

Nyack Public Schools

MTSS Plan

June 2025

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Date submitted: May 2025
Date approved:

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Melinda Nealon, Special Education Teacher
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Valley Cottage Elementary School MTSS Team

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Christina Sinistovic, ENL Teacher
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Gaetane Fontanges, 2nd Grade Teacher
Tracey Richmond, 3rd Grade Teacher
Lisa St. John, 4th Grade Teacher
Rebecca Somma, 5th Grade Teacher
Meredith Handt, Speech Teacher
Brett Distelhurst, Social Worker
Jon Hogg, School Counselor
Kayla Tracey, School Psychologist
Carina Graganella, Occupational Therapist

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction of Multi-Tiered System of Supports **3**
- **Summary of District Demographics** **3**
- **The District's Vision** **4**
- **The District's Mission Statement** **4**
- **The District's MTSS Philosophy Statement** **5**
  - Milestone Measures of Success 5
  - District's Goals 5
- **MTSS Vision Statement** **6**
- **MTSS Program Goals and Objectives** **7**
- **Nyack's MTSS Implementation Timeline** **8**

Section 2: Overview of Framework & Processes **11**
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports** **11**
  - The MTSS Process 11
  - MTSS Process Summary 12
- **Summary of Identification of Struggling Learners** **14**
- **Summary of Accepted RFA** **15**
- **MTSS Teams** **16**
  - Grade-level/Department Teams 16
  - Building-level MTSS Teams 17
- **Intervention Tiers** **18**
  - Tier 1 18
  - Tier 2 19
  - Tier 3 19

Section 3: Curriculum, Intervention, and Assessment **20**
- **Overview of District Curriculum Approach** **20**
  - Assessment 21
    - *Balanced Assessment System* 21
- **Pre-Referral Interventions Prior to a Committee on Special Education Referral** **24**
- **The Role of Special Education in MTSS** **25**
- **English Language Learners and MTSS** **25**
- **Intervention** **26**
- **Progress Monitoring** **26**
  - Frequency 27
  - Progress Monitoring Tools 27

Section 4: Staffing and Scheduling **28**
- **Staffing** **28**

Scheduling **28**
Section 5: Professional Development **28**
References and Resources **28**
Resources used to help create this manual 28
Intervention Resources for Parents/Guardians 29
Appendix A: Key Documents & Location **30**
Appendix B: Expectations for Staff and Service Providers **31**
Appendix C: Key Terminology **33**

Section 1: Introduction of Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Nyack Public School's development of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is designed to enhance our District's ability to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, health, enrichment, and social-emotional needs of our students. Nyack's MTSS model is based on a three-tiered framework of supports and interventions. Central to the success of MTSS is a strong foundation of District and school leadership, a positive school culture and climate, and family and community engagement.

The MTSS framework outlined in Nyack's Plan is based on guidance from NYSED. For more information, please visit the state's MTSS homepage at Multi-Tiered System of Supports – Integrated (MTSS-I)

Summary of District Demographics

To create a comprehensive multi-tiered system of support, it is essential to know the demographics of the students the District serves. Below is an overview of Nyack's student demographics for the 2023-2024 academic year.

K-12 Enrollment

Total Enrollment: 2787

Enrollment by Gender

Male	
1415	51%
Female	
1369	49%
Non-Binary	
3	<1%

Nyack is a primarily residential community in Rockland County situated 20 miles north of mid-Manhattan, just over the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. The Nyack School District consists of three elementary schools that serve students (K-5): Liberty Elementary School, Upper Nyack Elementary School and Valley Cottage Elementary School. Students filter into one Nyack Middle School (6-8) and ultimately the Nyack High School (9-12). Nyack celebrates its cultural diversity.

Enrollment by Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaska Native	
1	
Black or African American	
393	14%
Hispanic or Latino	
947	34%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	
192	7%
White	
1049	38%
Multiracial	
205	7%

Enrollment: Other Groups

English Language Learners	
285	10%
Students with Disabilities	
420	15%
Economically Disadvantaged	
842	30%
Migrant	
-	-
Homeless	
38	1%
Foster Care	
6	<1%
Parent in Armed Forces	
-	-

The District's Vision

The Nyack Public Schools value the richness of our diverse community. This assertion is founded in the Board of Education's Mission Statement approved in its policies. We believe that all children are born with sufficient innate ability to achieve school tasks, and that it is our ethical and moral responsibility to ensure our School District provides an optimal learning environment that meets the needs of all students regardless of race, gender, gender identify, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, first language, religion, national origin, age, or differently-abled.

The District's Mission Statement

We, the students, parents, community and staff of the Nyack School District VALUE: the pursuit of scholastic excellence; the richness of our diverse community; harmonious relationships among individuals and groups; partnerships among students, staff, parents, and community; respect for self, and others; responsible ethical behavior that engenders trust; individuals who think critically and creatively; ongoing involvement in local and global issues; development of essential skills and attitudes for a productive life; a safe and nurturing environment.

To implement its Mission Statement, the Nyack Board of Education established the following goals and objectives:

- Challenge each student to reach their highest potential
- Recognize the diversity of the Nyack School District
- Foster understanding of school programs and support every student via reciprocal communication process between staff and the community about District goals, programs, and achievement
- Support students' efforts to learn and grow by ensuring a safe and caring environment in all buildings

The District's MTSS Philosophy Statement

The District's MTSS philosophy statement is based on our Strategic Plan for Excellence Through Racial Equity. More specifically, Nyack Public Schools will significantly improve achievement outcomes for all students as measured by the Milestones Framework outlined in the Strategic Plan for Excellence Through Racial Equity.

Milestone Measures of Success:

- Each student will enter Kindergarten ready to learn and First Grade ready to read
- Each student will be reading at grade level at the end of Third Grade
- Each student will complete Grade 8 ready for high school
- Each student will enter Grade 10 on track to graduate high school
- Each student will complete Grade 12 on time and are ready for college, vocational school, and/or the workforce

The Nyack School District is a community proud of its traditions that use the richness of its diversity to meet the needs of all students and prepare them for a rapidly changing world. The District's goals are infused into its classrooms and curriculum through a joint commitment of administrators and staff to transform the educational experience of each and every student.

District's Goals:

- Implement a District-Wide MTSS Plan
- Advance the District's Equity Plan
- Strengthen Elementary ELA/English as a New Language(ENL) Math Curriculums

Nyack's MTSS model happens within the pillars that are included in the District's Strategic Plan for Excellence:

Pillar 1 – A Culturally Responsive Workforce
Pillar 2 – Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning
Pillar 3 – Culturally Responsive Family and Community Engagement
Pillar 4 – Cultural & Organizational Transformation

Nyack's MTSS framework includes four core beliefs:

1. We are committed to supporting our students' academic, social, and emotional development
2. Every student, regardless of individual need, will be provided with high-quality, research-based classroom instruction built upon the rigorous academic standards set forth by the New York State Education Department
3. Every member of the educational community continues to learn and grow in a variety of ways
4. Collaborative problem-solving enables all stakeholders to contribute to the success of all students

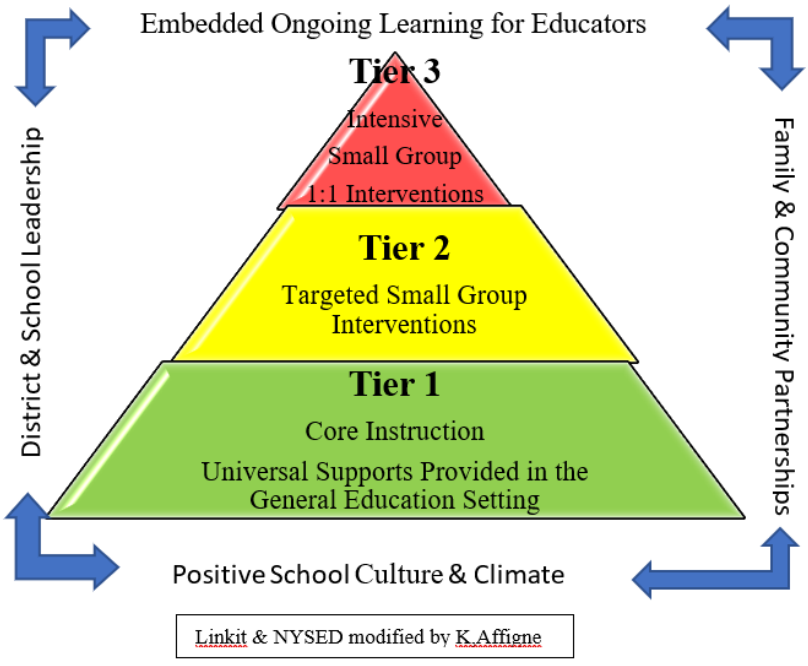
By using the MTSS model to identify and support students with learning and behavioral needs, we can ensure their academic success.

