West Northfield District 31

Field Middle School

MTSS Handbook

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Grow. Achieve. Together.

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Introduction

This handbook provides a structural overview of our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support specific to Field Middle School. Details regarding the roles and responsibilities for individual team members are included. Specific guidance on the data and criteria D31 utilizes to monitor student progress within our MTSS system is indicated. This handbook reflects the collaborative work teams have engaged in to refine and strengthen the MTSS framework throughout Field Middle school and the district.

Our Mission

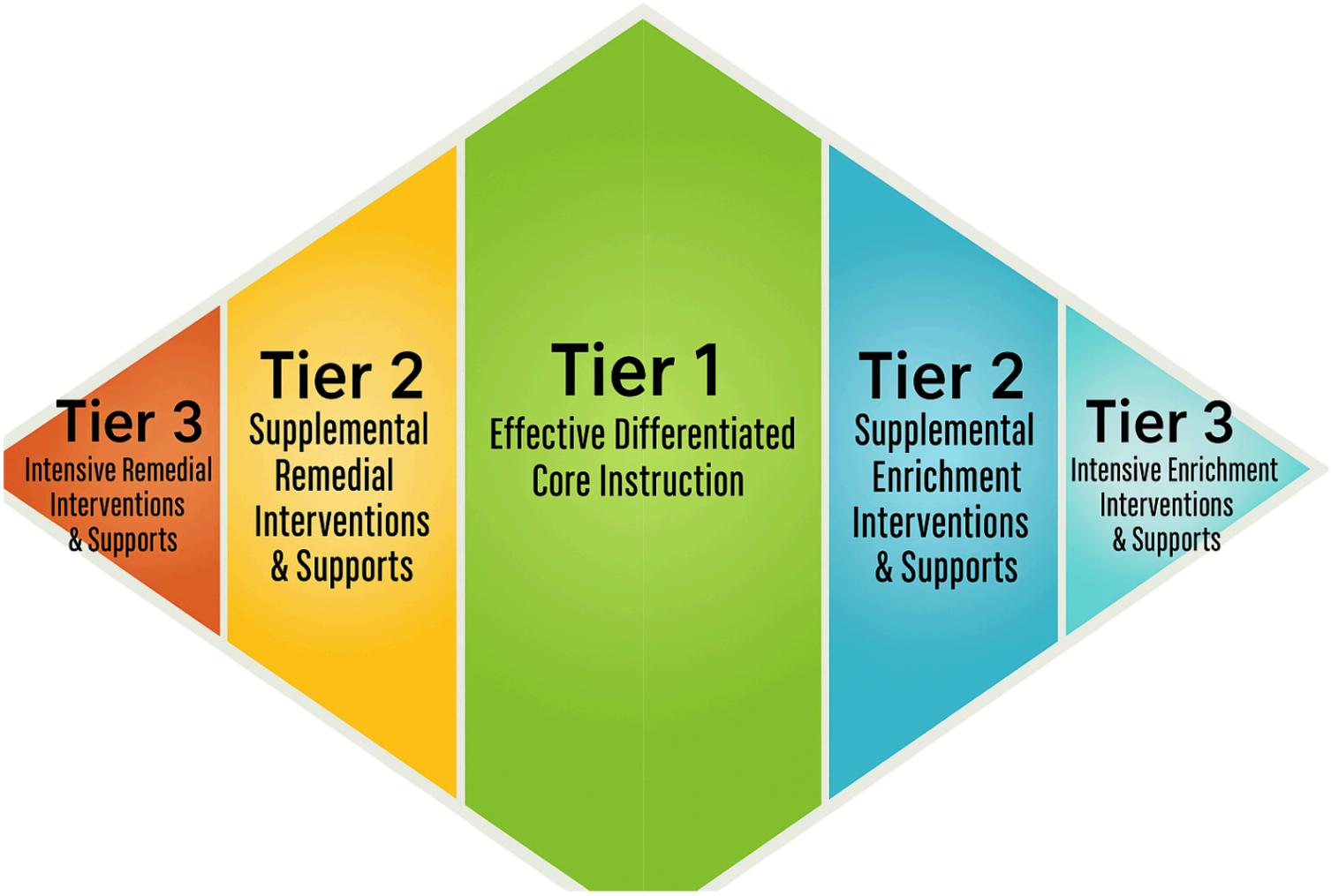
At West Northfield SD 31, we take a holistic approach to supporting student success that includes academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports for all students. We build the capacity of staff to understand and implement a research-based & effective MTSS system to ensure that our entire school can collectively grow and achieve together.

