tiered System of Support

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework that grew out of Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). MTSS brings the two together in order to meet the needs of the whole child. It prioritizes the academic, behavioral, and social/emotional needs of all students - including students with advanced learning needs, students with disabilities, students served through 504, and English Learners.



Image from illuminateed.com

MTSS is a collaborative, evidence-based approach to differentiating and individualizing instruction and intervention - including academic, behavior, and social-emotional needs - for the academic and lifelong success of all students. MTSS is designed to be effective with the leveraging of collective knowledge, expertise, and resources to help teachers understand the needs of all learners, and to make informed, strategic decisions to meet those needs and support students.

The MTSS process begins in the general education classroom with quality Tier I instruction for all students. It progresses as students receive research-based and targeted supports matched to their mastery level and needs. Progress Monitoring for students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 is used to track student progress for students and make decisions about ongoing student needs.

The process is ongoing. It begins with the definition of what determines a student with a need. It continues with the analysis of student data, the implementation of agreed upon strategies, and the evaluation of these strategies for ongoing decision-making.



MTSS relates to Alabama Achieves. Alabama Achieves is a strategic plan for “helping children find success in school and their lives thereafter. It is the “What?” The Alabama Multi-Tier System of Supports is focused on proactively ensuring equitable access to opportunities to improve outcomes for all children. It is the “How?” The “Why?” for combining these two is. “Every child. Every chance. Every day.”

According to the Alabama MTSS Framework, the AL-MTSS is a comprehensive framework that encompasses the academic, behavioral, physical, mental health and wellness, and social-emotional needs to support the whole child. The AL-MTSS uses a proactive, team-driven approach that involves data-based decision making, team-driven leadership, safe and supportive learning environments, engaged stakeholders, and PreK-Grade 12 evidence-based instructional strategies. The purpose is to implement and sustain a continuum of evidence-based practices that align with the needs of all students and eliminate barriers to teaching and learning. DeKalb County Schools will use this as the basis for our framework.

DeKalb County Schools Comprehensive Framework Elements

The DeKalb County Board of Education is committed to working schools and communities to develop a comprehensive framework of supports that corresponds to that of the ALSDE:

- Provides for the **academic needs** of every child.
 - Every child is prepared to meet the academic needs of every grade PreK-12. Schools will prepare students so that they are intellectually challenged and academically prepared for success in school, college, employment, in a global environment.
- Provides for the **behavioral needs** of every child.
 - Every child is met with equitable access to opportunities that build success, confidence, and skills. Our schools will communicate a high level of expectations for all learners so that every child feels valued and accepted for what they bring to the learning environment and what they will take into the world.
- Provides for the **physical/mental health wellness needs** of every child.
 - Every child and adult should encounter a learning community that promotes a healthy lifestyle and provides a physically and mentally safe and supportive educational environment. Our schools will promote environments where the wellness and needs of all are respected and nurtured so that all may be their best and work towards their goals.

- Provides for the **social-emotional needs** of every child.
 - Every child and every adult is equipped with the self-awareness skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; the social awareness and relationship skills necessary to feel and show empathy for others and maintain positive relationships; and the skills for responsible decision making in and out of schools so that each can achieve school, career, and life goals.
- Provides for the **engagement needs** of every child.
 - Every child is engaged in varied and meaningful activities with skillful and caring adults. Our schools will provide engaging interaction that occurs before, during, and after the school day so that there are multiple opportunities for involvement, ensuring every child has every chance, every day.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports, based on the ALSDE Model

Data-based Decision Making	Data-based decision making refers to the ongoing process of gathering and analyzing multiple sources of data to make the decisions needed for improving the educational environment and processes for all children. It is necessary to assist educators in making critical choices for the needs of the whole child, and in identifying areas of need for their on-going professional learning and development of critical content knowledge.
Team-driven Leadership	Team-driven, shared leadership is part of a whole school reform practice related to a school's organization, operation, and academics by creating decision-making opportunities for stakeholders. By sharing responsibilities, school decision making becomes more collaborative, comprehensive, and self-reflective because more people are committed to every child's success. This practice fosters personal investment and creates a shared responsibility for the performance and results of a school.
Safe and Supportive Learning Environment	A safe and supportive learning environment is one that enables students, educators, and the school as part of a larger system to learn and grow in dynamic ways. Every student needs and deserves a safe, supportive, and healthy environment in which they feel respected and free from physical harm, intimidation, harassment, and bullying. This will eliminate barriers to teaching and learning by promoting high expectations, encouraging innovation, and supporting positive risk-taking for students and faculties.
Engaged Stakeholders	Engaged stakeholders are those individuals, internally and externally, who have an equitable interest in providing a positive school experience for all students. Engaged stakeholders include staff who have a direct responsibility in creating the conditions necessary for students to learn and grow, families vested in the long-term success of children, and community leaders who have a stake in the development of a well-prepared workforce.

