



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Standing Committee Meeting Notes February 25, 2026

Time: 4- 5:30 p.m.

Location: District Office for Bellingham Public Schools, 1985 Barkley Blvd.

Presenters: Arionda Feeney, assistant superintendent and Jessica Wallace, teacher on special assignment

Agenda

- Welcome and Purpose
- Data Beliefs in Action
- Alderwood Elementary Example
- Level Teams and Data Process
- Next Meeting & Closing

Welcome

Ari welcomed the committee members and introduced special guests, Teresa Williams, a former principal from Marysville schools, and Amy Berreth, Alderwood Elementary School principal. Amy joined the meeting to present an example of centering student voice in building decision-making. Ari also reaffirmed the district's goal to use data beliefs for evidence-based decision-making and to create systemic, data-driven approaches supporting all students.

Feedback from the Jan Committee Meeting

Jessica reminded the group that in last meeting they practiced a structured data protocol using SEL screener data. Feedback from the committee highlighted appreciation in viewing data from multiple perspectives, using the protocol to guide dialogue, and making predictions that surfaced assumptions and biases. Next-step feedback included continuing to use data protocols to start small and grow conversations, centering marginalized voices while humanizing practices for all students, and incorporating additional data such as attendance to help distinguish between students with one no-credit (N/C) and those with multiple N/Cs.

Data Beliefs in Action

Ari explained that the purpose of this committee is to build the collective “muscle” needed to implement best practices that advance our MTSS work. Today’s focus is specifically on strengthening systemic, data-driven approaches to support that effort.

Table groups were asked to share their experiences using the district data beliefs, core prompts designed to help teams center students, families, and their cultures, while analyzing

data with curiosity. Each group discussed the actions they have taken at the team or building level to help staff understand and meaningfully apply these beliefs. They recorded notes from their conversations for the MTSS team to review. Ari offered an example, explaining that during this week's monthly leadership meeting and the recent Facilities Planning Task Force – Elementary Focus Review Committee, the district data beliefs were used to guide discussions while examining birth rate and enrollment data.

Levels of Data and MTSS in Action: Alderwood

Jessica reviewed understanding of the three levels of data:

- Satellite data – big-picture district trends.
- Map data – academic indicators like i-Ready, attendance, SEL.
- Street data – student and family experiences captured through deep listening.

Jessica and Amy shared how Alderwood embedded routine student focus groups into their MTSS Tier 1 work. Key findings from students included:

- Positive relationships with staff and other students are essential for having a good day.
- Writing time is challenging for many students.
- Peer conflicts and feeling excluded affect well-being.

These insights influenced building decisions, such as:

- Professional learning on writing strategies tied to student identity.
- Student-led videos on inclusion.
- New approaches to class placement that prioritize meaningful peer relationships.

Level Teams and Data Process

Jessica asked the group to reform into levels to repeat the data process with new data sets, including i-Ready literacy data (K–8), high school NC data, and street data from focus student interviews. She provided guiding questions for each phase of the data process:

Phase 1: Activate and Engage – Make predictions before seeing data

- What do we predict the data will show? Why?
- What questions do we have?

Phase 2: Explore and Discover – Examine the data and describe it without bias

- What points seem to “pop out”?
- What patterns, categories, or trends do we notice?
- What is surprising or unexpected?
- Are there other avenues we should explore?

Phase 3: Organize and Integrate “Plan” - generate ideas or next steps

- What inferences or conclusions might we draw from the data? (causation)
- What additional data sources might we explore to verify our explanations? (confirmation)
- What research-based solutions could we explore? (action)
- What additional data will we need to collect? (calibration)

Jessica then asked groups to revisit their earlier data-belief brainstorm and add new ideas for implementing the data beliefs, including additional prompts or questions inspired by today's data process.

Next Meeting & Closing

Jessica thanked committee members for their work and asked them to bring insights back to their buildings, principals, coaches, and families. She encouraged members to watch for an email regarding an upcoming challenge before the April meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 22, 4-5:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Schools District Office. (Room 102/103)