Defining MTSS

MTSS is a framework for systematic and continuous improvement using evidence-based practices and data-based problem solving to support student success. Our support system follows a three-tiered structure: **Universal** core instruction, **Targeted** intervention supports & enrichment, and **Intensive** intervention supports & enrichment. Universal (Tier 1) instruction includes core academic, behavioral, and Social-Emotional supports provided to all students. Using data, we identify students who may need additional intervention to close skill gaps or enrich learning. These students move into Targeted (Tier 2) or Intensive (Tier 3) supports designed to meet their specific needs. This continuum is illustrated in the diamond shaped graphic below. Note the various tiers that are utilized to ensure all students receive the support they need to reach their full potential.

MTSS Diamond Model

This graphic illustrates how MTSS is a framework for student support that expands beyond the traditional triangle by including both intervention (remediation) for struggling students and extension (enrichment) for advanced learners. It emphasizes that Tier 1 core instruction serves all students, while providing tailored paths for growth, recognizing that student needs exist on a continuum.



Defining Tiers 1, 2, & 3

Tier 1: Universal Core Instruction

Educators often refer to Tier 1 supports as "universal" because they are provided to every student. Strong, Tier 1 practices are essential for strengthening school climate, relationships, and classroom instruction.

Indicators of effective Tier 1 Core Instruction include:

- **Delivered to every student.** Tier 1 supports are universal—they happen everywhere: in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds. All students receive these supports, regardless of their learning profile or background.

- **Grounded in strong instruction.** Effective Tier 1 instruction includes clear learning targets, modeling, and opportunities for guided practice that are grounded in research-based strategies.

- **Explicit behavior expectations**. Tier 1 supports don't assume students "just know" how to behave—they proactively teach behavioral norms through modeling, visual cues, and positive reinforcement, creating a shared culture across the school.

- **Monitored with shared data tools.** Attendance, academic performance, behavior, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) data are used to assess the overall effectiveness of Tier 1. These metrics help identify patterns and flag students who may benefit from additional support.

- **Adjusted based on trends.** School teams regularly review data to fine-tune Tier 1 practices. This cycle of reflection and refinement ensures that supports stay relevant and responsive to evolving student needs.

Tier 2: Targeted Support

Tier 2 supports are targeted, additional interventions delivered to students who are not responding to Tier 1 supports. Understanding the distinction between Tier 1 and Tier 2 is essential to building a responsive MTSS intervention system. Tier 1 delivers strong, research-based instruction and behavioral expectations for all students, creating a foundational consistency across the school. Tier 2 builds on that foundation –providing additional, targeted support to a group of students who need more to succeed. These supports don't replace Tier 1; they supplement it, allowing students to benefit from both levels at once. When implemented together, Tiers 1 and 2 form a cohesive system that adapts to student needs and prevents small challenges from becoming long-term barriers.

What is an intervention?
An MTSS intervention is a planned, evidence-based instructional, social-emotional or behavioral strategy that is intentionally implemented to support students who are *not* making adequate progress with their core (Tier 1) instruction alone. A specialized intervention is used in both Tier 2 and Tier 3 of the MTSS framework.

An Intervention Must:

- Involve instruction that targets specific skill(s) deficits.
- Be supplemental to the general curriculum (not in place of).
- Be delivered in a small group ***or*** individually.
- Be provided in alignment with the recommended frequency.
- Monitored regularly to evaluate effectiveness & guide decision making.

Key Characteristics:

- Data-Driven
- Targeted
- Evidence-Based
- Systematic & Explicit
- Time-Bound
- Progress Monitored

Indicators of effective Tier 2 targeted support include:

- **Delivered in small groups.** Tier 2 supports are typically provided to groups of 3 - 6 students with similar needs (yet the exact number of students in a group can

be flexible). This structure allows for more targeted instruction while maximizing staff time.

- **Built into or around the school.** Interventions may be delivered during existing differentiation blocks as well as in the students' general education classroom.

- **Focused on a single skill or challenge**. Rather than addressing broad deficits, Tier 2 focuses on one area of need (such as reading fluency, time management, or emotion regulation) with strategies designed to accelerate progress in that specific domain.

- **Short-term and data-driven.** Progress is tracked regularly, often weekly or bi-weekly, using simple, reliable tools. This allows teams to monitor effectiveness in real time and make timely decisions about whether to continue, modify or intensify support.

- **Responsive to student progress**. If a student isn't making expected growth, educators can adjust the intervention's intensity, frequency, or delivery method to better support student progress and growth.