<p>PK-12 Evidence-based Instructional Strategies</p>	<p>PK-12 evidence-based instructional strategies are those practices, techniques, and teaching strategies proven to work through experimental research studies or large-scale research field studies/ meta-analyses. Educators should consider those academic and behavioral practices and programs grounded in scientific evidence that lead to improved educational outcomes. Educators must also consider the unique characteristics of the children being served, the setting in which the program or practice will be implemented, and the diverse learning needs of every child. Leaders must understand the gap between current practices and prioritized outcomes, work to identify the practices that show a positive impact on student outcome goals, match resources to student needs, and then measure formatively and summatively for success.</p>
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Priority Areas

According to ALSDE, there are 5 Priority Areas for MTSS.

Academic Growth and Achievement

Increase student outcomes in all academic areas with a focus on reading and mathematics.

College, Career, and Workforce Readiness

Engage, challenge, and support every student in relevant, impactful instruction that equips him or her with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully enter college, career, and workforce.

Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

Provide safe environments that support the physical, mental, emotional, social, and cognitive development of all students in every school.

Highly Effective Educators

Ensure highly effective educators are equipped with the content knowledge and teaching skills to address the needs of all learners in every school.

Customer-Friendly Services

Build a collaborative environment at the Alabama State Department of Education that provides fast, reliable customer service for citizens, state leaders, and local education agencies.

Tiers of Instruction

“MTSS is characterized by a continuum of integrated academic and behavior supports reflecting the need for students to have fluid access to instruction and supports of varying intensity levels,” (Collier, 2020). The triangle model is often used to present the three tiers and the percentage of students that should fall into each tier. The graphic below varies in that it uses the three tiers to describe the level and intensity of the instruction/interventions provided across the continuum in order to meet student needs, as well as giving an idea of who should benefit from each tier.

With MTSS, the academic and social-emotional-behavioral needs of all learners are identified and supported through increasing levels of intensity and time. It is important to note that with MTSS, the focus is on the integration of systems of support, not just interventions.

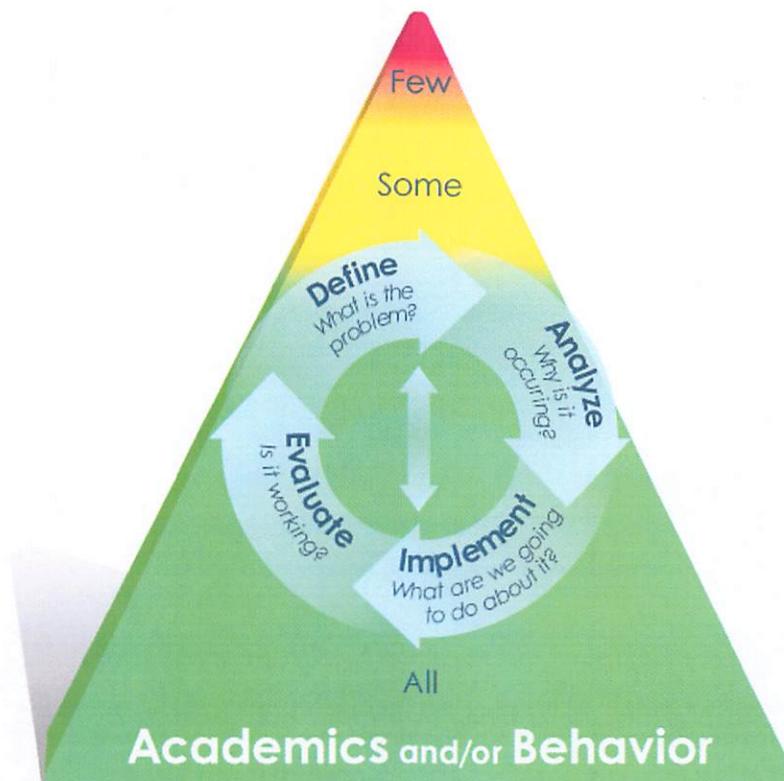


Image from <https://www.collierschools.com/domain/3446>

Tier 1 Instruction should target all students. This is the core curriculum and instruction that is aligned to content standards from the Alabama Course of Study. The curriculum is designed and implemented to meet the needs of all students, including advanced learners, English Learners, and students served with a 504 or IEP. Tier 1 instruction creates a positive learning environment and promotes social and emotional development through explicit curriculum and best practices for instruction. Approximately 80-90% of students should achieve content mastery at this level.

Differentiated instruction begins in Tier 1. Core instruction should be linguistically appropriate for ELs, and should be universally designed for all students. Preparation for differentiated instruction requires that teachers have knowledge of the varying levels of student readiness, background knowledge, and culture.

Tier 1 Instruction is about:

Aligning high quality, core instruction to Alabama State Course of Study	Collaboration among teachers to ensure that the needs of all students are met. This includes general education teachers, EL teachers, Special Education teachers, etc.)
Providing structures and systems for creating a positive school or classroom climate, as well as explicit and integrated instruction of social-emotional skills	Providing sufficient time and language instruction for EL students which includes strategies such as visual representations, repetition, first language support, and group strategies.
Maximizing student growth by using differentiation strategies	Implementing instructional practices that support all learners

(Madison, 2020).

