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MTSS

IMPLEMENTATION IN NEVADA



**Nevada Department of
Health and Human Services**
DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE FINANCING AND POLICY

NEVADA
MTSS
MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM
OF SUPPORTS



Nevada Department
of Education

The following manuscript is supplementary to the definitions of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and the seven core features that are outlined in Nevada's Equitable Integrated System of Student Supports (2018). This document was designed specifically to describe how MTSS is implemented in Nevada. The leadership components of MTSS are detailed and the role of the state, local educational agencies, and individual school sites is explained. Specific details have been included on the implementation functions at each level including training, coaching, and evaluation.

Diagrams of implementation at each level are included, as well as sample scenarios for the classroom teacher and family members.



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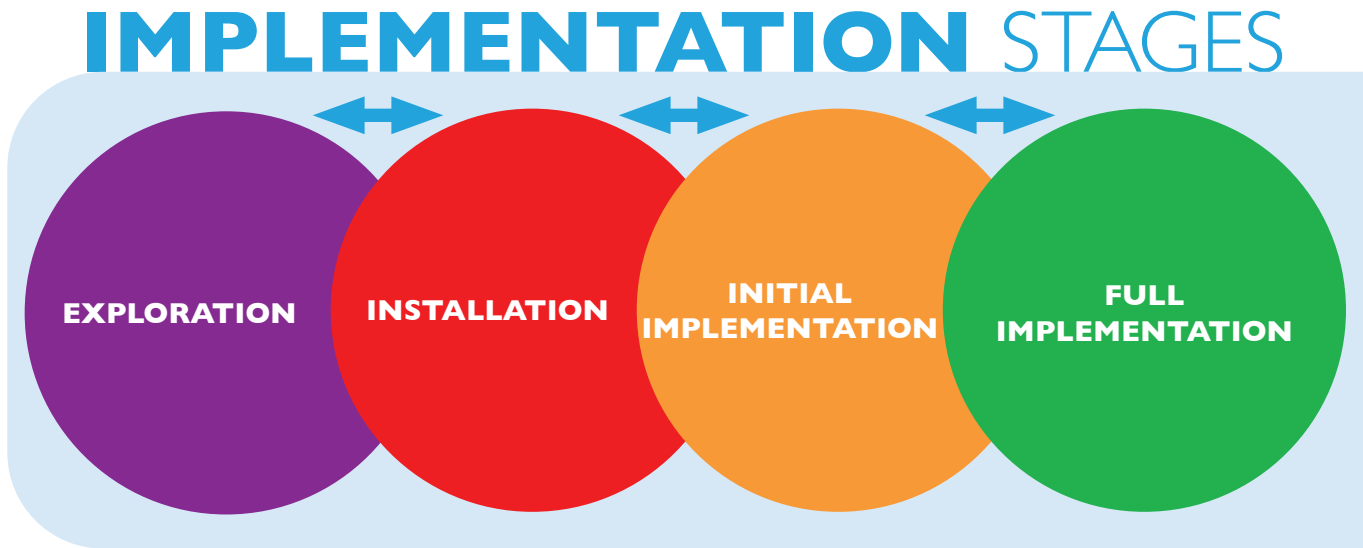
MTSS IMPLEMENTATION IN NEVADA

Evidence indicates that implementation of evidence-based practices is enhanced when implementation science guides the process (Fixsen et al., 2005). Therefore, the implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is conducted in stages, following the guidelines of implementation science. The stages of implementation include exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation.

The exploration stage focuses on assessing the needs of the organization, how well the proposed evidence-based practice being considered “fits” the organization, and how practical it is to implement the evidence-based practice. When exploration results in the decision to move forward, installation begins. In the installation stage, the focus is on building capacity at both the organization and practitioner level to implement the evidence-based practice. After capacity is built, initial implementation begins. At this stage, staff begin to use the evidence-based practice with important attention given to collecting and using data to monitor implementation fidelity, as well as outcomes. When the evidence-based practice is being used by staff with fidelity, and with the organization’s valued outcomes being achieved, the organization has moved into the stage of full implementation (National Implementation Research Network, 2020).

Successful implementation is a process that takes careful planning and time. One tool that exists to assist with this process is the “Implementation Stages Planning Tool” developed by the National Implementation Research Network (2020). This tool includes activities and outcomes for each of the four stages of implementation. Activities are monitored by indicating whether they are “in continuous improvement,” “in progress,” or “not yet initiated.” This user-friendly tool structures the process, putting focus on both the necessary activities, as well as the required outcomes of each stage.

