

## Multi-Tiered System and Supports Procedures

### Tier 1

These supports are available to all students through a general education program. Inclusive practice, which is linguistically responsive and culturally sustaining, is a cornerstone of Tier 1. Inclusive practice is defined as “instructional and behavioral strategies that improve academic and social emotional outcomes for all students, with and without disabilities, in general education settings” (Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice, 2017). For example, providing students with a high-quality, coherent curriculum that provides options and choices for how they learn (i.e., access to books, videos, or direct teacher instruction), what materials, scaffolds and supports they need to learn (e.g., visuals, exemplars, graphic organizers, rubrics), and how they can express what they have learned will allow more students to access rigorous, standards-based instruction.

Tier 1 systems serve as the foundation on which all other tiers are built. With school-wide systems in place, schools can ensure students and staff are thriving and quickly identify which students need additional support. These Tier 1 foundational systems are:

#### A. Leadership Team

The Tier 1 team represents multiple and diverse perspectives to co-create the systems and practices for Tier 1 support. This team is responsible for uncovering strengths and needs by monitoring school and community data, ensuring students receive equitable access to these supports, and evaluating overall effectiveness.

#### B. Regular Meeting Routine, Schedule, and Structure

The Tier 1 team meets at least monthly. Meetings should include an agenda, minutes, team agreements, defined roles, and a current action plan linked to the school improvement plan.

#### C. On-Going Data-Based Monitoring, Evaluation, and Dissemination

Tier 1 teams review and use multiple data sources regularly to guide decisions. Reviewing fidelity data measures how closely the school implements the critical components of MTSS at Tier 1. Annually, teams evaluate the overall effectiveness of Tier 1 supports and share their findings with interested parties. School community members should see school and community data regularly and have the opportunity to provide input on Tier 1 foundations.

#### D. Procedures for Selecting, Training, and Coaching New Personnel

The key to MTSS implementation is staff consistency. All staff members are involved in the development of goals, process, and measures. Tier 1 implementation may require professional development to orient all school personnel – particularly around five core practices:

- Defining school expectations with input from students and families
- Teaching school expectations and Social Emotional Behavioral (SEB) skills
- Acknowledging appropriate behavior
- Responding instructionally to unwanted behaviors
- Using data for decision making

#### E. Core Practices

Before schools start implementing Tier 2 and Tier 3 practices, Tier 1 practices must be in place.

These include:

- Schoolwide positive expectations and SEB skills are defined and taught.
- Rather than establishing specifically what not to do, schools define and teach expectations and SEB skills they want to see. Schools should identify 3-5 positively stated, easy to remember expectations. These should create the conditions for a positive school climate to support teaching and learning.
- For students to know the expectations, they must be taught. The Tier 1 team should decide how students will learn expected academic and social behaviors across various school settings.

#### F. Procedures for Establishing Classroom Expectations and Routines Consistent with Schoolwide Expectations

Students spend the majority of their day within classroom settings. It is critical for the expectations in the classroom to align with the broader school-wide systems. This consistency supports better behavioral outcomes for all students. Teachers and students co-design agreements and routines that align with school expectations.

#### G. Continuum of Procedures for Encouraging Expected Social, Emotional Behavior

A school's Tier 1 team determines how to acknowledge students positively for prosocial behaviors. Schools might use an acknowledgment system to support offering specific praise when students do what is expected. No matter the system, it should be:

- Linked to school expectations
- Used across settings and within classrooms
- Used by 90% or more of all school personnel
- Available to all students within the school
- Created with ongoing input from students and families

#### H. Procedures for Ensuring School-Family Partnerships

Teams should solicit stakeholders, including families, for input on Tier 1 foundations. Opportunities to provide ongoing feedback and direction should happen at least once a year, if not more regularly. This input ensures Tier 1 is culturally responsive and reflects the values of the local community.

#### I. Tier 1 Team

The Tier 1 team's role is to establish the priority for improving the conditions for learning through the adoption of evidence-based practices. In addition to monitoring Tier 1 systems, the Tier 1 team meets regularly to refine school-wide practices and evaluate their effectiveness. The team reviews discipline data, curriculum-based measures, state tests, and other data sources related to improving school-wide outcomes. Individuals with the following positions will be included on Tier 1 teams:

- Someone to coordinate the team
- School administrator
- Classroom teachers
- Non-certified staff (engagement specialist, paraprofessional, secretary, etc.)
- Student representation at the middle school and high school level

In addition to these suggested roles, the following skill sets should be represented by the team:

- SEB expertise
- Applied behavior support
- Mental health and trauma
- Academic instruction
- Coaching expertise
- Equity
- Physical health and wellness (e.g., nurse)
- Knowledge of student academic and behavior patterns
- Knowledge about how the school operates across grade levels and programs

#### Tier 2

Tier 2 supports occur in addition to the supports that are provided in Tier 1 settings. These supports are generally done in small groups and include additional opportunities to practice the skills necessary for core instruction or strategies for enrichment.