The MTSS process will be in place throughout the school year to allow schools to identify the needs of students on an ongoing basis, and based on multiple measures. Throughout the school year, teachers and educational teams will analyze data related to academics, behavior, social and emotional skills, and attendance. Teachers will also assess students using universal screeners and formative assessments in order to evaluate learning trends. These data sets should be used to reinforce or plan for subsequent instruction. When assessment measures indicate that a student needs more instruction and intervention to access the core curriculum, the educators should continue to Tier 2 to provide supplemental support for students.

Tier 2 Instruction is for some students, and is targeted group intervention. Tier 2 Instruction is for those whose needs are not met through universal and differentiated instruction and support. Targeted and evidence-based interventions should be used to meet specific needs identified through a data-based decision making process. Progress monitoring is a key component for success and should occur every two weeks. Approximately 5-15% of students should be academically successful at this level.

Tier 2 Instruction is also known as Strategic Intervention. It is provided in addition to Tier 1 instruction. It is provided to students who need additional time, intensity of instruction, and/or type of instruction to gain grade level proficiency.

Tier 2 Instruction is about:

Aligning Tier 1 instruction with school-wide academic and behavioral supports	Using data to provide more time and intensity of instruction and support. This could be through previewing, reviewing, frontloading, and providing more opportunities to learn.
Matching interventions to student needs	Providing interventions to ELs in the language of instruction, differentiated to meet language proficiency, and supportive of language development.

(Madison, 2020).

Tier 3 Instruction is for a few students, those with the highest levels of need. It involved individualized interventions that are highly targeted for academic and behavior. It requires more intensive intervention and monitoring. 1-5% of students should need Tier 3 to be academically successful. Tier 3 Instruction should be monitored more frequently, usually weekly.

Tier 3 Instruction is also known as intensive intervention. It focuses on a more narrow set of academic and behavior skills. However, it is not Special Education services.

Tier 3 Instruction is about:

Extending beyond Tier 1 and Tier 2 Instruction and Behavior Supports	Increasing time and instructional intensity on a more narrowly focused set of skills for academics and behavior
Integrating Tier 3 instruction and supports with core instruction	Using frequent data in collaboration with a team familiar with the student to regularly monitor progress
Collaborating among all those involved in the student's learning (classroom teachers, interventionists, Reading Specialists, families,	

The unique needs students and student groups bring to a classroom can vary, which can alter the estimated percentages of students who need support at the differing tiers. However, if the percentages are not in line with those provided, Tier 1 instruction should be evaluated for rigor and effectiveness.

How does MTSS Add to Rtl?

Response to Instruction (Rtl) is reactive, focuses on interventions, and improves classroom instruction. Rtl is differentiated instruction that includes the efforts of the teacher to respond to learner needs in the classroom.

MTSS adds to this by being proactive, focusing on prevention, and improving all systems in the agency. Both focuses can and should work together to meet student needs. MTSS is made up of a group of educational professionals who come together to align resources and design instructional plans to ensure student growth.

What is Differentiated Instruction?

As stated in the previous section, differentiated instruction begins in Tier 1 and continues across the tiers. Core instruction should be linguistically appropriate for ELs, and should be universally designed for all students. Preparation for differentiated instruction requires that teachers have knowledge of the varying levels of student readiness, background knowledge, and culture.

Differentiation can occur through accommodations to the content (what is taught), the process (how it is taught), the product (how learning is shown), and/or the resources available in the classroom (core curriculum or supplemental materials). Modifications can only occur when part of a special-designed, individualized plan for a student.

To differentiate instruction to maximize student growth, teachers can:

Add depth and complexity to the curriculum	Employ questioning strategies
Scaffold lessons	Facilitate independent study that emphasizes students' areas of interest
Pre-assess students to form flexible groupings	Previewing and frontloading
Implement learning centers	Reviewing and re-teaching

(Madison, 2020).

What is Social Emotional Development?

Social Emotional Development, or Social Emotional Learning (SEL), is a critical dimension to support student success. SEL is the process through which students acquire and apply the knowledge, attitude, and skills needed to understand and manage their emotions, achieve goals, exhibit empathy, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines the key SEL competencies as: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness. It should be put into practice to support how adults and students interact with each other at all levels, beginning with creating a welcoming environment and caring climate that supports learning. This can include, but is not limited to, reflection, engagement in small group discussions, and creating norms (Multi-tiered, 2019).

Roles of MTSS Team Members

Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conducts walk-throughs and provides feedback to monitor and guide the instructional integrity within grade levels and departments ● Leads data analysis ● Leads MTSS Meetings ● Ensures progress monitoring occurs ● Ensures Tiered Instruction is part of classroom schedules and routines ● Provide professional development opportunities for teachers when trends are identified
Building-Level MTSS Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Works with administrators to lead MTSS Meetings ● Maintains Data from Meetings ● Maintains and submits MTSS Tracking Logs ● Assists in coordinating resources for students ● Assists with data analysis
Classroom Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has knowledge of the student(s) being discussed ● Presents data and background knowledge of the student to the team

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides tiered instruction ● Implements the intervention plan designed for students ● Conducts progress monitoring ● Communicates the plan and progress to the students and families ● Makes referrals to MTSS, and provides documentation and data
Interventionist, Special Education Teacher, Speech and Language Pathologists, EL Teacher, Liaisons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides expertise on skill remediation ● Supports data interpretation ● Works with Classroom Teacher on differentiating instruction ● Assists in coordination of services as needed ● Supports tiered instruction ● Provides documentation of Tier III, as appropriate (depending on role)
Central Office Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supports MTSS Team work ● Provides Training on MTSS ● Assists in coordination of services as needed

(Adapted from Branching Minds, 2021).