MTSS Vision Statement

MTSS lives in the general education setting and provides interventions as a part of the general education instructional program. Every student will receive the necessary instructional support to succeed in our educational community through differentiated, culturally responsive instruction, data-driven decision-making, and the incorporation of need-based interventions.

MTSS is a data-driven decision-making framework for:

- Increasing the **effectiveness**, **efficiency**, and **equity** of delivered instruction;
- Rapidly identify and responding to the needs of students;
- Continuously improving; and
- Implementing evidence/research-based instructional practice.



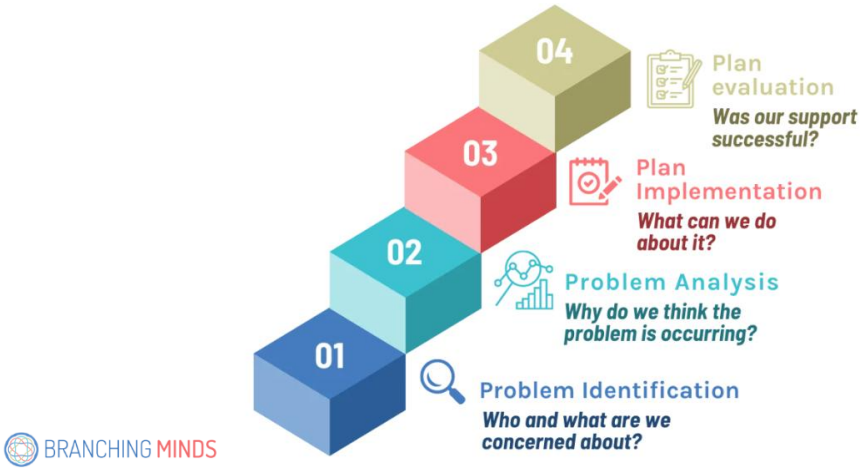
MTSS is not an initiative or program; it is a model or framework. MTSS is the vehicle we use to achieve the goals outlined in the District's Strategic Plan for Excellence Through Racial Equity.

Our strategic plan relies on an ongoing analysis of a wide range of data and a targeted analysis of disaggregated data to determine long-range priorities and initiatives for the District. At the same time, MTSS works to support groups and individual students in short-term, measurable increments. A successful MTSS implementation will contribute to the success of the strategic plan's goals over time.

To best achieve these goals, established processes must be put in place. Implementing a successful MTSS layer will require articulation meetings that engender the support of professional learning committees, staff, school-based, and District-wide committees. This will allow for collaborative problem-solving and goal setting across the District.

MTSS Program Goals and Objectives

MTSS is a data-based problem-solving process consisting of four components:



To support our overall objectives, the following steps have been outlined:

1. Provide high-quality instruction and resources for all students in the general education classroom
2. Ensure students participate in universal screening assessments to provide information about each student's learning growth and achievement
3. Help educators to understand how to analyze student and programmatic data systematically
4. Develop and maintain criteria to accurately identify struggling students
5. Define and sort support programs and practices into tiers based on the intensity of the intervention
6. Provide targeted support for students for defined periods as per intervention plans.
7. Monitor student progress to determine effectiveness throughout the school year

8. Facilitate student movement throughout tiers based on the success or failure of each intervention

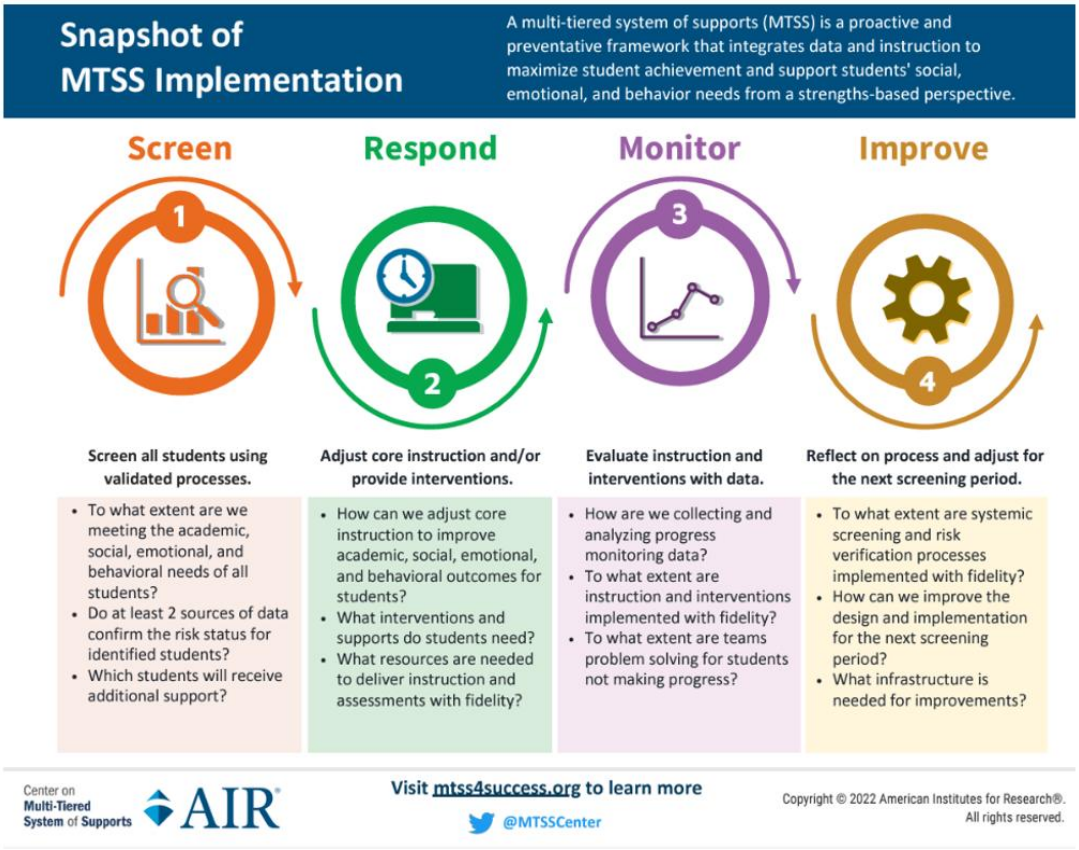
Nyack's MTSS Implementation Timeline

2023-2025 MTSS Implementation Plan			
Key Deliverable	**Action Required**	**Responsibility**	**Date**
95% Implementation	Training – Spring 2023 – Fall 2026 Implementation K–2 September 2023 Implementation Grade 3 September 2024 Implementation Grade 4 September 2025 Implementation Grade 5 September 2026?	*District & 95% Group*	**September 2023 – Fall 2026**
Eureka Math	Training – March 2024 Implementation K-5 September 2024	*District & Great Minds*	**March 2024 – Fall 2024**
MTSS Kick-Off Meeting	District Leadership will meet with LinkIt!! to make introductions and discuss project plan	*LinkIt!! & District*	**August 2024**
MTSS Overview Training	Administrative Retreat workshop • MTSS-I Introduction and Processes • The Role of Leaders in its Implementation	*Karry Mullins & Will Lentz/LinkIt!! & District*	**August 2024**
MTSS Planning Session	How to build organizational capacity for MTSS implementation	*LinkIt!! & District*	**September 2024 – October 2024**
LinkIt! Training	Will Lentz provides Building-level specific training for administrators	*Will Lentz/LinkIt! & District*	**September 2024 – June 2025**
LinkIt! Training	Will Lentz provides Train-the-Trainer sessions for 12 staff members	*Will Lentz/LinkIt! & District*	**November 2024 – June 2025**
MTSS Overview Training (SCD)	MTSS District-wide Training (Keynote) • Model overview for K-12 Staff MTSS Building Level Team Training • MTSS-I Introduction and Processes	*Karry Mullins/LinkIt! & District*	**November 2024**
MTSS Team Training	MTSS Building-specific Team Training • Running an Effective MTSS Meeting • Best Practices in Tiers 2 and 3	*LinkIt! & District*	**November 2024**