When working through the implementation stages, it is important to note some key points. First, organizations should not skip the exploration stage, as the information gathered during exploration will assist in later stages of implementation. Second, the implementation stages are not linear. Organizations may go forward and back through the stages as situations deem necessary. Third, when organizations are implementing more than one evidence-based practice at a time, each evidence-based practice may be in a different stage of implementation. Finally, this work is continuous as implementation is ongoing.



MTSS AT THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY

While implementation of MTSS happens at the level of the school building, initiative success and student outcomes are improved when support is provided at the level of the state and district (McIntosh, K., & Goodman, S. (2016). *Integrated multi-tiered systems of support: Blending RTI and PBIS*. Guilford Press.). The state provides the context for the district, and the district for the schools. Successful implementation of MTSS is centered around a leadership team, which is typically comprised of members from the executive cabinet, as well as the people who have the content expertise to lead MTSS implementation efforts. In Nevada, the State Leadership Team is comprised of key members from the Nevada Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Respectful Learning, implementation leaders from the University of Nevada’s Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Technical Assistance Center, and relevant community stakeholders with direct implementation experience and/or interests. This team supports the executive functions and oversees implementation functions needed for the successful roll-out and scaling of statewide MTSS. These functions are diagrammed on page 2 and will be explained in detail in the following sections.