Tier 2 practices stem from a strong foundation of Tier 1 support. With school-wide systems in place, schools are able to identify which students need additional support.

In addition to Tier 1 systems, the foundational systems involved in Tier 2 support are:

**A. Intervention Team with Coordinator**

This team establishes systems and practices for students requiring Tier 2 support. Team members ensure students receive timely access to interventions, oversee implementation, and regularly use data to monitor student progress and evaluate the program's overall outcomes.

**B. Behavioral Expertise**

Team members with behavior support expertise help Tier 2 teams consider the function of a student's problem behaviors before choosing an intervention. They keep teams focused on aligning interventions with what will work best for students.

**C. Fidelity and Outcome Data Collection**

Regardless of the intervention implemented, it is important to collect and monitor data about student performance. Teams use this data to determine whether to continue, modify, fade, or move on from a student's intervention. Assessing how closely Tier 2 supports are implemented as intended (fidelity of implementation) ensures students get the maximum benefit from the intervention as possible. Two ways to assess fidelity include self-assessment and direct observation.

**D. Screening Process to Identify Students**

Schools need a clearly defined, methodical process for considering which students may need additional support. Multiple strategies can be used to identify students for Tier 2 supports. Examples include:

- Office discipline referrals
- Screening instrument scores
- Teacher nominations
- Parent and support service recommendations
- Formative assessments

It is not necessary to exhaust all possible identification methods. No single method is likely to identify all students who need Tier 2 supports. The Board recommends that schools select and use multiple techniques.

An effective identification process should generate information for students experiencing externalizing (able to be observed) and/or internalizing (directed inward) behaviors.

**Access to Training and Technical Assistance**

At Tier 2, school personnel need effective professional learning that is research-based, consistent, ongoing, convenient, relevant, and differentiated. Access to training, practice, feedback, and coaching also are important.

**E. The Tier 2 Team**

In addition to monitoring Tier 2 systems, the Tier 2 team meets regularly to design and refine Tier 2 interventions in the building. The team is responsible for reviewing students referred for additional supports and providing training about interventions to families, school personnel, and students. Individuals in the following positions are often included on the Tier 2 team:

- Someone to coordinate each Tier 2 intervention
- School Administrator
- Behavior Specialist
- Classroom Teacher

In addition to these suggested roles, committee members also may serve a coaching role to support implementation of Tier 2 practices among staff. Coaching practices include:

- Understanding and reviewing data
- Encouraging, teaching, prompting, providing practice, and modeling for school personnel
- Communicating with stakeholders
- Distributing information and gathering input
- Organizing and promoting professional learning

### Tier 3

Tier 3 provides more intensive support. These are often explicit, focused interventions that occur individually or in very small groups. It is important to note that Tier 3 is not synonymous with special education. Students with disabilities may not need Tier 3 support and students not identified with a disability may in fact need Tier 3 supports.

The foundational systems involved in Tier 3 supports are:

#### A. Multi-disciplinary Team

Tier 3 team membership includes an administrator, a coach/behavior representative, and others with basic knowledge of problem solving. Team members should also include personnel who actively provide Tier 3 support in the school. This gives them input on decisions about interventions they provide to students they serve. Including school personnel from different departments ensures an array of perspectives.

#### B. Behavior Support Expertise

A school's Tier 3 team must include someone who has experience providing formal behavior support. They need to have applied behavior expertise and experience developing multi-agency support.

#### C. Formal Fidelity and Outcome Data Collection

Documenting student outcomes lets teams monitor how the resources allocated and the practices adopted affect student's outcomes. This data is essential to:

- Supporting data-based decision making and problem solving
- Identifying needed adjustments to Tier 3 practices
- Maximizing resources
- Ensuring all students are supported fully and equitably
- Evaluating the system's overall effectiveness
- Determining student eligibility for additional resources
- Evaluating individual education programs

Assessing how closely Tier 3 supports are implemented as intended (fidelity of implementation) ensures student outcomes can be attributed to the interventions provided.

#### D. Tier 3 Leadership/Student Support Team

Tier 3 teams will not look the same in every school. Whether you have one team looking at Tier 3 specifically, or one team monitoring Tier 2 and 3 systems together, this leadership/student support team meets regularly to be sure:

- Students who need additional support have access to those systems
- Students who receive Tier 3 supports are successful

In addition to monitoring Tier 3 systems, this team will engage in problem solving for each student receiving Tier 3 supports. This team meets regularly to design and refine strategies specific to each student. The team's goal is to transition a student to fewer intensive supports.