Key Deliverable	Action Required	Responsibility	Date
LinkIt! Training (SCD)	LinkIt! Overview – Keynote Breakout Training for K-12 staff	*Will Lentz/LinkIt! & District*	**November 2024**
MTSS Presentation	MTSS Board of Education Presentation	*Karry Mullins /LinkIt!*	**November 2024**
MTSS Presentation	MTSS Board of Education Presentation	*Will Lentz/LinkIt!*	**December 2024**
MTSS Intervention Manager Implementation	Building principals attend training session on Intervention Manager	*Frankie Jones/LinkIt! & District*	**December 2024**
SEL Universal Screener	Working with Vendors, preview multiple Universal Screeners	*District*	**December 2024** **May 2025**
MTSS Plan	The District and LinkIt! will create a MTSS Plan using LinkIt!'s template.	*Karry Mullins/LinkIt! & District*	**January 2025**
MTSS Behavioral System Building	Building- & District-level Behavior Systems Karry Mullins, Dr. Affigne, & Dr. Novogrodsky [District's Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Coach]	*LinkIt! & District*	**January 2025**
MTSS Team Training	MTSS Building-specific Team Training • Building an Effective MTSS for SEL and Behavior • MTSS School Based Teams-Identifying Students for Tiered Intervention	*LinkIt! & District*	**January 2025**
MTSS Plan Development	District to review internally with the MTSS Building-level Teams.	*District*	**January 2025**
MTSS Plan Review Meeting	LinkIt!! review of MTSS Plan.	*LinkIt! & District*	**February 2025**
Simplify Writing Adoption K-5	Based on the recommendation of the Elementary ELA Committee, K–5 Elementary Teachers implemented Simplify Writing on April 1, 2025	*Simplify Writing & District*	**March 2025**
MTSS Plan Review	Admin Council Reviews Plan	*District*	**April 2025**

Key Deliverable	Action Required	Responsibility	Date
Intervention Manager Training	Training on how to use the system to manage MTSS Processes	*LinkIt! & District*	**April & May 2025**
Science 21 Implementation, K-5	Science Committee chooses resource	*PNW BOCES & District*	**April 2025**
AIMSWeb Progress Monitoring Tool for Tiers 2 & 3	AIMSWeb training for Interventionists and Special Education Teachers	*AIMSWeb & District*	**April & May 2025**
Winter Universal Screening Analysis K-9	MTSS Building-level Teams Analyze Winter Star Data	*LinkIt! & District*	**April & May 2025**
District-wide Data Team Formation	Members of each Building-level MTSS Team will be a member of the District-level Data Team	*LinkIt! & District*	**June 2025**
Spring Universal Screening Analysis K - 9	MTSS Building-level Teams Analyze Spring Star Data	*LinkIt! & District*	**June 2025**
Eureka Math 6 – 8	Training – June 2025 Implementation September 2025	*District & Great Minds*	**September 2025**
Science 21 Implementation, K-5	Teachers are provided access to the Science 21 and Stem Sims Websites	*PNW BOCES & District*	**September 2025**

All professional development will meet the guidelines provided by Nyack Public Schools & NYSED.



Section 2: Overview of the Framework & Processes

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The Nyack Public School District provides a program of **multi-tiered system of supports** for general education students that places a special focus on students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and attendance challenges. By doing so, we can help all students function productively and develop positively in the classroom environment.

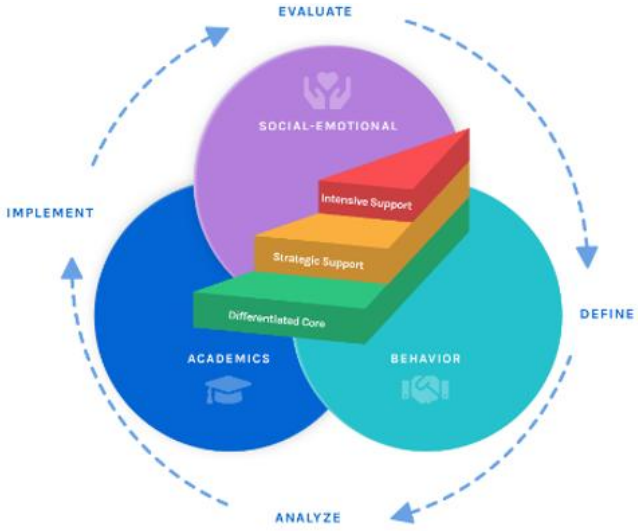
The MTSS process includes data collection and analysis by a multi-disciplinary MTSS team, the creation of MTSS action plans, and a referral by a parent/guardian or school staff member. The action plan specifies interventions for improvement and outlines how improvement will be measured. A student remains in the MTSS process until marked progress occurs or a referral is made to the Committee on Special Education.

The MTSS Process

Universal screenings (assessments) are administered at regular intervals consistently at each grade level. In Nyack, these screenings will happen three times per year (fall, winter, and

spring). These screening tools, along with multiple data sets such as benchmark assessments, State assessments, report card grades, and teacher observations, provide the necessary information for data teams to identify students needing support systematically.

Students receive tiers of services that are developed based on guidelines and using predetermined criteria. To illustrate, students receive Tiers 2 and 3 additional support to address their identified need(s). Academic, emotional, and/or behavioral support cycles generally last 8-10 weeks. As these instructional and support cycles reach completion, updated assessment data is collected for MTSS Building-level Teams to evaluate and update tier placement for the next instructional cycle.



Freeport School 145, Freeport, IL

A teacher may request the support of the MTSS team at any point in an instructional cycle. If a teacher has a concern about a student, they must complete an initial Request for Assistance Form and identify the specific problem area(s) such as fluency, inferential thinking, problem-solving, fact fluency, etc. Teachers must collect and submit a minimum of six weeks of data and work samples to illustrate their concerns. Paperwork must be submitted to the building principal for review prior to scheduling an MTSS meeting. Action plans developed by the MTSS team are scheduled and monitored based on MTSS criteria. In essence, students receiving support at any tier can be brought to the MTSS team for consideration to ensure student needs not identified through benchmark assessment analysis can be addressed promptly.

MTSS Process Summary

Students will initially be identified to receive Tier 1, 2, or 3 support based on universal screenings administered by classroom teachers and/or appropriate interventionists. In Nyack, universal screenings are administered three times a year (fall, winter, and spring).

The majority of students, approximately 80%, require Tier 1 support to meet rigorous grade-level standards successfully. The progress of students receiving Tier 1 support is monitored and reported through report cards, benchmark assessments, State assessments, and teacher observations. However, any teacher concerned about a student's progress with Tier 1 support should use the appropriate Progress Monitoring Tool to record the student's progress for a minimum of six weeks. At that time, the concern may warrant an MTSS meeting to brainstorm the best way to support the student.

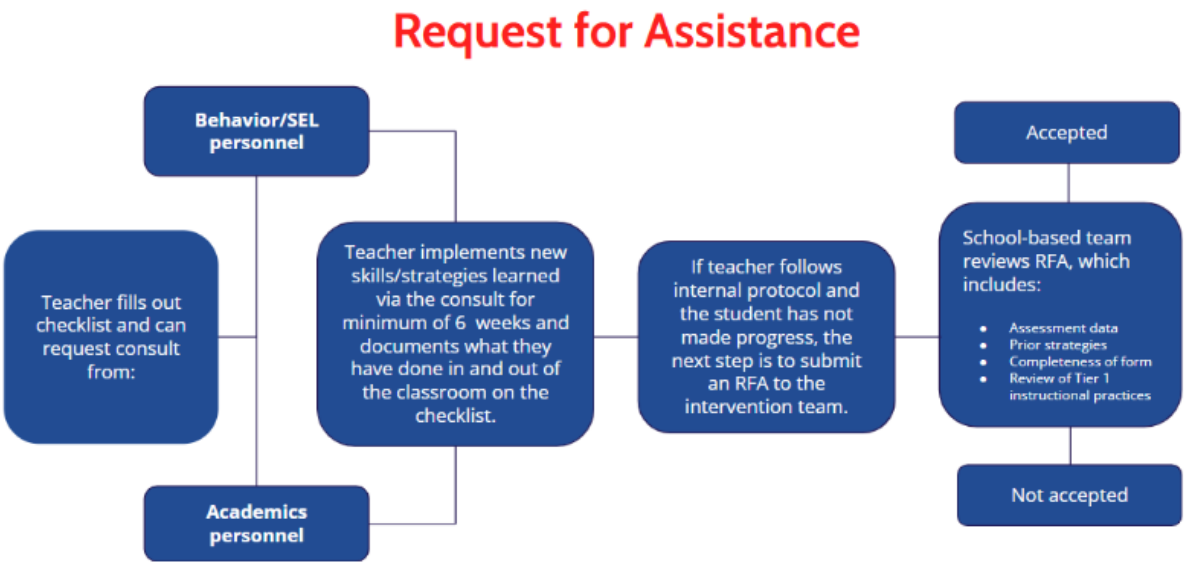
Multiple sources of evidence will be gathered for students who scored in the lowest 5% on the Universal Screener and may be given additional assessments to identify need. Based on the data analysis, students may receive either Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions. Students who scored in the next lowest 15% may also be given additional assessments to identify need and after analyzing multiple sources of evidence, receive an appropriate tiered intervention. All students receiving tiered interventions will be progress monitored over 8-10 weeks following the progress monitoring guidelines. Progress monitoring data, work samples, and teacher input are reviewed and discussed regularly among all teachers working with the student to address the identified need. Building MTSS team meetings will be held to assess student progress.