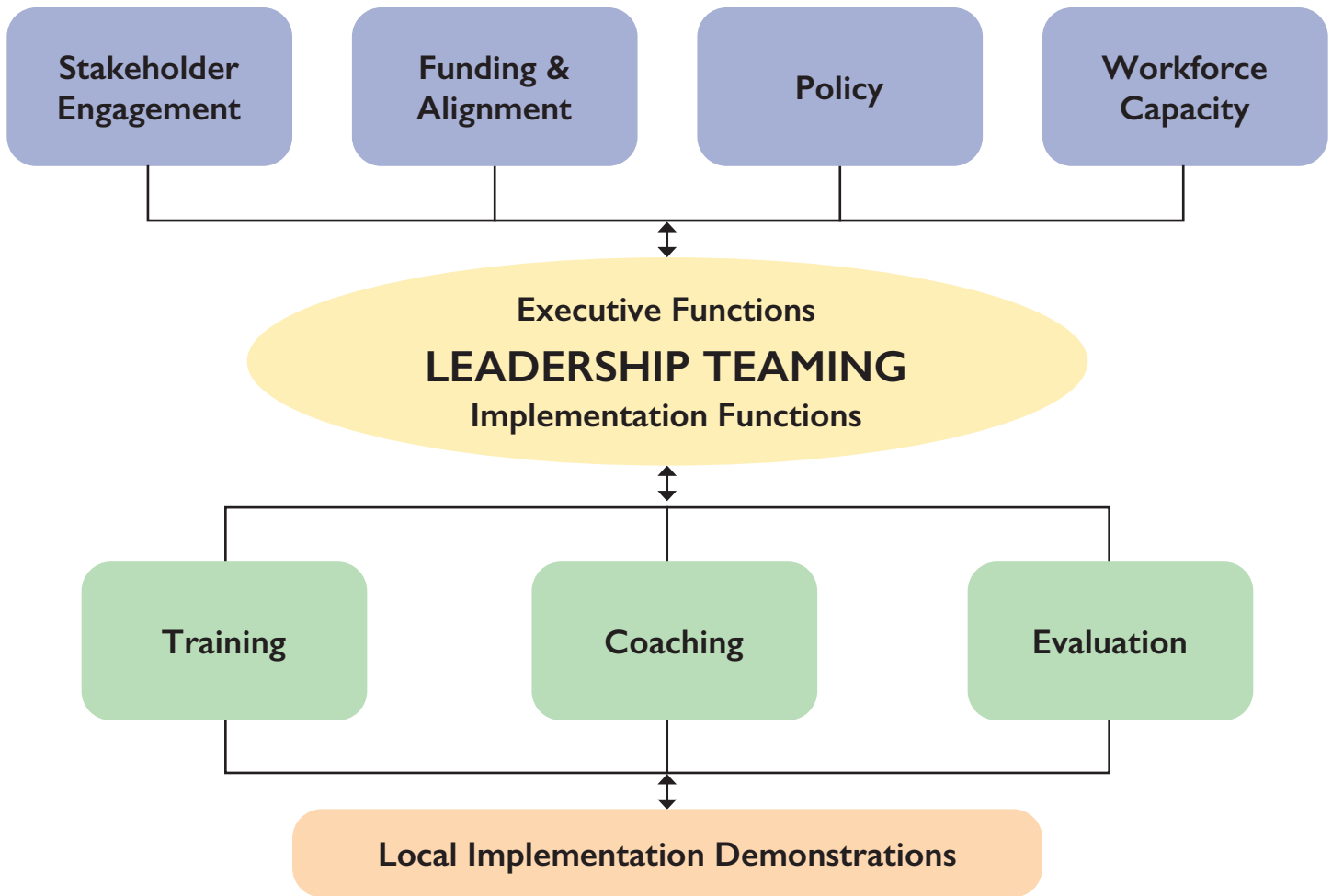


Figure 1. MTSS Implementation Blueprint

Successful MTSS implementation in Nevada is measured by the objectives in the State Systems Fidelity Inventory. The State Systems Fidelity Inventory is facilitated annually with the core State Educational Agency Leadership Team and results drive a 3 to 5 year action plan for scale up and sustainability. The State Systems Fidelity Inventory measures progress on each of the executive and implementation functions that are described below.

State Educational Agency Executive Functions

Initiating MTSS at the level of the state requires adequate and sustained funding, meaningful and wide visibility, and relevant and effective political support. To achieve the objectives, the leadership team is responsible for supporting four executive functions: stakeholder engagement, funding and alignment, policy, and workforce capacity.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT. MTSS should include a range of stakeholders including state and district/ charter leadership, community partners, family members, and youth. MTSS Stakeholders in Nevada currently consists of leadership from the Nevada Department of Education, leadership/administrators from other related state agencies, implementation specialists, implementation partners (typically represented by participating district administrators), parents, and youth. These stakeholders meet quarterly at the MTSS State Leadership Team meeting to review state MTSS progress, policy, funding, and any new initiatives or regulations related to MTSS in Nevada. An annual state/district leadership team retreat is also held to allow for more intensive strategic planning. The State Leadership Team is provided with an annual report of activities and outcomes related to MTSS and encouraged to share with their colleagues and peers to enhance visibility of statewide efforts. An annual conference of the Nevada Association for Positive Behavior Support includes two full MTSS strands each year to disseminate information and outcomes and promote further stakeholder engagement. Finally, the Director of the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning is tasked with sharing MTSS activities and outcomes with the upper Nevada Department of Education cabinet.

FUNDING AND ALIGNMENT. As of 2022, MTSS in Nevada is funded primarily by federal dollars through the US Department of Education and state ESSER funds. The funding streams have largely dictated the goals and objectives of MTSS in Nevada, currently mainly focused around MTSS-Behavior, or MTSS-B. One of the goals of the State Leadership Team and an action item dictated by Nevada’s State Systems Fidelity Inventory score is to obtain sustainable state funding for MTSS by 2023 and to integrate MTSS-Academics, or MTSS-A, at the state level. In the meantime, alignment efforts for MTSS are taking place regularly at the Nevada Department of Education. Initiatives already integrated into MTSS in Nevada include Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, restorative practices, social emotional learning, and trauma informed care. Initiatives underway include school improvement plans and academic response to intervention. A goal of the state is to align the initiatives at a state systems level in order to provide support and guidance on one framework to districts and schools in their integration and alignment efforts of student supports.

POLICY. Policy development from the level of the State Educational Agency is imperative to sustaining MTSS implementation in Nevada. In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act, the Nevada Legislature passed AB275 (2017) that formed the Nevada Integrated Student Supports. Nevada Integrated Student Supports is an equitable integrated MTSS, a framework that builds systems for strong, effective, and sustainable implementation of evidence-based practices to ensure Nevada’s students receive the most impactful services, practices, and resources based upon responsiveness to effective instruction and intervention. MTSS is also now in the State Improvement Plan as an educational initiative that all schools must adopt.

WORKFORCE CAPACITY. As part of any initiative, a local workforce with relevant expertise must be established. In 2014, the Nevada Department of Education received School Climate Transformation Grant funding from the US Department of Education to implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. These competitive funds were renewed in 2019 with the expectation of building capacity to implement a more comprehensive MTSS framework in Nevada. The Nevada Department of Education formally partnered with UNR’s Nevada Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Technical Assistance Center in 2014 to be the state implementation team for MTSS. National technical assistance has been provided to the UNR TA Center since 2014 and the center is now an officially named and externally evaluated hub of MTSS in Nevada with full capacity for oversight of all Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/MTSS implementation functions: training, coaching, and evaluation.