Tier 3: Intensive Support

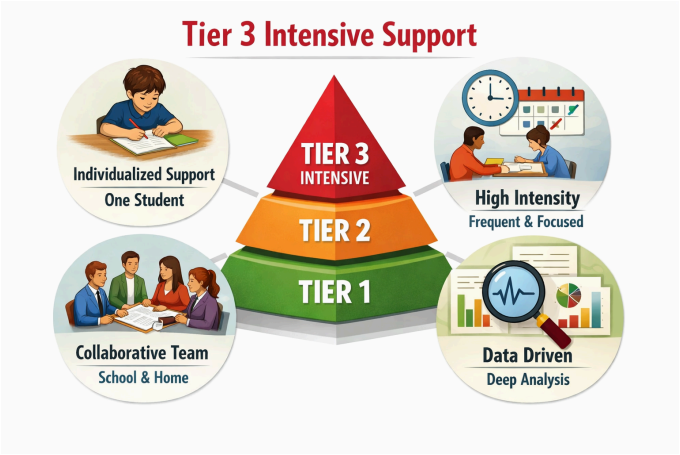
Tier 3 is the most intensive level of support within an MTSS Framework – reserved for students with ongoing or more complex needs.. These individualized interventions go beyond the reach of Tier 1 and Tier 2, targeting challenges that require customized, sustained attention. Students receiving Tier 3 supports also receive core, Tier 1 instruction.

Indicators of effective Tier 3 supports include:

- **Individualized.** Tier 3 plans are highly personalized, designed to match a student's specific strengths, challenges, and context. There's no one-size-fits-all formula –each intervention is tailored to the root causes behind a student's areas of need.

- **Delivered with greater time and intensity**. Supports often occur daily and for longer periods, with increased instructional time, one-on-one interactions,

and frequent check-ins. The goal is to accelerate growth in high-need areas through sustained, focused attention.



- **Coordinated by a team**. Intervention plans involve close collaboration among teachers, related service providers, interventionists, and care givers. This shared responsibility helps ensure consistency across school and home environments and keeps everyone aligned on goals and progress.

- **Driven by deep data analysis**. Tier 3 relies on multiple data sources - including: academic, attendance, Social-emotional, and diagnostic assessments - to uncover root causes and monitor impact. The emphasis is focused on precision and insight, not just surface-level symptoms.

Data-Based Decision Making

A central aspect of MTSS is using data to make decisions around instruction and intervention. The different data teams play different roles in the decision-making process, but are all integral to the implementation of an effective system of support for all students. Data plays a crucial role in determining when and how to deploy resources and interventions. In D31, our MTSS structure uses universal screening processes and assessment systems to identify which students need targeted support. Educators then use data across academic performance, behavior, attendance, and social-emotional learning to source the right intervention strategies from a whole-child perspective. The practice of data-based decision-making and documentation of MTSS interventions can also support the reduction of bias in schools. By interrogating data, educators can uncover disparities in interventions provided based on race, ethnicity, or other student group identifiers that could lead to over-referrals for discipline or special education.

The following data sources are utilized during the MTSS process:

Data Source	Frequency	Purpose/What it measures
AimsWeb+	• As needed (students qualify to take Aims if they are performing below the 40th percentile on MAP) - identification begins in Spring of 5th grade	• Oral reading fluency • Math computational fluency
NWEA/MAP	• 3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)	• Math proficiency (nationally normed) • ELA proficiency (nationally normed)
Lexia	• As needed	• ELA skills (by grade level)
DESSA	• 3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)	• SEL strengths/skill sets
Navigate 360 (PBIS) & SWIS	• Ongoing	• Behavior data
Classroom assessments	• Ongoing	• Academic & SEL skills
Grades	• Ongoing	• Proficiency on grade level academic standards
Anecdotal classroom evidence	• Ongoing	• Behavior, academic, SEL skills

Field Middle School Tier 3 Intervention Criteria & Identification Measures

Math, ELA, SEL, & Behavior

Area	**Entrance** Student may qualify based on one indicator below	**Exit** Student may qualify based on one indicator below
ELA	• 40th percentile and below on AimsWeb+ Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) • 40th percentile and below on NWEA/MAP Reading • Limited to no growth on Progress to Proficiency (ML students only) • Consistently "Beginning" on classroom assessments with limited to no growth throughout the quarter	• Approaching 50th percentile on AimsWeb+ ORF • Approaching 50th percentile and above on NWEA/MAP • Mastery and growth in identified skills in Lexia Skills plans *(in development)* • Consistently Meeting on classroom assessments with evidence of growth throughout the quarter
Math	• 40th percentile and below NWEA/MAP Math • 40th percentile and below on AimsWeb + Number Sense Fluency • Consistently "Beginning" on classroom assessments with limited to no growth throughout the quarter	• Approaching 50th percentile and above on NWEA/MAP Math • Approaching 50th percentile and above on AimsWeb + Math Fluency measures • Consistently Meeting on classroom assessments with evidence of growth throughout the quarter
SEL	**In development...** - WayPoints - Attendance - Nurse visit records/notes - Elyssa's Mission/Mental Health Screener data	
Behavior	**In development...** - Behavior referrals	

Tiered Support & Intervention Checklist

Teachers can use the **Tiered Support & Intervention Checklist** as a structured, ongoing decision-making tool to guide instruction and intervention for all students. The purpose of the checklist is to show the progression from Tier 1 to Tier 2 to Tier 3 to ensure that each step is followed using a research-based method. The checklist provides clear touchpoints to ensure that all decisions are reflective of students' needs. The checklist ensures that each tier is implemented with fidelity and there is a clear implementation plan with an identified staff member responsible for implementation.