Students can access intervention tiers based on performance within each intervention cycle. If progress is being made, the student can continue with the current intervention until the end of the cycle. If progress is not made, the building MTSS team can add more support to meet the student's needs. The goal is to provide every student with the appropriate level/intensity of the most beneficial intervention. At the completion of each cycle, all tiered support groups will be reviewed and adjusted accordingly based on universal screening and/or progress monitoring data.

If a student has met their goal in their group, they can receive a lower-tiered intervention. If they still need to meet their goal, they may need a higher-tiered intervention. It is possible to have a student receiving a Tier 2 intervention for one area of need and a Tier 1 or 3 intervention for another. If students are holding steady with the current level of support, they can stay in the same tiered intervention for another cycle.

Using a decision-making flowchart can visually demonstrate what rules should trigger what action. It can help staff identify the different elements of a process and understand the interrelationships among the various steps. This "at-a-glance" view promotes collaboration and consensus while also assuring that the system is working effectively.

The flow charts below outline the overall District process as students move through MTSS and the layers of support.



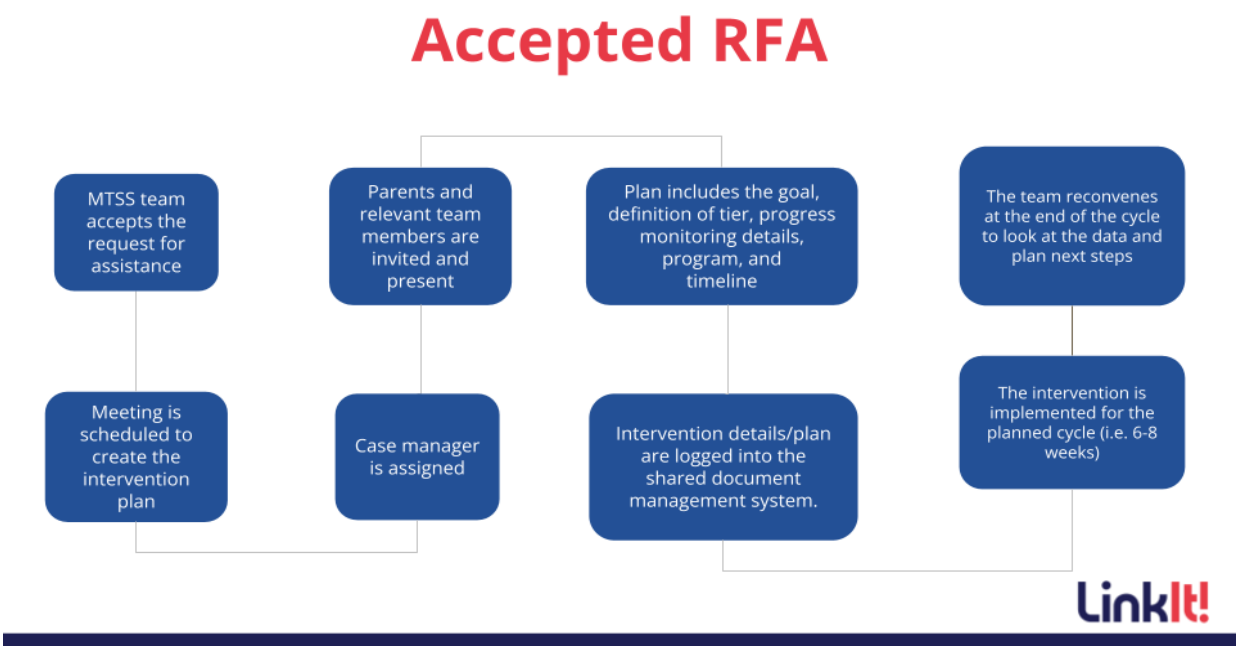
Summary of Identification of Struggling Learners:

When a teacher initially identifies that a student is struggling academically and/or behaviorally, the following steps should be taken:

- Complete a student checklist form that includes areas of concern and classroom-based strategies
- Request help from other staff with different areas of expertise.
- Implement any new suggested strategies

If no progress is noted, the teacher will next complete a formal Request for Assistance (RFA) form for review. The designated team would then:

- Review assessment data, prior strategies, Tier 1 instructional practices, and any relevant work samples and related documents
- Request additional information from the teacher or schedule a formal meeting



Summary of Accepted RFA

When an RFA is formally accepted, the teacher is notified of this acceptance, and the following actions take place:

- An MTSS Team meeting is scheduled by a designated team member and appropriate team members are invited to the meeting. The following are the designated team members responsible for scheduling the meeting:
    - Valley Cottage ES - Social Worker
    - Liberty ES and Upper Nyack ES: School Psychologist
    - High School – Assistant Principal
    - Middle School – Assistant Principal
- A case manager is assigned to support the teacher
- At the meeting, the action plan and any follow-up items are created and are shared with parents

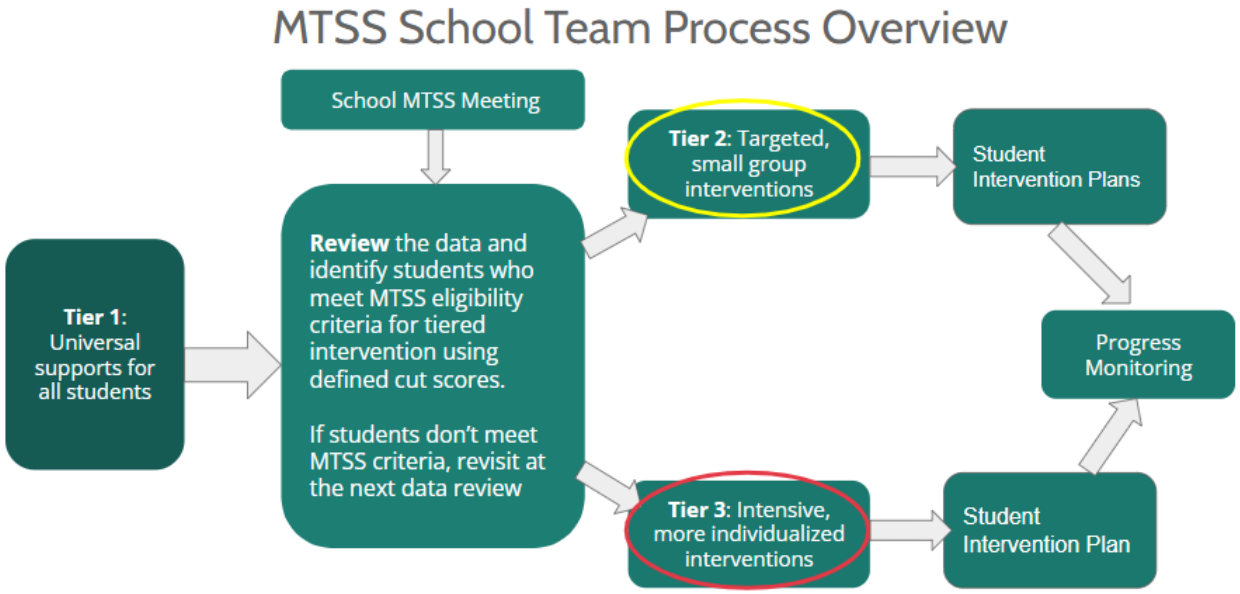
During the implementation of the intervention/plan, the following actions happen:

- Progress is monitored continuously
- The plan is reviewed after a predefined period, usually between 4-8 weeks, to determine how the student responds to the intervention
- The plan can be continued or discontinued, the tier can be intensified, and/or the plan can be modified
- Parents are notified of the status of the plan and given a progress report