State Educational Agency Implementation Functions

Coordination for MTSS begins at the level of the state and effectively works to increase capacity at both the district and school building level. The implementation functions that the State Educational Agency is responsible to oversee include training, coaching, and evaluation.

TRAINING. To build capacity, the state needs to establish resources for training schools at the local level. Prior to providing training, the State Educational Agency works to contextualize training materials to meet the unique needs of the state, the participating Local Education Agencies, and professional development needs of the school building personnel. An State Educational Agency training action should establish criteria for implementing training activities and building local training capacity. Evidence based practices are largely selected by the Local Education Agency and school building level, however the State Educational Agency may select state-specific initiatives that are included within the training sequence based on Local Education Agency data needs identified and state policy.

Nevada’s training plan for MTSS aims to build capacity through a training model as seen on page 4.





Figure 2. Nevada’s Training Model

The State Educational Agency leverages the expertise of the UNR Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Technical Assistance Center to develop Nevada specific training materials on MTSS. MTSS trainings in Nevada are delivered in a circuit format in which participating Local Education Agency school-team cohorts come together to receive, on average, one tier of training per year (teams progress through the tiers based on fidelity of implementation of the preceding tier). Tiered workshops are typically delivered in the summer months, allowing teams time to develop and implement new systems materials, and professional development trainings occur quarterly throughout the school year. Nevada’s MTSS training series includes information on systems development, selection of evidence-based practices in behavior and academics, data collection, and the monitoring of student outcomes. School teams and Local Education Agency coaches should expect to receive a minimum of three years of training prior to having local capacity built across tiers.

COACHING. Research indicates that training alone has very little sustainable impact and that coaching, or on-going implementation support, is necessary for sustainable, long-term outcomes. The State Educational Agency Leadership Team is responsible for organizing the personnel necessary to facilitate, assist, and sustain implementation efforts. Resources must be allocated to initial training and on-going technical assistance.

In Nevada, the State Educational Agency provides coaching to the Local Education Agency and the Local Education Agency provides coaching to the school building. Nevada’s State Educational Agency MTSS Team currently has one MTSS State Coordinator and three MTSS Regional Coordinators. The State Coordinator is responsible for facilitating or co-facilitating the District Leadership Team in each participating Local Education Agency. The Regional Coordinators are responsible for building the capacity of the Local Education Agency coaches.

Nevada’s Local Education Agency Coaches formally implementing MTSS participate in a coaching feedback program called Nevada’s Total Performance System for Coaching, facilitated by the State Educational Agency Regional Coordinators. The Total Performance System outlines coaching competencies, training responsibilities, and the expected coaching activities performed with the district and the school teams. State Educational Agency Regional Coordinators also provide weekly coaching calls to build a community of practice, monthly meetings to provide feedback on the Total Performance System coaching objectives for each Local Education Agency coach, and quarterly coaching professional development series to build and enhance capacity. The State Educational Agency Regional Coordinators also provide on-going technical assistance through direct email, phone and video conference communication to the Local Education Agency coaches. Coaching content created by the State Educational Agency is based on Local Education Agency requests for assistance and identified need as determined by Local Education Agency data sources.