What does the law say about MTSS?

According to the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015)*, a multi-tiered system of support is “a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students’ needs, with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision making.”

MTSS is a larger umbrella that covers RtI and PBIS. Response to Intervention (RtI) was included in the Individuals with Disabilities Act in 2009 as an alternative evaluation procedure. RtI was designed to provide screening for all students. This screening would be used to guide and deliver academic interventions and to monitor student progress. This information could then be used to consider student responses to those interventions as a basis for determining special education eligibility (Turse & Albrecht, 2015; Multi-Tiered, 2019). RtI focuses on direct services. MTSS builds upon this to address the conditions for creating successful and sustainable systemic change while supporting students and teachers. MTSS does this, as it also includes Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This is a framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices that affect daily student outcomes.

When should a student be referred to MTSS?

Using multiple data sources, teachers and administrators should identify students who are at-risk academically or behaviorally, in need of more intensive monitoring, or in need of additional support to be successful in the general education classroom.

Data that should be considered could include, but is not limited to: classroom grades, assessment scores, transcript audits, diagnostic data, observational data, chronic discipline data, chronic social/emotional concerns, chronic absenteeism/tardies, environmental concerns, and bus referrals.

Students who ended the previous under MTSS monitoring should automatically be added to the MTSS list for the new school year. Also, students who score at-risk on the Beginning of the Year universal screener should be added to the MTSS monitoring list. Then, throughout the school year, students can be added for various needs as the determination arises.

What is the MTSS Team's role in identifying students in need of dyslexia-specific interventions?

1. Administer Universal Screeners and the diagnostic portion of the Universal Screener.
2. Tier students based on screener and diagnostic data.
3. Teachers observe students and keep running records on student performance and progress.
4. Hold the initial Student Support Meetings as part of the MTSS process/SRIP process.
5. Develop collaborative intervention plans as part of the MTSS process/SRIP process.
6. Share updates with the family and student.
7. Implement and Monitor the MTSS Plan and/or SRIP Plan.
8. Review the impact of supports and student progress.
9. Adjust the plan as needed.
10. If the current intervention is not successful, the plan should be revised to incorporate additional strategies. If interventions remain unsuccessful, the MTSS team can determine the need for additional evaluations and services.

Three Types of MTSS Meetings

1. **School Leadership Meeting**
 - a. The School Leadership Team will evaluate the school-wide health and wellness of MTSS practice.
 - b. They will meet three times a year to discuss Universal Screener data.
 - c. This should include at least the principal, data specialist, reading specialist, Special Education, and EL teachers.
2. **Grade/Content Team Meeting**
 - a. The team will monitor progress of Tier 2 students, as well as look for trends at the teacher or school level.
 - b. This should occur one time per month.
 - c. Administrators should participate in this meeting.
 - d. A list of all students identified as needing to be referred to MTSS should be compiled and turned into the site MTSS Coordinator.
 - e. The site coordinator will provide a referral form to initiate the process.
3. **Individual Problem-Solving Meeting**
 - a. The team will work deeper for problem-solving for students not making sufficient progress as identified in the Grade/Content Team Meeting. They will write or revise intervention plans.
 - b. These meetings will be held monthly.
 - c. The meeting should include at least an administrator, the MTSS site coordinator, the reading specialist for students in Grades K-3, and the General Education teacher of the student being discussed.

Steps in the MTSS Process

All students should be provided with high-quality Tier I instruction. Through the use of screeners, classroom observations, student work samples, grade reports, transcript reviews, collaborative team meetings, or parent referrals, students may be identified as needing additional assistance.

1. Universal Screening and/or Transcript Reviews
2. The teacher uses Tier I instruction and strategies for all students.

Tier I should include best practices. These can be increasing their proximity to the student throughout the lesson, reteaching during class time, altering seating arrangements, working with students in small and/or whole groups, multisensory strategies, and providing students with reminders throughout the class. Parent contact can also begin in this step. Other common classroom strategies can be used in this step, as well.
3. The teacher determines more support is necessary. This is Tier 2.

When more support is needed, the teacher should provide Tier 2 Instruction to the student. If the student is making progress with Tier 2 Interventions, the teacher can continue with Tier 2 support. If the student continues to make gains through progress monitoring and Tier 2 instruction, they will eventually reach grade level, and this process can stop. If the student IS NOT making progress, the teacher will need to continue to Step 3.
4. Additional, more individualized support is needed. This is Tier 3.