MTSS Teams

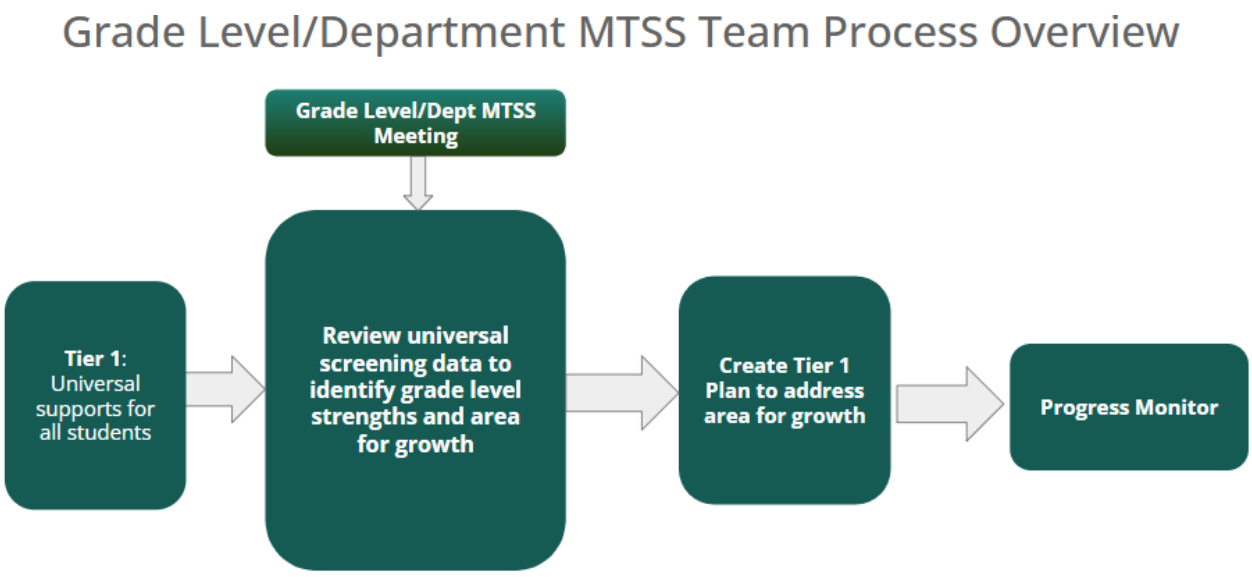
Building-level MTSS teams are essential to the day-to-day functioning of MTSS. Here is a summary of their role:

- Plays a critical role in supporting teachers' competency to use effective innovations with fidelity
- Ensures that educators are supported and receive on-going, data-informed training and coaching
- Reviews student screening data after each Universal Screening to identify overall student progress and identify students for Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention based on criteria using defined cut scores
- Uses a consistent data system to resolve problems, enact action plans, and monitor feasibility, usability, and impact of interventions
- Uses improvement cycles to determine the impact of interventions



Grade-level/Department Teams are also essential to support MTSS. Here is a summary of their role:

- Meets to increase consistency across classrooms and facilitate collaboration in problem solving for continuous improvement
- Evaluates the effects of practices supporting all students within their specific grade/dept and classrooms, as well as taking steps to strengthen them
- Reviews student screening data after each Universal Screener to identify overall student progress and compares results against grade-level targets to assess whether to modify instruction and practices



Data flow is a path for data to move from one part of the information system to another. The transfer of data between the components of a comprehensive system helps streamline the process. In addition, data flow eliminates the need for duplicate data entry, which in turn results in fewer errors in the data

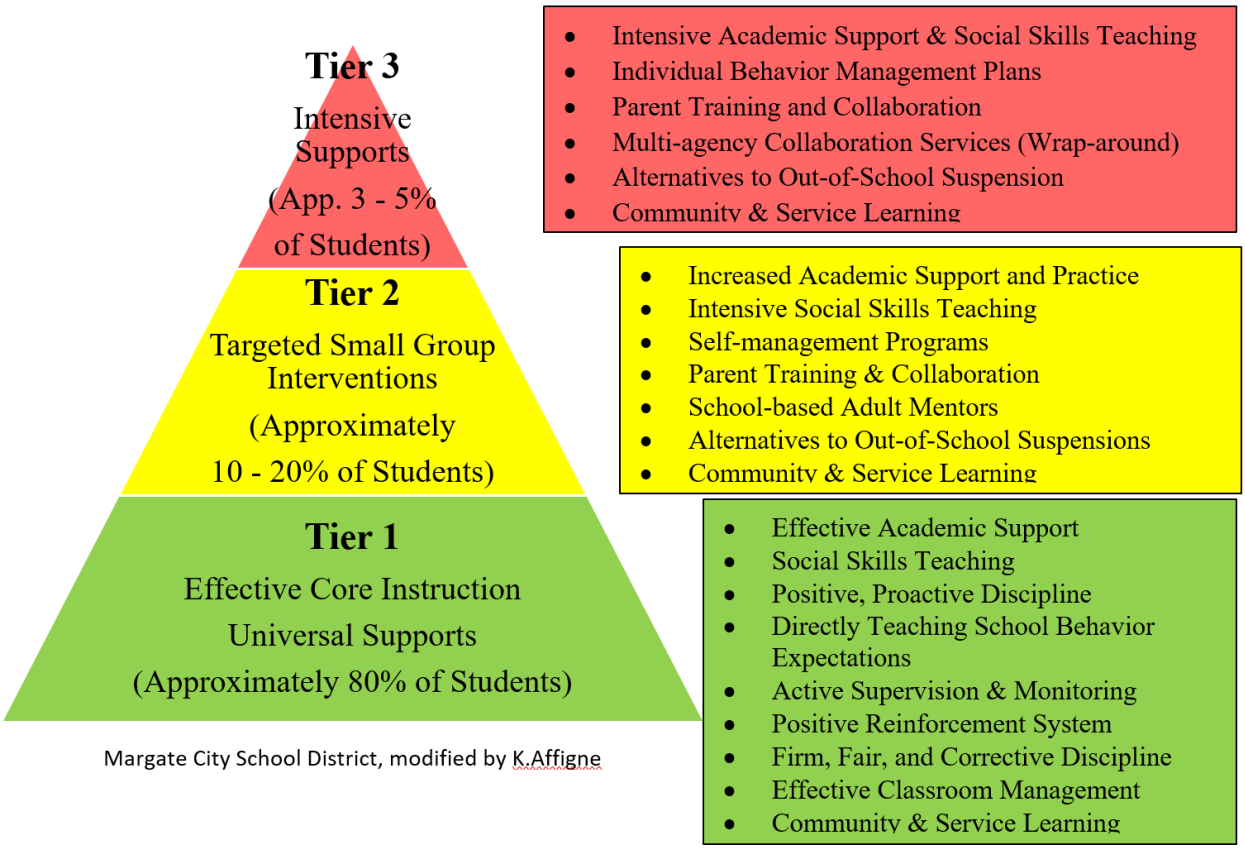
A data flowchart graphically illustrates the essential steps in the process. The flow charts above are exemplars of documenting a tiered data review and the paths students can take to ensure success

Building-level MTSS Team

Building-level MTSS teams meet at least three times per school year. These teams include school-based administrators, math and reading interventionists/specialists, grade-level teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and social workers

These teams discuss data received from Universal Screeners to determine which students qualify for a tiered intervention. Additionally, classroom teachers are notified when their student has qualified for a tiered intervention. A meeting to create the plan will occur and parents/guardians will be notified of the meeting results.

The MTSS Model includes Academic and Behavioral Systems that Function in Tandem



Intervention Tiers

Tier 1

Tier 1 in MTSS is the core instruction that all students receive; therefore, Tier 1 is the foundation for the entire MTSS framework. Tier 1 includes:

- A rigorous and inclusive solid core curriculum for each grade level/department.
- Best practices for teaching, including clear directions, demonstrations, and opportunities for practice
- Proactive strategies to create a supportive environment
- Expectations, structure, and climate to encourage positive behavior and attendance

The goal of Tier 1:

- Provide equitable access to core instruction that meets grade-level & course-specific expectations
- Support the growth of learning of most students
- Minimize the need for more intensive resources in Tiers 2 and 3

How does Tier 1 instruction differ for students?

- Teachers use data from screening and progress monitoring to differentiate instruction
- Teachers tailor instruction to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of each student

Tier 2

Tier 2 interventions are in addition to ongoing Tier 1 support. Students are provided increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs relative to their progress toward expected grade-level performance 2-3 times a week on a rolling six-day cycle. Intervention times vary based on student needs/content. Each intervention session ranges from 5 - 40 minutes based on student need/content, and intensity varies across group size, frequency, and duration of the intervention. Overall, each intervention lasts between six to ten weeks.

- This support is provided in small group settings in addition to instruction in the general curriculum at Tier 1, following an Individualized Student Intervention Plan (SIP)
- Tier 2 interventions may be provided by the designated staff member and/or an intervention teacher
- Tier 2 interventions are skill-based to address an identified deficit/learning gap, **not** to support ongoing classwork
- Students who show minimal or no progress at this level of intervention are considered for more intense Tier 3 interventions
- The Tier 2 cycle does not need to be completed if it is determined that a Tier 3 intervention would better suit the student at this time

The goal of Tier 2:

Create a bridge between universal instruction and more intensive interventions by providing targeted support to help students who are struggling in a specific area to catch up with their peers.