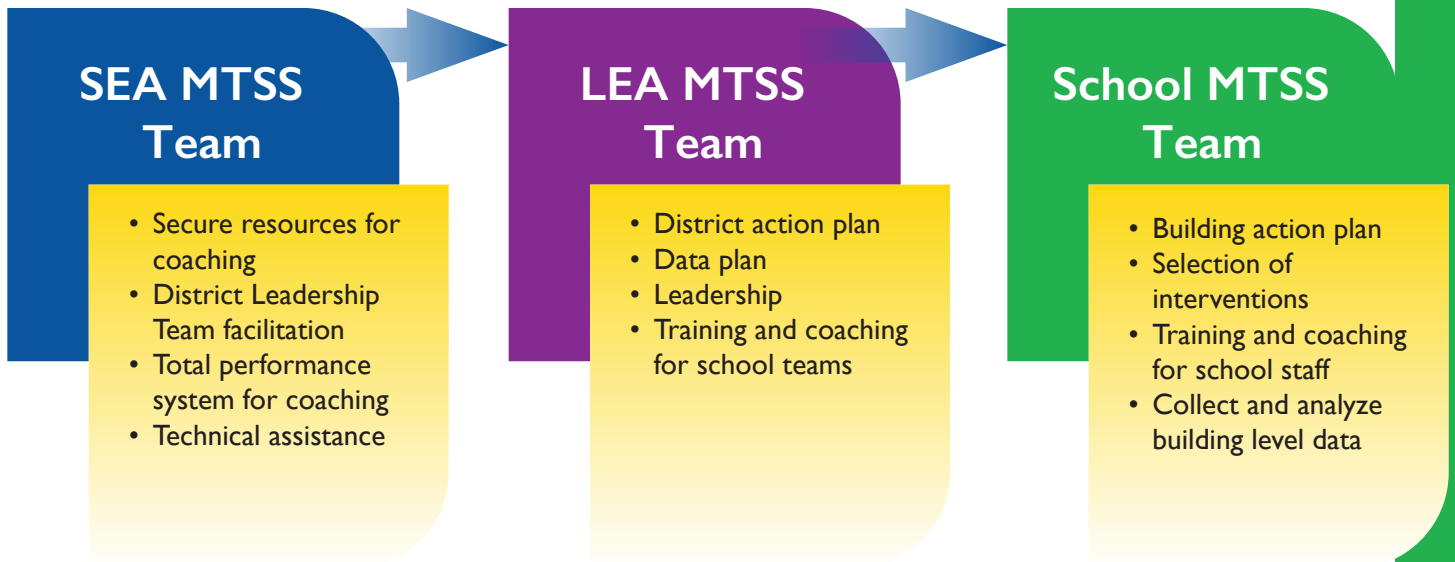
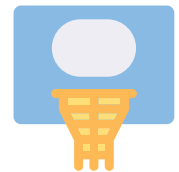


Figure 3. Nevada’s Coaching Model

EVALUATION. Implementation of MTSS should result in measurable outcomes. The State Educational Agency is responsible for identifying methodologies to evaluate progress, to use data to modify practices and policies, and to identify Local Education Agencies that need additional supports and resources.

Nevada uses the State Systems Fidelity Inventory to evaluate MTSS outcomes. The State Systems Fidelity Inventory is conducted annually with the State Leadership Team and monitors progress across nine key domains of implementation as depicted by the blueprint: leadership teaming, stakeholder engagement, funding and alignment, policy, workforce capacity, training, coaching, evaluation, local implementation demonstration. The progress on the State Systems Fidelity Inventory is used to inform a 3 to 5 year action plan for the State Educational Agency.

Outcome data are also monitored by the State Educational Agency. Some sources of data that the State Educational Agency aggregates to inform implementation outcomes include Nevada Report Card, School-Wide information System, Nevada School Climate Survey, Safe Voice data, and Infinite Campus. Outcome data at the state are aggregated annually and used to inform professional development needs and policy revision. If the State Educational Agency determines that a specific district is struggling with their MTSS systems, the State Educational Agency will provide support, resources, and ultimately differentiate coaching and training supports to meet the needs of the Local Education Agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION DEMONSTRATION. The implementation functions that the State Educational Agency provides to the Local Education Agency will result in certain Local Education Agencies having model practices and policies that the State Educational Agency and other Local Education Agencies can learn from. These model sites are known as implementation demonstration sites. In Nevada, the State Educational Agency recognizes high performing Local Education Agencies in a state recognition system for MTSS.