When the student has received Tier 1 and Tier 2 Instruction, and improvement is not evident in progress monitoring, Tier 3 strategies are necessary. A referral to the Multi-tier System of Support team is recommended.
5. A MTSS Student Profile and Referral Form is completed.

This form will assist school personnel in reviewing current student services, including: Special Education, EL, Migrant, Dyslexia-specific, 504, Counseling, and Social Worker services. It also assists in identifying areas of need, such as in reading, mathematics, written language, communication, attendance, social and emotional health, and behavior. It reviews previous parent contact, strategies used, tiered instruction, and behavior supports previously provided. This will inform the MTSS team at the time of the referral meeting.
6. A MTSS Meeting is held.

The MTSS Team, which should be comprised of individuals with knowledge of the student and interventions in place, will meet to review student data, needs, and current supports. The team will then decide on a recommendation for the student. This could include: Additional Tier 1 Instruction, Additional Tier 2 Instruction, Additional Tier 3 Instruction, 504 Referral, Special Education Referral, Referral for Counseling, Referral to Social Worker, Referral to Attendance Supervisor, or the creation of a MTSS Action Plan.

7. A MTSS Student Plan is created.

Questions - What is it we want students to achieve? Why is there a gap between current and expected achievement? Implement the plan. How have students responded to our plan? What will we do differently? PD

Include Multiple Means of Engagement (The Why of Learning); Multiple Means of Representation (The What of Learning), and Multiple Means fo Action and Expression (The How of Learning)

If the MTSS Team determines that a student needs an Action Plan, one will be created. This plan will include goals for the student, the start date of intervention, a description of interventions to be used, the frequency and duration of the intervention, staff responsible, and the progress monitoring tool that will be used.

8. A MTSS Student Action Plan Review Meeting will be held.

Once a MTSS Action Plan is in place, it will be regularly reviewed. This should occur every 4 to 4 ½ weeks for most plans, but at a minimum of once per nine weeks. Most Action Plans will be reviewed at Progress Report and Report Card times. They can be reviewed more frequently if needed and if data will be available to guide team decisions. This meeting will include a summary of interventions that are in place, results of these interventions, and progress made by the student. Progress monitoring must have been done to determine the effectiveness of the interventions. The MTSS Team can make changes to the plan or student services at this time.

- Was it fidelity
- Is the student making progress (3 consecutive PM data points at or above the 25th percentile.

9. A continuation decision will be made.

If an Action Plan is proving to be successful, the team can decide to continue with the same plan in place. If the Action Plan is deemed unsuccessful, the MTSS team can decide to create a new action plan, or to refer to the student for additional services. MTSS is not solely a referral process to Special Education, even though Special Education referrals are one possible MTSS recommendation. Referrals for any services (Dyslexia Screening, 504, Special Education evaluation, Counseling, Social Work, etc.) can be made at any point in the process as deemed appropriate by the team. The MTSS team does not have a predetermined number of times to meet regarding a student. The important factor to consider is the effectiveness of the interventions on progress and achievement of goals.

- a. If a student is referred to Special Education, a hard copy of MTSS documentation must be submitted to the referring coordinator at the school.
- b. If a student is referred to 504, a hard copy of the MTSS documentation and 504 Referral Form must be submitted to the 504 coordinator at the school.

- c. If a student does not qualify for Special Education or 504, but it is necessary for the student to continue to receive individualized services for the identified deficit area, the student can continue in the MTSS Documentation Process.
- d. If a student is successful and can return to Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction without additional support, the MTSS documentation process can be discontinued, but this decision must be documented.

Steps from SRIP to a MTSS Plan from 3rd to 4th Grade

Students that are moving from 3rd to 4th grade will change from a SRIP plan to a MTSS plan if a need is still identified. Documentation from students' SRIP plan will need to be added to the new MTSS plan.

SRIPs

- If reading is the only concern, the SRIP is sufficient for reading progress monitoring the student. If the SRIP is unsuccessful, and the team determines a SES referral is needed, this information can be attached to the MTSS referral paperwork. Work samples and signature pages will have to be added.
- If a student has an SRIP and math deficits or behavior concerns, the student will need both plans to monitor interventions, progress, and future needs.

The MTSS Plan in Action

What is the difference between interventions and accommodations?

Intervention - An intervention is a specific skill-building strategy implemented and monitored to improve a target's skills and to achieve adequate progress in a specific academic or behavioral area.

Examples - www.interventioncentral.org for research-based intervention resources

SPIRE

IXL

Dolch Word List

Letter naming and fluency passage generators

Math fluency and math work generator

Writing probe generator

Methods for building sight word vocabulary, spelling, math facts, etc.

Strategies for managing problem behaviors

Accommodation - An accommodation that may be included in a MTSS Plan includes tools and procedures that provide equal access to instruction and assessment for the student. This includes how the content is taught, made accessible, and/or assessed.

Examples - Reading a test to a student but providing no additional help .

Allowing extra time to take the same test as other students or complete the same assignments

Breaking the work into smaller segments, but still expecting all segments to be completed

Tutoring or extra assistance

Preferential seating

Providing an extra set of books to be kept at home

What is Progress Monitoring?