Tier 3

Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom while receiving Tier 2 supports are recommended to receive more intense Tier 3 supports. Tier 3 intervention plans are in addition to ongoing Tier 1 instruction provided in the regular classroom. Progress monitoring continues on a weekly basis, at least.

- The building MTSS team meets to review all applicable artifacts (Tier 2 SIP, previous progress monitoring documents, assessment data, and student work)
- The building MTSS team develops a new SIP, providing an increased frequency of pull-out support with a teacher-to-student ratio no higher than 4:1. In some circumstances,

individualized instruction may be provided with approval from the principal/Assistant Superintendent

- The building MTSS team reconvenes after 6-10 weeks to review progress and make recommendations and/or plans for the following 6-10 weeks. Options include:
    - Continue with Tier 3 intervention
    - Move to less intense, Tier 2 intervention
    - Refer student to the Committee on Special Education
    - Refer student to the Section 504 Committee
- If a student is referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or Section 504 Committee, the intervention will continue until the completion of the process

The goal of Tier 3:

The primary goal of Tier 3 is to provide intensive, individualized support for students who have not responded to interventions at Tiers 1 and 2. These supports target persistent academic, social-emotional, or behavioral challenges. The aim is to promote meaningful progress and, when appropriate, facilitate a transition to lower tiers of support.

Section 3: Curriculum, Intervention, and Assessment

Overview of District Curriculum Approach

All curriculum and instructional plans focus on achieving the goals set by the District's strategic plan. Each content area's curriculum is aligned to and reflects the New York Learning Standards, which are based on research into how children learn. Learning targets in each content area provide all students with the knowledge, skills, and academic experiences needed to meet or exceed rigorous expectations. Teachers strive to learn about students' unique cultural experiences and employ teaching strategies that match the diverse learning styles of their students.

A variety of programs, resources, and instructional approaches are deployed to support the diverse needs of all students. Language arts literacy is essential for academic success and is the principal focus of instruction in the primary grades, providing a strong foundation to build upon in subsequent years. To that end, intervention programs and student supports are a priority for our youngest learners. We strive to ensure all students are able to read a wide variety of grade-appropriate texts fluently before the beginning of third grade.

The District collects and analyzes student data to identify strengths and weaknesses of programs and student needs at all levels. The cycle of data analysis, curriculum revision, and professional development to prepare staff to meet student needs is ongoing.

Finally, the District will generate a new Curriculum Review Cycle that ensures a review of each program/content area by grade level/department.

Assessment

To identify strengths and weaknesses of curriculum, programs, and students at all levels, the District collects and analyzes student data on an ongoing basis. Universal screening tools, standardized tests, and curriculum-based measures work in tandem to evaluate student success and teacher effectiveness in supporting these goals. Interventionists use additional assessment tools when necessary to identify learning gaps and foundational skill needs.

Balanced Assessment System

Nyack Public Schools uses a comprehensive system for assessing students' abilities and needs at the National, State, school, classroom and individual levels. Nyack's balanced assessment system includes the following assessment types:

- Benchmark Assessments - Benchmark assessments are periodic tests administered throughout the school year to evaluate students' progress toward mastering grade-level standards. They help educators monitor academic growth and adjust instruction, accordingly, often given at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.
- Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) - CBMs are short, standardized assessments aligned with the curriculum and used frequently to monitor student progress in basic academic areas (like reading, math, and writing). They help track growth over time and inform instructional decisions, especially in RTI/MTSS frameworks.
- Formative Assessments - Formative assessments are informal, ongoing checks of student understanding during instruction. They guide teachers in adjusting teaching strategies to meet students' needs. Examples include quizzes, class discussions, exit tickets, and observations.
- Summative Assessments - Summative assessments evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional period, such as the end of a unit, semester, or year. They are used to measure overall achievement and are often high-stakes assessments. Examples include final exams, standardized tests, and end-of-unit projects.
- Universal Screeners - Universal Screeners are brief assessments given to all students at regular intervals (e.g., 3 times per year) to quickly identify those who may be at risk for learning difficulties or behavioral challenges. These tools help schools provide early intervention and support.

Listed below are many of the assessments currently being used by the District to monitor student learning:

Assessment	Area(s) Assessed	Assessment Type	Grade Level(s)	Frequency Given
Star Renaissance	Reading & Math	Universal Screener	K-9	3x/year & Progress Monitor Tool
Star Renaissance	Reading *Spanish for Bilingual Program*	Universal Screener	K-2	3x/year & Progress Monitor Tool
Fountas and Pinnell BAS	Reading	Benchmark Assessment	K-5	3x/year Progress Monitoring Tool
Fountas and Pinnell Running Records	Reading *Spanish for Bilingual Program*	Formative Assessments	K-2	3x/year Progress Monitoring Tool
95% Group PSI	Phonics	Benchmark Assessment	K-3	As Needed
Heggerty	Phonemic Awareness	Benchmark Assessment	K-1	As needed
95 Phonics Unit Assessments	Reading	Curriculum Based Measures	K-3	After each unit
Letters and Sounds	Reading	Curriculum Based Measures	K-1	3x/year & Progress Monitoring
High Frequency Words	Reading	Universal Screener	K-1	3x/year & Progress Monitoring Tool
Module Assessments	Reading	Summative Assessments	3-5	
NYS 3-8 Assessments	Reading, Math & Science	Summative Assessments	ELA & Math 3-8 Science 5	Annual
Early Childhood Assessment in Math	Math	Universal Screener	K-1	3x/year
Universal Screeners for Number Sense	Math	Universal Screener	3-5	2-3/year

Assessment	Area(s) Assessed	Assessment Type	Grade Level(s)	Frequency Given
IXL Diagnostic	Math	Universal Screener	2-5	As needed
Eureka Math Benchmark Assessments	Math	Curriculum Based Measures	2-5	As needed
Do the Math	Math	Formative and Summative Assessments	1-5	As needed
NYSAA	ELA & Math	Summative Assessment	3 – 12	Annual (Gr. 3 – 8) Once before leaving High School
NYSITELL (NYS Identification Test for English Language Learners)	English Language Proficiency	Screener	K-12	Within 10 days of registration in a NYS school following NYSED's ELL Identification Process.
NYSESLAT (NYS English as a Second Language Achievement Test)	English Language Proficiency	Summative Assessments	K-12	Annually
Regents Exams	ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science	Summative Assessments	8-12	Annually
MS Benchmark Assessments	Math, ELA, Social Studies, Science & World Language	Summative Assessments	6 - 8	Quarterly
PSAT	Reading , writing and math	Formative Assessment	11	Annually
PRE ACT	English, Math, Reading, Science	Formative Assessment	10	Annually
SAT	Reading , Writing and Math	Standardized Test used for College Admissions	11-12	A few times a year

Assessment	Area(s) Assessed	Assessment Type	Grade Level(s)	Frequency Given
ACTS	English, Math, Reading, Science	Standardized Test used for College Admissions	11-12	A few times a year
Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener	Reading, Math, Vocabulary	SIFE Screener and/or General evaluation of home language literacies.	3 – 9	Once

Pre-Referral Interventions Prior to a Committee on Special Education Referral

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Part 200 of the New York State Commissioner's Regulations, specify that school Districts must develop policies and implement plans to establish pre-referral interventions to support a student's educational progress before making a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). To that end, the District has implemented specific guidelines that unify its Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and its special education processes.

Prior to a CSE referral, it is important to determine whether MTSS has been implemented with frequency, duration, and fidelity within the general education classroom. The MTSS process ensures each student has been afforded every opportunity for success within the general education setting. This same process also serves to demonstrate the need for a student's referral to the CSE.

Specifically, the CSE referral form must describe the intervention services and/or programs that were used to support the student's performance, including instructional methodologies and supplementary aids or services provided. The referral must also include supportive progress monitoring data.

The MTSS team will maintain a record of pre-referral interventions implemented for each student. Each referral shall be reviewed to determine its appropriateness, including whether pre-referral interventions have been adequately implemented and if further general education supports are warranted prior to a CSE referral.

Within ten (10) school days of receiving a CSE referral, the student's building principal may request a meeting with the person(s) requesting the referral to discuss the MTSS process. If, during this meeting, the person agrees to withdraw the referral, the Building-level MTSS Team will develop a new intervention plan for the student. This plan will be shared with the student's family and the CSE Chairperson.