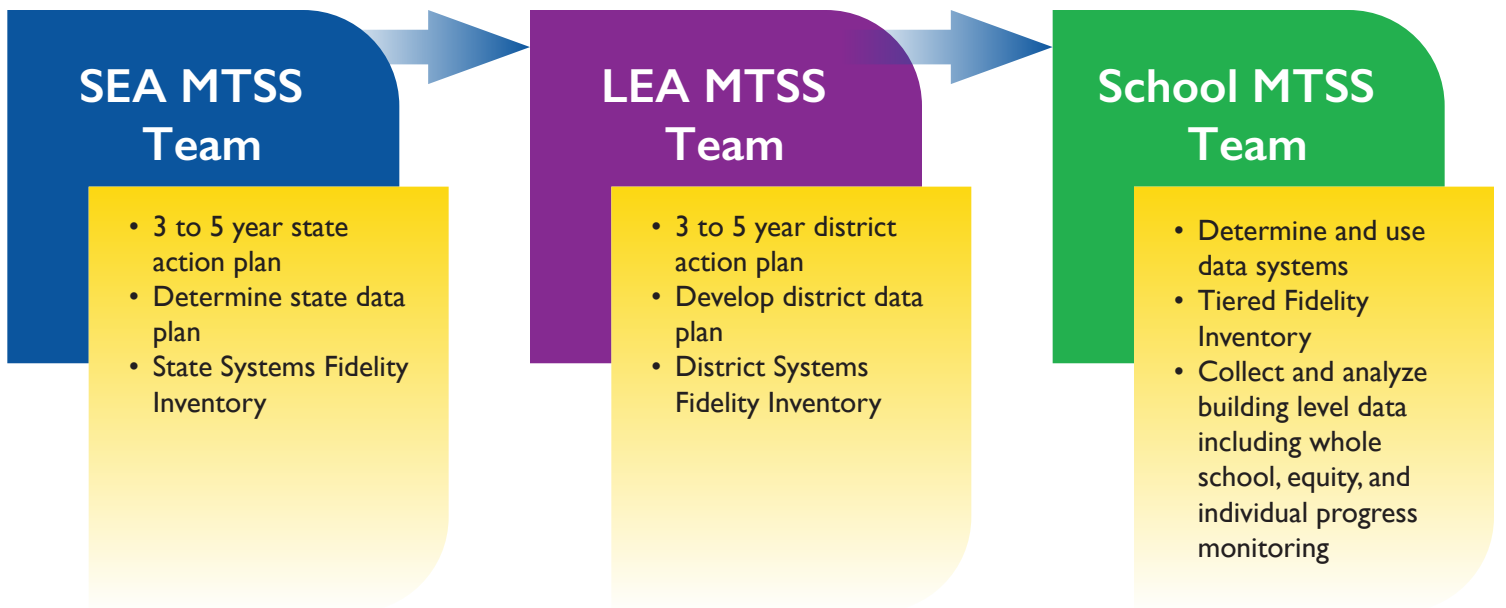


Figure 4. Nevada’s Evaluation Model



NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Educational Agency's Role in Establishing an MTSS Framework

State Educational Agency Leadership Team:

Range of stakeholders including state and district/charter leadership, community partners, family, and youth voice

State Educational Agency Tools:

- MTSS/Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Blueprint
- State Systems Fidelity Inventory

<p>TIER 3: Individualized District/ Charter Support</p>	<p>State Educational Agency Tier 3 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of District/Charter Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity Tiered Professional Development Training Supports • Resources • Crisis Response and Support
<p>TIER 2: Targeted District/ Charter Support</p>	<p>State Educational Agency Tier 2 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of District/Charter Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity • Tiered Professional Development Training Supports • Resources
<p>TIER 1: State System Development</p>	<p>State Educational Agency Tier 1 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Teaming • Stakeholder Engagement • Funding and Alignment • Policy • Workforce Capacity • Training • Coaching • Evaluation • State Implementation Demonstration (District/Charter/School sites)

MTSS AT THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY

“It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes a team to raise a village.”



Due to the diverse and varying needs of Local Education Agencies, it's important to clarify that the practices supported and encompassed within MTSS can and often will vary from district to district. Therefore, the practices within one district's MTSS framework will look different in scope when compared to a neighboring district. Most commonly, three-tiered models such as Response to Intervention and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports are frequent components of districts' MTSS, but this is not always the case. This is on account of districts selecting practices to “upload” into their MTSS operating systems that meet their current needs, resources, and priorities. In recent years, many Nevada school districts have focused on utilizing their MTSS to install other initiatives such as School Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Trauma Informed Care, School Safety Initiatives, and so on.

As the needs of students and communities change over time, so does a district's MTSS. District-level Implementation is an iterative process that evolves to respond to new needs as they arise within communities, as federal, state, and local policy changes, and as educational innovation and science continues to inform and refine best practice.

Implementation of MTSS at the district level is driven by the District Leadership Team. The District Leadership Team at the level of the Local Education Agency is composed of a specifically curated group of committed stakeholders required for installing, scaling, and evaluating MTSS. This team is established after an Local Education Agency goes through the exploration process (see section 2 regarding the implementation phase). During the previous exploration phase, the Local Education Agency identifies and articulates the district-specific vision and goals related to MTSS implementation. Therefore, members of the District Leadership Team will

vary based on the size and priorities of the district. Formal invitations will be extended to those stakeholders who hold specific skills, knowledge, and authority in line with the district's MTSS scope and mission. The facilitation of this team is a co-lead partnership between a state MTSS technical assistance advisor and a member of the district's executive cabinet (or other person with leadership authority to make key decisions related to the district's budget, implementation, policy, and data systems). The members of the District Leadership Team are charged with advancing MTSS through two primary functions: executive functions and implementation functions.