Beginning with **Tier 1,** teachers review student data to identify needs and implement differentiated core instruction with supports, monitoring progress over several weeks.

Based on student response, they either continue, adjust instruction, or move students to **Tier 2** for more targeted interventions with specific goals and closer progress monitoring. If students do not adequately respond, teachers intensify support through **Tier 3** by individualizing interventions and collaborating with problem-solving teams. At each stage, teachers use data to evaluate effectiveness, adjust strategies, and determine next steps, ensuring that support is responsive, systematic, and tailored to student needs.

Tiered Support & Intervention Checklist

🟢 Tier 1: Universal Instruction (All Students)

☐ Identify Needs

☐ Identify students with skill gaps or concerns by reviewing student data (academic, behavior and/or SEL

☐ Plan supports using scaffolding, differentiation, and/or instructional adaptations

☐ Implement & Monitor

☐ Deliver core instruction with supports

☐ Monitor progress

☐ Decision Check

☐ Are students making expected progress?

If YES:

☐ Continue Tier 1

If NO:

☐ Adjust core instruction

☐ Re-teach or modify strategies

☐ Move to Tier 2 (once core instruction has been adjusted at least once over the course of 2 weeks)

🟠 Tier 2: Targeted Support (Some Students)

☐ Plan Intervention

☐ Create a Tier 2 Intervention Plan in Panorama (note: students may have multiple intervention plans with different goals. If multiple strategies are being used towards the same goal, one intervention plan may be used).

☐ Tier 2 Intervention plan is documented/created in Panorama (see screenshots)

☐Match intervention to specific student needs

☐ Set clear goals

☐ Identify resource to be used

☐ Identify intervention "point person" who will be updating Panorama intervention plan/notes (or determine if there are multiple staff members who will provide updates)

☐ Identify who will communicate updates with parents

☐Identify the staff member who will be providing the intervention

☐ Implement

☐ Provide targeted intervention

☐ Monitor progress

☐ Collect data → consider using Teacher Data Collection Tools, Gradebook, and student work evidence

☐ Provide data analysis/updates in student's Panorama Intervention Plan

☐ Decision Check → Are students making expected progress?

If YES (student is responding):

☐ Adjust plan

☐ Consider returning to Tier 1 OR

☐ Continue targeted support as needed

If NO (student is not responding):

☐ Check fidelity of intervention

☐ Adjust intervention (intensity, duration, strategy)

☐ Consult Individual Problem-Solving Team for potential Tier 3 consideration

🔴 Tier 3: Intensive Support (Few Students)

☐ Plan Intensive Intervention

☐ Match intervention to specific, individual student needs

☐ Set clear goals

☐ Identify resource to be used

☐ Identify which staff member will provide the intervention & when intervention will take place

☐ Communicate intervention plan to family/care-giver

☐ Intervention plan is documented/created in Panorama

☐ Implement

☐ Provide intensive intervention

☐ Monitor progress closely

☐ Decision Check → Are students making expected progress?

If YES (student is responding):

☐ Adjust plan

☐ Consider reducing intensity (Tier 2)

☐ Continue plan

If NO (student is not responding):

☐ Check fidelity of intervention

☐ Adjust intervention (intensity, duration, strategy)

☐ Consult Individual Problem-Solving Team for next steps

Roles & Responsibilities

Defined roles and responsibilities provide clarity, alignment, and clear expectations to those executing the work. Teams utilizing defined roles and responsibilities create an equitable, inclusive culture that builds a strong foundation of success. The practice allows everyone to contribute effectively.

Teachers

Instructional Responsibilities

- Deliver standards-based instruction and interventions with fidelity
- Differentiate instruction and provide appropriate accommodations
- Set clear expectations and maintain an inclusive, supportive classroom
- Implement targeted supports for whole, small group, and individual instruction

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Assessment & Data Use

- Assess academic, behavioral, and language performance
- Monitor and document progress across tiers
- Use data to guide instruction and evaluate interventions
- Share data with relevant teams

Collaboration & Problem Solving

- Collaborate with staff to plan instruction and interventions
- Participate in team meetings and problem-solving processes
- Contribute expertise to support student success

Documentation & MTSS Processes

- Document interventions and supports accurately

- Follow MTSS procedures and timelines
- Share required documentation with appropriate staff

Tier 2: Targeted Support

- Use assessment data to identify and plan targeted interventions
- Apply data protocols to analyze student needs and misconceptions
- Consider if students can be grouped together if they are demonstrating similar needs
- Monitor progress every 2-3 weeks
- Provide structured intervention support (e.g., Guided Studies, math/ELA interventions)
- Document interventions and maintain student records (e.g., Panorama)

Family & School Partnerships

- Maintain ongoing communication with families
- Engage parents in the learning process
- Build relationships with students and families

Equity & Student Advocacy

- Foster an inclusive, culturally responsive environment
- Advocate for student needs
- Support student self-advocacy

ESL Responsibilities

- Assess language proficiency and monitor progress
- Support language-based accommodations and instruction
- Align language development with academic standards
- Provide resources and guidance to staff supporting MLs

Collaborative Teams *(In Development)*

Purpose of Collaborative Teams

Collaborative Team Meetings support teachers in delivering high-quality, standards-based instruction through shared planning, data analysis, and refinement of instructional practices. Teams use formative data to strengthen Tier 1 instruction and align practices with school and district goals.