As a result of MTSS implementation, the following benefits will be realized:

- Data-based interventions are provided within the general education classroom with tiered supports
- Increased inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms and access to interventions and school-based environments
- Reductions in the following:
    - Excessive referrals to special education
    - Disproportionality in special education referrals
    - Disciplinary referrals to the office that lead to significant loss of instructional time
    - In-school and out-of-school suspensions

The Role of Special Education in MTSS

CSE referrals may originate from a variety of sources, including Early Intervention (EI services, MTSS, related service providers, previous school Districts, or a student's parent/guardian. Regardless of the source, it is critical to determine whether MTSS interventions have been implemented with fidelity, frequency, and duration within the general education setting.

For example, if Tier 3 interventions have proven insufficient in meeting a student's needs, a referral to the CSE may be warranted. MTSS ensures that the student has been afforded every opportunity to succeed within the general education environment, and the data supports the need for further evaluation.

Importantly, MTSS does not replace special education or related services, nor is it intended to delay a referral. In accordance with the District's Child Find responsibilities under IDEA, if there is reason to suspect that a student may have a disability, a referral to the CSE must be made without delay.

Parent engagement remains a key component of this process. Parents are informed and encouraged to participate throughout the MTSS intervention process, including discussions around supports, progress monitoring, and potential referrals.

English Language Learners and MTSS

It is important to consider the specific needs of English Language Learners when assessing and designing interventions. An MTSS plan for ELL/MLLs involves tiered supports that meet the diverse needs of these students, ensuring they receive appropriate instruction and interventions to develop language and literacy skills. Student data is used to design and differentiate instruction. When possible, Universal Screeners should be administered in the languages spoken by the

student. This will help staff members identify whether a student has academic or language-based difficulties.

Additionally, other sources of data can be used to make intervention decisions, including previous schooling information, classroom data and anecdotal notes, home interviews, NYSESLAT scored for English Language Learners (ELLs), and school records. For English Language Learners, Tier 1 instruction includes participation in Transitional Bilingual Education programs and/or English as a new Language (ENL) services. To foster collaboration and best support the needs of the students, Bilingual and/or ENL Teachers will be included in conversations regarding academic and social/emotional progress.

Intervention

Our philosophy focuses on providing student intervention based on student needs. As outlined previously in this manual, the District offers three tiers of support based on the results of a variety of multiple evidence sources such as data sets. Interventions are provided individually or in small groups, targeting the student's specific needs in academics, behavior, or social-emotional development. The District reexamines data each year to evaluate offered interventions and how they are provided to students. All interventions are data-based and provided by trained teachers or intervention professionals as necessary.

A sample of Nyack Public School District's list of interventions can be found here.

- Menu of Interventions (Academic): Illinois School Psychologists Association
- Instructional Strategies List: Washoe County School District
- Menu of Function-Based Options for Behavior Intervention Planning
- Intervention Central, Behavioral Interventions
- Intervention Central, Academic & Behavioral Interventions
- Intervention Central, Teacher Behavioral Strategies: A Menu

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is a key component of our instructional intervention program. Progress monitoring is used to monitor and assess students' performance over time, providing the opportunity to report student rates of improvement or responsiveness to the designed interventions. It also compares the efficacy of different forms of intervention or support put in place.

Assessment data is collected frequently and is used to inform the Building-level MTSS Team when changes in the individual student support plan may be needed. Progress is defined by and determined through student performance in comparison to benchmark indicators and is

determined during the development of the student support plan. If a student is making sufficient progress, the teacher will continue to implement the intervention for a suggested period of time. If a student is not achieving the expected rate of learning, the team experiments with instructional components (frequency, duration, and intensity of interventions) to improve the rate of learning.

In Nyack Public School District, progress is monitored as outlined in the student support plan by members of the Building-level MTSS Team, including, but not limited to the following:

- Building administrator
- General education teacher
- Special education teacher
- Speech Pathologist/Teacher
- Instructional intervention teacher
- School counselor
- School Psychologist
- Social worker

Frequency

As part of our District progress monitoring practices, students are typically assessed at regular intervals (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly). However, for students identified for support services, progress monitoring intervals are determined by the needs indicated in the intervention plan and based on the tier of intervention or support the student receives.

Progress Monitoring Tools

Listed below are multiple Progress Monitoring Tools used in our District. Please note, the list is not inclusive of all assessments in use by educators.

- STAR Assessments
- Fountas & Pinnell BAS
- Letters and Sounds
- High Frequency Words
- PBIS Tracker
- Behavior Plans
- Teacher developed and program provided Formative and Summative Assessments

Section 4: Staffing and Scheduling

Staffing

In order to run an effective MTSS program, staffing levels must be evaluated annually to identify the number of staff required to implement MTSS effectively. MTSS staffing includes teachers and designated interventionists to deliver Tiers 2 & 3 instruction.

The District is committed to implementing MTSS with a focus on the early childhood grades and will provide increased support for interventions in those grade levels. Additional support will be provided at the upper elementary and secondary levels based on data and specified areas of need.

Scheduling

Incorporating a daily intervention period (WIN - What I Need) into each elementary school's master schedule is a key component of MTSS. During this period, classroom teachers and interventionists work collaboratively to support the needs of students across all tiers. Additional support for students demonstrating Tiers 2 and 3 needs will be scheduled throughout the day.

At the secondary level, Tier 2 and 3 support courses are embedded into the school day, providing students the opportunity to transition in and out of these courses as needed.

Section 5: Professional Development

Professional development is key to supporting student success through the MTSS framework. The District's Professional Development Plan includes language supporting MTSS principles and practices. Accordingly, the District's annual Professional Development plan incorporates all aspects of the MTSS process to support student needs effectively.

The MTSS vision and goals are achieved through an ongoing cycle of assessment, data analysis, goal setting, evaluation, and collaborative problem-solving.

Notably, in preparation for the District's full MTSS implementation, K-12 educators have engaged in a wide range of professional development activities spanning across content areas and grade levels, many of which are included in Nyack's MTSS Implementation Timeline (page 8).

References and Resources

Resources used to help create this manual:

LinkIt! K-12 Assessment Management, Data & Intervention Support
Center on Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Freeport School 145, Freeport, IL
Intervention Central
Learningpolicyinstitute.org
Margate City School District
Multi-Tiered System of Supports – Integrated (MTSS-I)
Nationalequityproject.org
NYSED Multi-Tiered System of Supports Presentation
Pennsylvania Training and Technical Network Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
Raceforward.org
Racialequitytools.org
RTI Action Network
Steinhardt.nyu.edu

Intervention Resources for Parents/Guardians:

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Headstrong Nation
- International Dyslexia Association
- Pearson: The world's learning company
- Raz-Kids
- RTI Action Network
- STAR Reading
- Tumblebooks

Appendix A: Key Documents & Location

The success of a multi-tiered system of support is dependent on all stakeholders understanding the process and how it can support their work to support students. To that end, Appendix A lists key documents and their Google Drive folder location for staff to access, as needed.

	Document	Folder Name
1	**MTSS Plan**	**MTSS Resources (main folder)**
	Liberty PBIS Resources **Valley Cottage PBIS Resources** **Upper Nyack PBIS Resources** **Nyack MS PBIS Resources** **Nyack HS PBIS Resources**	**Nyack PBIS Resources**
All documents listed below are located within the main MTSS Resources folder in Google Drive		
2.	I&RS Forms (various)	*I&RS Documents*
3.	I&RS Policy	*I&RS Documents*
4.	I&RS Flow Chart	*I&RS Documents*
5.	K-5 Assessment Schedule	*Assessment Information*
6.	6-8 Assessment Schedule	*Assessment Information*
7.	9-12 Assessment Schedule	*Assessment Information*
8.	Tier 2 & 3 Assessment Guide	*Assessment Information*
9.	building MTSS team Roles and Expectations - Elementary	*Assessment Information*
10.	building MTSS team Roles and Expectations - Secondary	*Assessment Information*

Appendix B: Expectations for Staff and Service Providers

Central Office Administrators

The role of Central Office Administration is to facilitate all MTSS processes within the District. First and foremost, Central Office Administration will plan and coordinate all MTSS training and prioritize professional development. The second core role of Central Office Administration is to ensure that MTSS teams are formed and running smoothly at all buildings. Representatives from Building-level MTSS Teams will be members of the District-level Data Team. The District-level Data Team will focus on system-wide MTSS implementation and sustainability, building consensus, ensuring consistency across schools, and making decisions about District-wide policies related to MTSS such as screening norms for intervention tiers.

Principals

The role of principals in the MTSS process is crucial. The principal ensures that all stakeholders follow the processes outlined within the MTSS plan. With input from interventionists, teachers, and counselors, the principal develops a schedule that allows for dedicated intervention time in the general education classroom (in addition to all Tier 1 instruction.) Principals act as the MTSS lead, outlining MTSS expectations and responsibilities in the meetings. Principals attend all data meetings and are invested in the work that staff members and students are doing. They also participate in conversations with families and answer questions about the MTSS process. Finally, principals are members of the District-wide Data Team.