Progress monitoring is the practice of assessing students' academic performance on a regular basis, depending on their Tier. It is used to determine the extent to which students are benefiting from classroom instruction and for monitoring the effectiveness of interventions.

Progress monitoring can occur with iReady or Scantron, but can also occur through teacher-made materials. It is important that the tool used shows progress over intervals of time and that it relates to the goal area.

Progress monitoring data should be used for an agreed upon timeframe. If the student made progress toward their goal, the MTSS team can determine if another goal should be set and a different Intervention Plan implemented or if the student no longer needs an Intervention Plan. If a student did not make progress towards their goal, or made insufficient progress, the MTSS team can determine if another goal should be set and a different Intervention Plan be implemented, or if a referral for other services is needed.

Guidelines for Referral for Special Education Services

Before a student is referred for Special Education evaluation, or concurrently during the evaluation process, intervention strategies must be implemented in the general education classroom and monitored by the MTSS team. This should be done for a minimum of 2 MTSS meeting cycles, or approximately two months (each being 4 to 4 ½ weeks in length), and deemed unsuccessful. This requirement may be waived for a child who has severe needs that require immediate attention, for three- and four-year olds, for five-year olds who have not been to kindergarten, for children with articulation, voice, or fluency problems only, for children with a diagnosis of traumatic brain injury, and for a child who has been referred by parents.

What does the law require for Special Education referrals?

Information must be gathered to determine if there are any environmental, cultural, language, or economic differences that might mask a student's true abilities and affect their performance in the areas evaluated.

- Medical information or signs of a medical problem
- Hearing and vision screenings (passed or within limits)
- Data-based documentation that shows the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular settings and the reason for referral has a direct impact on the child's education performance - or for a preschool child, participation in age-appropriate activities. Documentation that the child does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in areas of suspected disability.
- Data-based documentation that supports the child was delivered appropriate instruction in the regular setting that was delivered by qualified personnel.
- Data-based documentation that supports valid implementation of interventions and repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals from multiple sources reflecting formal monitoring of student progress during instruction for referral concern(s).
- Progress monitoring documentation that reflects ineffectiveness of the interventions for the referral concern(s) that was provided to the child's parents. It should include dates.

Can a student already served with an IEP, I-ELP, or 504 be referred to MTSS?

MTSS provides the structure to prioritize the academic and social-emotional-behavioral needs of all students, including those already served with an IEP, I-ELP, or 504. Though the MTSS can choose a referral to one of these, or choose to refer a student to a counselor, a social worker, or the Attendance Supervisor, a referral is not the main goal of the MTSS process. The MTSS process is intended to prioritize and integrate the various services and supports that a student may need to meet grade-level expectations, academically and behaviorally.

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Appendix

Appendix A: MTSS Student Profile and Referral Form

Appendix B: MTSS Student Action Plan

Appendix C: MTSS Student Action Plan Review Meeting Record

Appendix D: Special Education Referral Checklist

Appendix E: Consent for Vision and Hearing Screening Form

Appendix F: MTSS Parent Notification Form

Appendix G: MTSS Progress Report for Parents

Appendix H: Approval to Begin the Special Education Referral Process for an EL Student

Appendix I: EL Approval



MTSS Student Profile and Referral Form

Student Last Name:	Student First Name:	Date of Birth:
Grade Level:	Referral Completed By:	Date of Referral:

IEP: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Case Manager:	EL: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Case Manager:
504: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Case Manager:	Migrant: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Case Manager:
Dyslexia-Specific Interventions: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Services Provided By:	Counseling/Social Worker Services: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Provided By:
Gifted: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Gifted Teacher:	Other Services:

<p>Academic - Reading</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Phonemic Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Phonics <input type="checkbox"/> Fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension</p> <p>Comments:</p> <hr/> <p>Academic - Math</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Counting Cardinality <input type="checkbox"/> Base Ten <input type="checkbox"/> Fractions <input type="checkbox"/> Computational Fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Geometry <input type="checkbox"/> Measurement <input type="checkbox"/> Algebraic Concepts</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p>Academic - Written Language</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Word Choice <input type="checkbox"/> Voice <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions <input type="checkbox"/> Organization</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mechanics</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pencil Grip <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Placement <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Formation <input type="checkbox"/> Spacing <input type="checkbox"/> Reversals</p> <hr/> <p>Communication</p> <p><u>Expressive Language</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor Grammar <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete Sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Struggles with Oral Message <input type="checkbox"/> Following Language Social Rules</p> <p><u>Receptive Language</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty Following Directions <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension of Oral Language <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension of Basic Concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Articulation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Attendance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Tardies <input type="checkbox"/> Unexcused Absences <input type="checkbox"/> Excused Absences <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Medical Issue <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent Requests to Visit Nurse/Restroom</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Social/Emotional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Loved One <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Decline in Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Family Issues <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Behavioral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespectful <input type="checkbox"/> Defiant <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Attitude <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Attention <input type="checkbox"/> Unmotivated <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Work Independently <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Materials <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of Work</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Comments or Information</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student has a SRIP. <input type="checkbox"/> Student has not earned required credits. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p>
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Parent/Guardian Contacted: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Name of Parent/Guardian Contacted:	How did parent contact occur? <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	Summary of Parent Contact:
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What have you individualized to help the student be more successful? <input type="checkbox"/> Scaffolding <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodated Assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Seating Arrangement <input type="checkbox"/> Modeling and Demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Student Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Tiered Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Progress Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Dyslexia Supports <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	Has this student received tiered instruction in the academic areas of concern? <input type="checkbox"/> Tier I Frequency _____ Duration _____ Program/Materials _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Tier II Frequency _____ Duration _____ Program/Materials _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Tier III Frequency _____ Duration _____ Program/Materials _____
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Other Specific Data to Show an Academic/Behavioral/Social Emotional Need:

What have you done to teach or re-teach expectations? <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed Classroom Rules and Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Redefined Expectations of Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent Reminders of Behavior Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Partnering <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Active Supervision (Interaction, Frequent Check-in/ Scanning) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	What behavior supports (positive/negative) have you tried, and were they effective? <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Behavior Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Office Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Classroom Privileges <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
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Summary of Concerns:

MTSS Referral Meeting Date: _____

MTSS Committee Recommendation:

<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 1 Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> MTSS Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Counselor
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 2 Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> 504 Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Social Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 3 Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Attendance Supervisor

Vision Screening Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail	Hearing Screening Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail
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MTSS Student Action Plan

Student Last Name:	Student First Name:	Date of Birth:
School:	Grade Level:	Date of Action Plan Meeting:

Student's strengths, talents and interests (include both academic and behavioral strengths):

Screener (If Applicable): _____ Screener Date:	Diagnostic Tools and Data used to Identify Area of Deficit (Summary of Relevant Data): <i>This could include, but is not limited to, data from iReady, Scantron, Benchmark Assessments, Classroom Observations, Work Samples, Grade Reports, etc.</i>
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SMART Goal for Student Success (Specific, Measurable Attainable, Realistic, Timely):

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Start Date			
Description of Intervention			
Frequency of Intervention			
Duration of Intervention			
Staff Responsible			
Progress Monitoring Tool and Frequency of Use			



MTSS Student Action Plan Review Meeting Record

Student Last Name:	Student First Name:	Date of Birth:
School:	Grade Level:	Date of Action Plan:

Meeting Date:	<p>Summary of Interventions, Results, and Progress:</p> <p>Recommended Changes to the Plan or Services:</p>
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Meeting Date:	<p>Summary of Interventions, Results, and Progress:</p> <p>Recommended Changes to the Plan or Services:</p>
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Meeting Date:	<p>Summary of Interventions, Results, and Progress:</p> <p>Recommended Changes to the Plan or Services:</p>
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Meeting Date:	<p>Summary of Interventions, Results, and Progress:</p> <p>Recommended Changes to the Plan or Services:</p>
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MTSS Committee Recommendation:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 1 Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 2 Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tier 3 Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> MTSS Action Plan <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Referral <input type="checkbox"/> New Strategy/Strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to Attendance Supervisor
Notes:		

Special Education Referral Checklist

Student: _____ School: _____

MTSS Information Required for Referral:

- ___ Signed DeKalb County Schools Consent for Vision and Hearing

 - ___ Vision and Hearing Results - The student must pass both. Results should be attached.
 - ___ MTSS Referral Form

 - ___ MTSS Action Plan

 - ___ MTSS Action Plan Review Meeting Record

 - ___ Copies of Parent Communication Regarding Concerns and Interventions

 - ___ Copies of all progress monitoring - Including Scantron Performance Series Express, iReady, DIBELS, easyCBM, or other assessments used
 - ___ Discipline records and Behavior Report Card (For Behavior Concerns Only)
 - ___ Copies of 3-5 graded work samples that show a deficit in the academic area(s) of concern
 - ___ Most recent State Assessment/Universal Screener Data - Including iReady, Scantron, ACAP, ACT, or ACCESS for ELs
 - ___ Most recent student grade and attendance reports
 - ___ Copy of Cumulative Folder Summary - Include Elementary and High School summaries
 - ___ LPAC Meeting notes with at least 3 meetings showing intervention changes for EL Students
-

Student:_____ **School:**_____

Special Education Forms Required for a Referral Meeting:

____ Notice and Invitation to a Meeting/Consent for Agency Participation Form

- These should be signed, or two attempts to obtain a signature should be documented.

____ Special Education Rights sent to the parent/guardian with the Notice and Invitation to the Meeting

____ Referral for Evaluation (Special Education Form Pages 1-4)

Revised 02-2-22



Screening Consent Form

Student Name:	Student Date of Birth:	Date of Recommendation:
School:	Grade:	Reason for Recommending Screening:

The school has recommended the following screenings for your child:

- Vision Screening
- Hearing Screening
- Other: _____

If the screening(s) indicate there might be a problem, you will be notified.