Guiding Questions

- What do we want students to learn?
- How will we know they learned it?
- How will we respond if they don't?
- How will we extend learning for those who are proficient?

Team Membership & Support

- General education, ELL, and special education teachers
- Curriculum coordinator (where applicable) and grade-level representatives
- Psychologist, social worker, and administrator
- Additional staff working with the student

Tier 1: Universal Instruction

- Deliver standards-based instruction aligned to pacing and curriculum
- Use differentiation and common formative assessments
- Analyze student data regularly to guide instruction
- Communicate progress with families and staff
- Collaborate to address students not progressing in core instruction

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Tier 2: Targeted Support

- Use assessment data to identify and plan targeted interventions
- Apply data protocols to analyze student needs and misconceptions
- Group students and monitor progress every 2–3 weeks
- Provide structured intervention support (e.g., Guided Studies, math/ELA interventions)
- Document interventions and maintain student records (e.g., Panorama)

Individual Problem-Solving Teams

Purpose of the Problem-Solving Team

- Support teachers and teams in reviewing student data and interventions
- Assist when Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports show limited progress
- Guide next steps using a structured, data-based problem-solving process
- Provide additional supports (e.g., observation, modeling, implementation support)

Guiding Questions

- What do we want students to learn?
- How will we know they learned it?
- How will we respond if they don't?
- How will we extend learning for those already proficient?

Team Membership & Support

- Classroom teacher
- Family/guardians
- Special education, EL teachers, and interventionists
- Applicable related service providers (ex: speech pathologist, psychologist, social worker)
- Administrator

Problem Identification & Planning

- Identify specific area(s) of concern (reference Panorama data dashboard)
- Select appropriate Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 interventions
- Establish timelines and intervention plans
- Determine progress monitoring frequency and data to collect

Implementation & Monitoring

- Implement intervention plan with fidelity
- Monitor progress regularly using identified data
- Adjust instruction, supports, or tier placement based on data
- Provide coaching, modeling, or observation as needed

Family Communication & Collaboration

- Inform and involve parents in planning and interventions
- Hold meetings to review concerns, plans, and progress
- Provide ongoing updates and adjust supports as needed

School Leadership Team (SLT) / Data Team

Purpose

- Review schoolwide academic and behavioral data three times per year
- Guide MTSS systems, including intervention criteria and supports

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Guiding Questions

- What strengths and needs are evident across grade levels and content areas?
- What trends are emerging in the data?
- What supports are needed at the building or district level?

Team Membership

- Principal and Assistant Principal(s)
- Teacher Leader(s)

Responsibilities

- Analyze grade-level, content-area, and schoolwide data
- Evaluate overall instructional effectiveness
- Identify areas for additional support
- Communicate trends and concerns to staff and support teams
- Plan professional learning and coaching based on data

District Administration / Cabinet

Purpose

- Provide oversight to ensure alignment with the district strategic plan, mission, and vision
- Support school leadership teams in meeting goals and implementing MTSS

Guiding Questions

- What progress have schools made toward goals?
- What supports do school leadership and site teams need?
- How is implementation aligned with the strategic plan, mission, and vision?

Team Membership

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
- Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Director of Multilingual Services
- Building Principals

Responsibilities

- Review building updates and district-level data
- Monitor progress toward district goals
- Ensure alignment of school initiatives with the strategic plan
- Provide guidance and problem-solving support to school teams
- Use data to inform continuous improvement and resource allocation
- Support effective MTSS implementation across schools

Digging Deeper | Tier 1

Tier 1 | Universal Support

Tier 1 is the foundation of the MTSS framework and represents the **core instructional experiences all students receive**. In middle school, effective Tier 1 instruction is:

- Standards-aligned and grade-level rigorous
- Responsive to diverse academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs
- Not just "core instruction"—it is **intentional, data-driven, and inclusive by design**.

A Coherent Model for Tier 1 Instruction

1. Design for Access (Planning)

Teachers proactively design instruction so all students can access learning from the start.