Executive Functions at the District Level

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT. The District Leadership Team actively involves stakeholders (school boards, families, community organization leaders, politicians, and youth) in goal setting and policy development. At the local level, many prevention and intervention programs are supported by entities external to the school district. Therefore, including community-based organizations to facilitate the interconnection of efforts is essential. Additionally, it is the prerogative of the District Leadership Team to communicate information, data, and accomplishments related to the Local Education Agency's MTSS implementation with stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement is not purely external facing. It is important to nurture and engage internal-to-district stakeholders as well. Organizational leaders at the district level (e.g., superintendent, cabinet, board of education trustees) should actively and visibly participate in MTSS events and activities (attend annual events, visit implementation sites, acknowledge progress, etc.).

FUNDING AND ALIGNMENT. School districts receive funding from a variety of sources to educate students within their communities. For Local Education Agencies to steward these funds equitably in a manner that ensures all students receive a free and appropriate education, requires alignment across systems within the district. One role of the District Leadership Team is to engage in thoughtful and ongoing alignment of budgets, personnel, and initiatives in order to reduce potential “silofication” and disproportionate access to opportunities and programming within the

district. Fiscally, this includes developing a budget plan that prioritizes funding to support operating structures and capacity building activities to implement MTSS. Operationally, funding and organizational resources across related initiatives must continually be examined to facilitate alignment and sustained implementation. As districts advance and enhance their implementation at advanced tiers of MTSS, the District Leadership Team should formally identify, document, and endorse Tier 2 and Tier 3 evidence-based interventions that are both contextually appropriate and adequately supported. At least annually, the District Leadership Team conducts a formal review (audit, resource mapping, initiative inventory) supported by the State MTSS Coordinator to document and refine the initiatives included within the district's MTSS framework and examine the effectiveness, relevance, and fidelity of implementation. When it is determined that innovation is needed, the District Leadership Team utilizes initiative adoption procedures (i.e., the NIRN Hexagon Tool, Figure 5) prior to adopting new programming, practices, or initiatives. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, the District Leadership Team is charged with MTSS alignment to district outcomes. As district level strategic plans evolve, soft funding sources come and go, and leadership changes, MTSS can be at risk for having a short-term "shelf life" if not aligned to publicly identified district outcomes and goals. Therefore, ensuring that the components of an Local Education Agency's MTSS are directly aligned with key district performance goals in each rendition of an Local Education Agency's strategic plan is imperative for durable and sustainable implementation.