Parent/Guardian, please check one of the responses, sign and date below your selection, and return this form to your child's teacher or the school office.

- Yes, I give permission for the screenings.
- No, I do not give permission for the screenings.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Thank you for allowing us to better serve your child. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

School Personnel Requesting Screening

Telephone Number



Parent Notification: Multi-Tier Systems of Support

Date _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____:

DeKalb County Schools is committed to the success of all students. There are many ways that children learn, and many student support services are needed to ensure equity and success for all students. The Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) is one way that DeKalb County Schools organizes and coordinates these supports - the tiered instruction and interventions your child may need to be successful in school.

Tiered Instruction for Academics and Behavior:

Tier 1: All students receive access to a high quality curriculum and instruction, and are taught positive behavioral expectations.

Tier 2: The school provides supplemental support, usually in small, targeted groups.

Tier 3: Intensive, student-centered instructional and/or behavioral support is provided to students who need higher levels of support.

After reviewing your child's data, our school's MTSS team believes that additional support could be beneficial. The supports that will be provided are:

We will meet regularly to monitor your child's progress and to make adjustments as needed. You will be informed of this progress as we meet.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please feel free to contact your child's teacher at _____ or the school principal at _____.
(Insert email or phone number.) (Insert email or phone number.)

Sincerely,
The MTSS Team



Parent Notification: Multi-Tier Systems of Support

Fecha _____

Estimado Padre/Guardián de _____:

Las Escuelas del Condado de DeKalb están comprometidas con el éxito de todos los estudiantes. Hay muchas maneras en que los niños aprenden, y muchos servicios de apoyo estudiantil son necesarios para asegurar la equidad y el éxito de todos los estudiantes. El Sistema de Apoyos de Varios Niveles (MTSS) es una forma en que las Escuelas del Condado de DeKalb organicen y coordinen estos apoyos: la instrucción e intervenciones estratificadas que su hijo puede necesitar para tener éxito en la escuela.

Instrucción escalonada para lo académico y el comportamiento:

Nivel 1: Todos los estudiantes reciben acceso a un plan de estudios e instrucción de alta calidad, y se les enseña expectativas positivas de comportamiento.

Nivel 2: La escuela proporciona apoyo suplementario, por lo general en grupos pequeños y específicos.

Nivel 3: Se proporciona apoyo intensivo y de instrucción y/o de comportamiento centrado en el estudiante a estudiantes que necesitan niveles más altos de apoyo.

Después de revisar los datos de su hijo, el equipo de MTSS de nuestra escuela cree que el apoyo adicional podría ser beneficioso. Los soportes que se proporcionarán son:

Nos reuniremos regularmente para monitorear el progreso de su hijo y hacer ajustes según sea necesario. Se le informará de este progreso a medida que nos reunimos.

Si tiene alguna pregunta con respecto a este proceso, no dude en comunicarse con el maestro de su hijo en _____ o al director de la escuela _____.

(Escriba su email o numero de tel.)

(Insert email or phone number.)

Sincerely,
The MTSS Team



Formulario de Consentimiento

Nombre del Estudiante:	Fecha de Nacimiento del Estudiante:	Fecha de recomendación:
Escuela:	Grado:	Motivos para recomendar los exámenes:

La escuela ha recomendado los siguientes exámenes para su hijo(a):

- Examen de Visión
- Examen de Audición (oídos)
- Otro: _____

Si los exámenes indican que puede haber un problema, usted será notificado.

Padre/Guardián, por favor marque una de las siguientes respuestas, firme coloque la fecha, y regrese esta forma a la maestra de su hijo(a) o a la oficina.

- Si, doy permiso para los exámenes.
- No, no doy permiso para los exámenes.

Firma del Padre/Guardián

Fecha

Gracias por permitirnos servir a su hijo(a). Por favor siéntase libre de ponerse en contacto con cualquier pregunta.

Personal de la escuela que pide la evaluación

Número de Teléfono



Approval to Begin the Special Education Referral Process for an EL Student

Student _____ Date of Birth _____
School _____ Grade Level _____

District policy states that referrals for Special Education testing and qualifying services for any EL student with a composite score on ACCESS for ELs less than 3.0 be approved by the District EL Coordinator or their designee.

This form verifies that the EL Coordinator or their designee has reviewed the EL records and MTSS Referral packet, and approves the continuation of the referral process, with language being determined to not be the primary area of concern for the student's academic achievement based on this review. Documentation of area(s) of concern is/are documented through attachments to the referral such as medical documentation or academic records.

OR

Dr. Anna Hairston,
Federal Programs Coordinator

Erin Brown,
Language Acquisition Coach

Date

Date

EL / LPAC Documentation Needed for Referral

Access this information from ELLEVATION

- ❑ **ACCESS for ELs Scores** - current and previous year
*Access scores should be level 3.0 or higher. If not, LPAC Committee needs approval of District EL Supervisor (**Name of Form**)*
- ❑ **Individualized English Language Plan (I-ELP)** for current year
- ❑ The last 3 **Student Meeting Reports (LPAC Meeting Reports)** – including changes to the current plan