Key Practices:

- Align lessons to priority standards and clear learning targets
- Use **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** to:
    - Provide multiple ways to access content (visuals, modeling, scaffolds)
    - Offer multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning
    - Increase engagement through relevance and choice
- Anticipate barriers and plan supports in advance (not after students struggle)

Middle School Consideration:
Students have varied readiness levels and independence; planning must balance **structure with autonomy**.

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2. Deliver with Responsiveness (Instruction)

Instruction is flexible and responsive in real time to meet student needs.

Key Practices:

- Use gradual release of responsibility (model → guided → independent)
- Differentiate instruction through:
    - Flexible grouping
    - Adjusted tasks or supports
    - Targeted questioning
- Embed checks for understanding throughout instruction
- Maintain high expectations with appropriate scaffolds

What This Looks Like in Practice:

- Small group reteaching within the core block
- Strategic use of questioning to assess and extend thinking
- Adjusting pacing based on student understanding

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3. Use Data to Adjust (Response)

Teachers continuously use data to refine instruction and determine next steps.

Key Practices:

- Use common formative assessments to monitor learning
- Analyze data during Collaborative Team Meetings
- Identify:
    - Students who need reteaching within Tier 1
    - Students who may require Tier 2 support
- Adjust instruction before moving to intervention

Key Principle:
Tier 1 should be **strengthened first** before assuming a need for Tier 2.

Important Shift:
Instead of asking *"Which strategy should I use?"*, teachers ask:
→ *"How am I ensuring access, engagement, and expression for all students?"*

Collaborative Support from Curriculum & Instruction Department (CSCI)

Tier 1 is strengthened through collaboration, not isolation.

CSCI Responsibilities:

- Plan instruction aligned to standards and pacing
- Develop and use common formative assessments
- Analyze student data regularly
- Share effective instructional practices
- Identify students needing additional support

Guiding Focus:
Improving Tier 1 is a **team responsibility**, not just an individual one.

When Tier 1 is Working Well

Strong Tier 1 instruction is evident when:

- The majority of students are meeting grade-level expectations
- Instruction is consistent across classrooms within a grade/content area
- Teachers are using data regularly to adjust instruction
- Students are engaged and able to access learning in multiple ways

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Common Misconceptions About Tier 1

- **"Tier 1 is just whole-group instruction."**
  → Tier 1 includes differentiation, flexible grouping, and targeted supports
- **"Interventions only happen in Tier 2 or 3."**
  → Many supports should occur within Tier 1 first
- **"UDL is an add-on."**
  → UDL is the foundation of effective Tier 1 design

Key Takeaway

Tier 1 is most effective when it is:

- **Proactive** (planned for variability)
- **Responsive** (adjusted in real time)
- **Collaborative** (refined through team processes)
- **Data-driven** (guided by student evidence)

When Tier 1 is strong, fewer students require additional intervention—and those who do are more clearly identified.

Field Middle School Tier 1 Programming		
Subject	**Standards**	**Link to Units**
Math	Common Core Math Standards	6th Core 7th Core 8th Core 6th SA 6th DA 7th SA Alg 1 Geo
ELA	Common Core ELA Standards	6th Core 7th Core 8th Core 6th Acc 7th Acc 8th Acc
Social Studies	ISBE Social Science Standards	6th 7th 8th
Science	Next Generation Science Standards	6th 7th 8th
SEL	ISBE SEL Standards Middle School	In development

Digging Deeper | Tier 2

Targeted Support | Tier 2

Tier 2 provides **targeted, supplemental instruction** designed to close skill gaps and support students in meeting grade-level expectations within Tier 1. These supports offer **additional time and focused, skill-based instruction** and are provided **in addition to—not in place of—core instruction**.

Tier 2 is typically needed for a **small group of students** and is implemented by classroom teachers in collaboration with the grade-level team, which may include general education, special education, interventionists, and EL staff.

Identifying the Need for Tier 2

When students are not successful in Tier 1:

- Teachers analyze data to identify skill gaps and potential barriers
- Teachers confer with students and may communicate with families
- Teams collaborate to implement and refine Tier 1 supports (e.g., small group instruction, targeted strategies)

Key Features of Tier 2

- Targeted, skill-based instruction aligned to identified needs
- Delivered in addition to core instruction
- Planned and implemented collaboratively
- Progress monitored regularly to evaluate effectiveness

Role of the CSCI

- Use common assessments and data to identify students in need
- Develop and adjust Tier 1 supports before moving to Tier 2
- Determine appropriate Tier 2 interventions when needed
- Monitor student progress and make data-based decisions

Key Takeaway

Tier 2 is most effective when it is **focused, collaborative, and data-driven**, ensuring students receive the additional support needed to succeed in Tier 1.

Tier 2 & Tier 3 | Key Features

The information below will support staff in more clearly determining the intensity level of an intervention. The chart includes the core set of variables to consider when designing intervention intensity. These are not a rigid set of rules, but rather guidelines to consider. It is important to remember that the value of tiered intervention is that it is not overly rigid, but rather adaptive to the needs of students.