Building-level MTSS Teams

The role of the Building-level MTSS team is to discuss data received from Universal Screeners to determine which students qualify for a tiered intervention. Additionally, classroom teachers are notified when their student has qualified for a tiered intervention. A meeting to create the plan will take place, so relevant stakeholders have a say in the plan. Once the intervention plan is developed, parents/guardians will be provided with information about their child's learning needs and interventions.

School-based MTSS teams meet at least three times per school year. These teams include District and school-based administrators, math and reading interventionists/specialists, reading teachers, learning consultants, speech/language specialists, grade-level teachers, special education teachers, social workers, and school nurses.

Classroom Teachers

The role of classroom teachers in the MTSS process includes making curricular decisions that support the needs of all students while meeting the New York State's Learning Standards. Teachers will analyze data from Universal Screeners, benchmark assessments, and classroom

curriculum to determine whether students require additional instruction in specific areas. Teachers monitor student progress, and if students are not meeting expectations, begin differentiating instruction and modifying the curriculum. Additionally, teachers document the changes they are making using the Tier 1 Student Checklist and develop Tier1 intervention plans as needed. If students are not making adequate progress, teachers share their records with the appropriate MTSS team members.

Interventionists

The Building-level MTSS Team, in conjunction with administration, will determine the role of Interventionists. Typically, staff members in these roles meet with students for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in small groups/individually in a separate location. The interventionists are responsible for providing agreed-upon interventions with fidelity while monitoring progress regularly and updating intervention logs shared with all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, when appropriate. Interventionists participate in regular meetings to discuss the child's progress and make decisions about the next steps.

Most importantly, interventionists regularly communicate with the classroom teacher regarding the child's progress in the intervention, the skills, and strategies used, and how the teacher can support the child's progress in the classroom. This ensures that all adults with whom the child works have the same goals in mind. In addition, interventionists communicate with families about their child's progress.

Committee on Special Education (CSE) Members

CSE members such as psychologists, speech and language therapists, and special education teachers support classroom teachers and interventionists as they have questions pertaining to students. CSE members also collaborate with other staff members to meet the needs of all students in the building.

Appendix C: Key Terminology

21st Century Skills
Skills students will need to be successful in the 21st-century workplace. The 21st-century skills are critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and leadership, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, curiosity, and imagination.

Accommodation
Adjustments to a student's environment intended to remove or mitigate barriers to learning.

Balanced Assessment System
A comprehensive system of assessing students' ability and needs at the National, State, school, classroom, and individual levels.

Benchmark Assessments - Benchmark assessments are periodic tests administered throughout the school year to evaluate students' progress toward mastering grade-level standards. They help educators monitor academic growth and adjust instruction, accordingly, often given at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.

BIPOC
Refers to "Black and/or Indigenous People of Color." While "POC" or People of Color is often used as well, BIPOC explicitly leads with Black and Indigenous identities, which helps to counter anti-Black racism and invisibilization of Native communities

CSE
The Committee on Special Education is an interdisciplinary team that supports children between 5 and 21 who are in need of special education services.

Culturally-Responsive Instruction
Inclusive content covered in the curriculum reflects the diversity of society that is based on how students from diverse backgrounds see themselves and their experiences in the curriculum, their prior knowledge, including their culture and language and the idea that culture is central to student learning because there is strong evidence that cultural practices shape thinking processes.

Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) - CBMs are short, standardized assessments aligned with the curriculum and used frequently to monitor student progress in basic academic areas (like reading, math, and writing). They help track growth over time and inform instructional decisions, especially in RTI/MTSS frameworks.

Data points
Refer to the assessment results gathered using an identified Progress Monitoring Tool.

Disproportionality
Manifests as an over-representation of a specific group in special education programs and/or disciplinary outcomes relative to the presence of this group in the overall student population.

Differentiation
Additional or extended instruction based on assessment of the essential learning outcomes. Instruction considers learning style, Intellectual capacity, interest, goal setting, cultural responsiveness, and multiple approaches to teaching and assessing.

Duration
In MTSS, this is used in terms of the number of weeks an intervention will continue.

Educational Equity
Every child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.

ENL
English as a New Language is a term used for programs and services that support students learning English as their second language.

Essential Outcome
An essential outcome is a measurable learning target for students to bring into their long-term memory. It is not negotiable as to whether or not the students know this concept or can do this skill; they are considered an essential part of student learning.

Fidelity
Refers to the extent to which a process and/or instruction are implemented as intended to maximize effectiveness. When checking for fidelity, we ask if each identified component of the process and/or instruction is evident in the process or instruction, implemented in the manner specified, and implemented to the degree specified.

Formative Assessments - Formative assessments are informal, ongoing checks of student understanding during instruction. They guide teachers in adjusting teaching strategies to meet students' needs. Examples include quizzes, class discussions, exit tickets, and observations.

Frequency
In MTSS, this is used in terms of intervention delivery in regard to the number of days in a week and the time in a day an intervention is delivered.

Instructional Teams
Teams of staff members who collaboratively use data to analyze student academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs, initiate intervention options, and monitor student progress.

Intensive Intervention
Refers to a systematic use of a technique, program, or practice designed to improve learning or performance in specific areas of student need, focusing on single or small numbers of discrete skills with substantial instructional minutes in addition to those provided to all students.

Intervention
Teach a new or never-acquired skill or challenge a student through critical thinking and problem-solving. Interventions include direct instruction as well as application and practice.

Interventionist
Certified educator who can implement scientific, research-based or evidence-based, intensive interventions with the referred student.

Modification
Changes in the curricular or behavioral expectations that are appropriate for a particular student's needs or abilities.

Normed Data
Refers to national norms that indicate grade-level expectations, ranges, or growth expectancies.

PBIS
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a school-wide framework that helps schools create safe, positive, and effective learning environments for all students. The framework focuses on proactive strategies to promote positive behaviors, teach social skills, and prevent problem behaviors.

POC
Refers to People of Color; however, BIPOC (Black and/or Indigenous People of Color) leads with Black and Indigenous identities, which helps to counter anti-Black racism and invisibilization of Native communities.

Progress Monitoring
A scientifically-based practice that is used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

Racial Equity
Process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.

Restorative Practices
Restorative practices are designed to build a strong sense of community in schools, to teach interpersonal skills, to repair harm when conflict occurs, and to proactively meet students' needs - including those that result from trauma in or outside of school—so misbehavior is less common.

SIP
Student Intervention Plan is a structured approach designed to support students who are struggling academically or behaviorally.

Tier 1 Progress Monitoring
Universal screening in reading, math, and behavior. Administered and analyzed three times a year. Teachers may also progress monitor Tier 1 interventions and use this data to demonstrate student progress.

Tier 2 Progress Monitoring
Measures that indicate progress a student is making based on intervention delivery. Data is collected at least every one to two weeks during intervention delivery and up to a month after the conclusion of the intervention.

Tier 3 Progress Monitoring
Measures that indicate progress a student is making based on intervention delivery. Data is collected at least weekly using a valid assessment tool.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
MTSS is a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students through high-quality instructional practice, continuous review of student progress (multiple measures), and collaboration

Strategies
In MTSS, these are considered teacher approaches to instruction or the techniques we use to address attendance or behavioral needs. These typically support intervention delivery.

Summative Assessments - Summative assessments evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional period, such as the end of a unit, semester, or year. They are used to measure overall achievement and are often high-stakes assessments. Examples include final exams, standardized tests, and end-of-unit projects.

Tier 1
High-quality instruction and standardized behavioral expectations are provided to all students in the general education setting through the New York State Learning Standards. Tier 1 is also used to differentiate instruction through a culturally responsive lens, taking individual and/or group needs into account. Tier 1 includes the curriculum, programs, and services used with all students, with the expectation that 80% of all students will make adequate progress according to screening benchmark expectations.

Tier 2
Based on screening data, instructional team discussions, and identification of student intervention needs, teams develop intervention plans for small groups of students with similar needs. Interventions are then delivered in small group settings for 8-10 weeks.

Tier 3
A problem-solving, team approach through which students with significant needs are identified, and measurable targeted options are collaboratively planned and continuously reviewed to address student progress. The ratio of student to teacher is no more than 1:4, and interventions are typically delivered daily.

Universal Screeners - Universal Screeners are brief assessments given to all students at regular intervals (e.g., 3 times per year) to quickly identify those who may be at risk for learning difficulties or behavioral challenges. These tools help schools provide early intervention and support.