Variable	Tier 2 (Targeted / Strategic)	Tier 3 (Intensive / Individualized)
Group Size	Small group (typically **3–6 students**)	Very small group or **1–3 students / 1:1**
Program / Materials	Evidence-based supplemental interventions aligned to core curriculum	**Specialized, individualized programs** often different from core; matched to diagnostic data
Opportunities to Respond (OTR)	Increased compared to Tier 1; structured practice within small group	**Maximized OTR** (frequent, immediate responses; high engagement every minute); individualized pacing
Instructional Strategies	Explicit instruction, modeling, guided practice; focus on specific skill deficits	**Intensified explicit instruction** (systematic, scaffolded, error correction, immediate feedback, individualized strategies)
Individualization	Targeted to common skill deficits across group	**Highly individualized** based on diagnostic assessment and progress monitoring data
Time / Dosage	Additional **20–40 min**, several times per week	**Daily, longer sessions**; increased frequency and duration
Progress Monitoring	Regular (e.g., biweekly) to guide adjustments	**Frequent (weekly or more)**; used to continuously adapt intervention
Instructor Expertise	Classroom teacher, interventionist, or specialist	**Specialist or highly trained staff** with expertise in intensifying instruction

Focus of Instruction	Remediation of **targeted skill gaps**	Remediation of **significant, persistent deficits**; often below grade level
Instructional Alignment	Aligned with Tier 1 curriculum	May **diverge from core** to address foundational needs

Digging Deeper | Tier 3

Intensive Support | Tier 3

Tier 3 provides intensive, individualized intervention designed to address significant skill gaps and support students in meeting grade-level expectations within Tier 1. These supports offer increased time, frequency, and precision of instruction and are provided in addition to—not in place of—core instruction.

Tier 3 is typically needed for a very small percentage of students and is implemented through a collaborative, team-based approach that may include general education, special education, interventionists, and ML staff. All students may access Tier 3 based on Individual Problem-Solving Team recommendations.

Identifying the Need for Tier 3

When students are not successful in Tier 2:

- The Individual Problem-Solving Team reviews multiple data sources, including progress monitoring and intervention history
- Teams analyze diagnostic data to identify specific skill deficits and barriers
- Previous interventions are evaluated for effectiveness and fidelity
- The team determines the need for more intensive, individualized support through Tier 3

Key Features of Tier 3

- Intensive, individualized instruction aligned to identified needs
- Delivered in addition to core instruction

- Increased time and frequency of intervention
- Provided in very small groups or one-on-one settings
- Ongoing progress monitoring (at least weekly)
- Use of diagnostic data to guide targeted instruction and adjustments

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Role of the Collaborative Team

- Review and analyze comprehensive student data across Tiers 1 and 2
- Develop and implement individualized Tier 3 intervention plans
- Coordinate supports across staff to ensure alignment and intensity
- Monitor progress closely and adjust interventions based on data
- Engage families as partners in the intervention process

Key Takeaway

Tier 3 is most effective when it is intensive, individualized, and data-driven, ensuring students receive the highest level of support needed to make progress toward Tier 1 expectations.

Progress Monitoring

What is Progress Monitoring?

Progress monitoring is the ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data to determine whether instruction and interventions are effective. It ensures that decisions about student support are based on evidence and that adjustments are made in a timely manner.

Progress monitoring occurs across all tiers and is an essential part of ensuring students are making meaningful progress toward grade-level expectations.

Purpose of Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is used to:

- Determine if a student is responding to instruction or intervention
- Measure growth toward specific skill goals
- Identify when instructional adjustments are needed
- Inform decisions about movement between tiers

For students receiving intervention (Tier 2 or Tier 3), progress monitoring should be aligned directly to the targeted skill(s) being addressed.

Key Features of Progress Monitoring

- **Aligned to the skill**: Data collection focuses on the specific skill being taught (e.g., fluency, computation, behavior frequency)
- **Consistent and routine**: Data is collected regularly (e.g., weekly or biweekly)
- **Brief and efficient**: Measures are quick to administer and easy to repeat
- **Sensitive to growth**: Tools are able to show small increments of progress over time
- **Comparable over time**: The same or similar measure is used to track growth

Examples of progress monitoring data may include:

- Curriculum-based measures

- Exit tickets
- Behavior frequency or duration tracking
- Intervention-specific assessments
- See folder of Teacher Data Collection Tools for additional examples

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Role of the Collaborative Team

- Identify the specific skill to be monitored based on student need
- Select or develop a consistent progress monitoring tool
- Establish a schedule for data collection
- Review data regularly to evaluate student response
- Adjust instruction or intervention based on trends in the data

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Utilizing Panorama to Progress Monitor

- Progress monitoring should be summarized and documented in Panorama at regular intervals
- The classroom teacher or related service provider can create an intervention plan in Panorama
- Reference the Panorama Cheat Sheet for an overview of the procedure for creating an intervention plan and progress monitoring student performance

Key Takeaway

Progress monitoring is most effective when it is intentional, consistent, and directly aligned to the skill being taught, ensuring that teams can make timely, data-based decisions about student support.

What does Progress Monitoring Look Like in Action?

ELA Example

A 6th grade team identifies that a group of students is struggling with reading fluency and begins a Tier 2 intervention focused on repeated reading.

- The team selects a measure to track words read correctly per minute
- Each week, students complete a 1-minute fluency probe using a grade-level passage

- The teacher records the number of correct words and graphs the results over time
- During team meetings, teachers review the data to look for trends:
    - Are students improving at an expected rate?
    - Is the intervention leading to consistent growth?
- If progress is limited after several data points, the team:
    - Adjusts the intervention (e.g., increases frequency, changes strategy)
    - Or considers moving the student to a more intensive level of support

Math Example

A group of students is receiving Tier 2 support for difficulty with multi-digit multiplication. The team implements an intervention using **explicit instruction with guided practice and immediate feedback** on the standard algorithm.

- The team identifies the target skill: **accurate and efficient multi-digit multiplication**
- Students complete a **brief formative assessment (5 problems)** at the end of each intervention session
- The teacher records the **number of correct digits** or **problems correct** for each probe
- Data is collected **2–3 times per week** and tracked over time

During team review:

- The team looks for an **increase in accuracy and consistency across probes**
- They may also note patterns of errors (e.g., place value mistakes, regrouping errors)

If progress is limited, the team may:

- Adjust the intervention (e.g., provide additional modeling, reduce problem complexity, increase guided practice)
- Increase time or frequency of support
- Consider a more intensive intervention if needed

Behavior/SEL Example

A student is receiving support for off-task behavior during independent work time. The team implements a Check-In/Check-Out (CICO) intervention with a daily goal focused on staying on task.

- The teacher defines **on-task behavior** (e.g., eyes on work, following directions, working quietly)
- During a 20-minute independent work block, the teacher summarizes the % of time a student is actively engaged in learning (see sample data collection tool)
- Data is collected **3 times per week** and summarized the number of times a student advocated for help when needed (see sample data collection tool)
- The student also receives **feedback and points** during check-out based on performance (see sample data collection tool)

During team review:

- The team looks for an **increase in percentage of on-task behavior over time**
- If progress is limited, the team may:
    - Adjust the intervention (e.g., increase feedback frequency, revise goals, add reinforcement)
    - Provide additional supports or consider a more intensive intervention

Individual Problem Solving - Tier 3

A student is eligible to be discussed at an individual problem solving meeting if the Tier 2 intervention plan reflects that there is limited to no progress. Progress monitoring data clearly shows that the student is in need of more intensive support. To engage in the problem solving process, teachers must have the following steps completed:

- Create a Tier 2 intervention plan in Panorama
- Summarized progress monitoring data in Panorama
- AND MORE....

The purpose of the individual problem solving process is to determine if Tier 3 support is necessary to move the student forward. The success of the individual problem solving process is dependent on the thoroughness of Tier 2 interventions and progress monitoring. We are committed to ensuring we are following a research-based MTSS model with integrity.

FAQs

1. What is the purpose of the MTSS handbook?
    a. The purpose of the MTSS handbook is to provide a usable guide for teachers, support staff, and administrators to reference when implementing the MTSS framework. The handbook provides clear definitions of the tiered system, and includes valuable resources that can be referenced throughout the process. While the handbook will continue to evolve over time, it is essential that staff reference the information to develop common language and approaches to MTSS implementation.

2. What is the difference between small group instruction and a Tier 2 intervention?
    a. Oftentimes, the terms “small group instruction” and “Tier 2 intervention” are used interchangeably. It is essential to note that there is a clear difference between small group instruction and Tier 2 intervention. While Tier 2 instruction *can* occur in a small group, there are key characteristics that further define it. The Tier 2 section of the handbook emphasizes that Tier 2 is additional instruction (beyond the core, Tier 1 instruction) for students who need targeted support or supplemental enrichment. Progress is monitored frequently to determine if the intervention needs to be continued, adjusted, or concluded. Small group instruction refers to the format of the instruction that is received Students move in and out frequently, and student progress may be noted, yet not monitored as closely as a Tier 2 intervention. Small group instruction can also refer to the format of delivery for Tier 1 instruction and does not always include an intervention.

3. What resources should be used for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions?
4. Where does Enrichment fit into the MTSS process?

Appendix

- D31 MTSS website
- Panorama website
- Panorama cheatsheet
- D31 Curriculum Maps
- Individual Problem-Solving Process
- Intervention Case Study: SEL/Behavioral
- Intervention Case Study: Academic (ELA)
- ML Guiding Questions