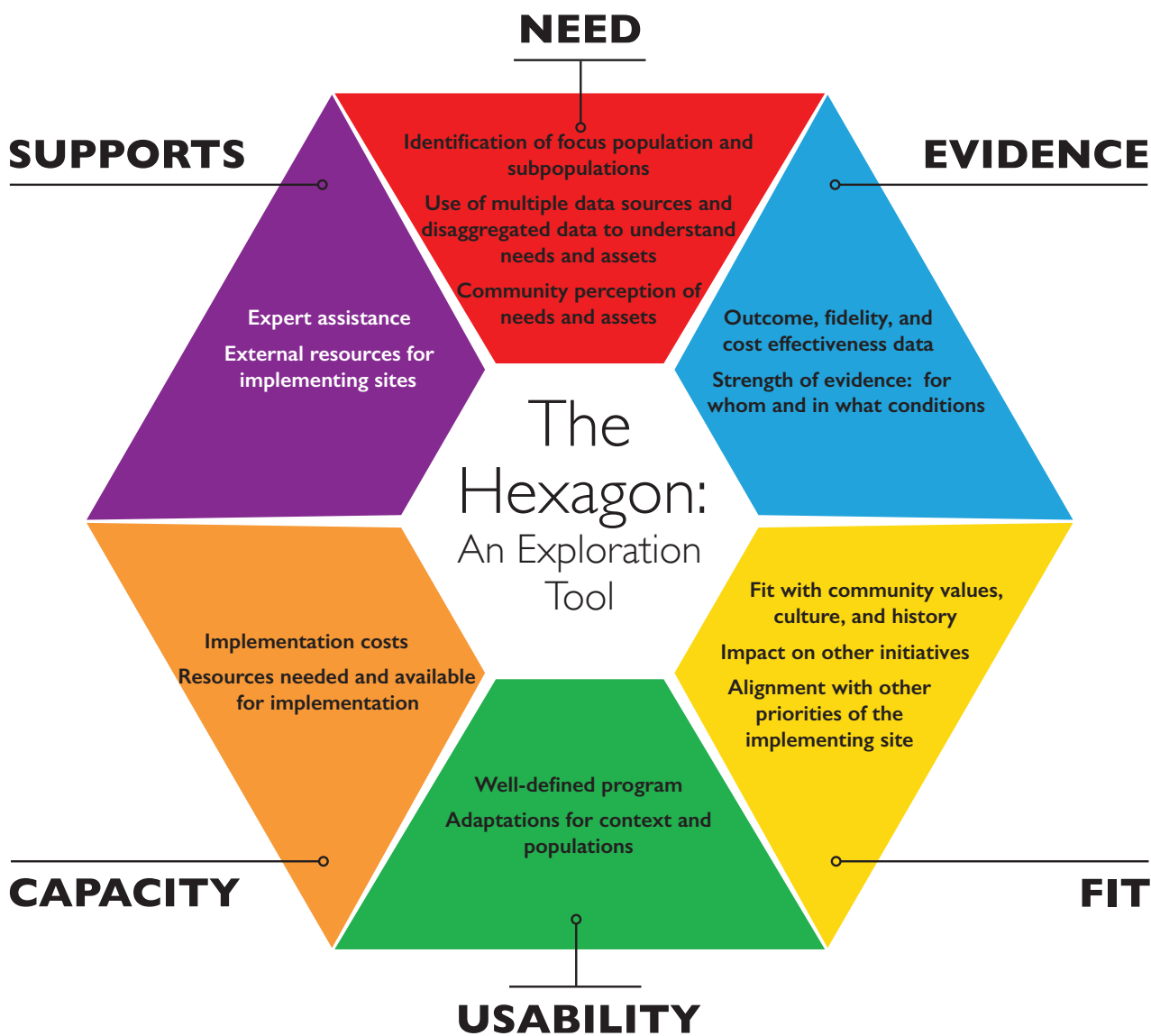



Figure 5. NIRN Hexagon Tool

The Hexagon can be used as a planning tool to guide selection and assess the fit and feasibility of potential programs and practices for use. It includes three **program indicators** and three **implementing site indicators**.



POLICY. One of the keys to sustainability is to codify the work of MTSS into local policy that supports processes to achieve long-term valued outcomes. For this reason, the section above related to district-level stakeholder engagement becomes increasingly relevant, particularly regarding the active information sharing, data updates, and accomplishment dissemination with school board trustees and other stakeholders.

Some Local Education Agencies are reluctant to advance MTSS policy until they are in the phase of full implementation (see Section 2) to ensure that the processes they are utilizing for their MTSS are efficacious and successful in achieving locally valued outcomes. In the initial phases of implementation (and thereafter) the Local Education Agency can articulate their priorities and nurture their policy efforts with a vision/mission statement specific to their district's MTSS initiative. This statement should include a rationale and clear support for the importance of MTSS as it relates to the Local Education Agency's valued long-term outcomes and is endorsed by lead district administrators.

From the behavioral support aspect of MTSS, there are often local policies related to student conduct and discipline. Districts should advance policies and support procedures that emphasize proactive evidence-based strategies to support student social, emotional, and behavioral needs. For existing discipline policy, it should be reviewed and refined annually to enhance their effects on fidelity of implementation and association with behavior and academic outcomes for all student groups. This may include reviewing the district's restorative discipline plan, behavioral screening policies, policies for alternative student placement, the district's strategic plan, and discipline guides/student handbooks.

WORKFORCE CAPACITY. There are key strategies for enhancing workforce capacity at the district level related to MTSS. One strategy is for the District Leadership Team to collaborate with Human Resources to refine personnel selection criteria and job descriptions. For example, an Local Education Agency could explicitly prioritize MTSS in hiring criteria, recruitment and candidate selection. Within position announcements priority could be given to those who have knowledge, skill, and experience implementing MTSS in relevant positions such as administrators, coaches, and other personnel. For existing personnel, job descriptions can be updated to include MTSS implementation activities rather than implicitly delegating those critical tasks into the discretionary area of "other duties as assigned." A final consideration would be for annual performance evaluations to directly assess knowledge and skills related to MTSS implementation as it relates to specific positions.

Implementation Functions at the District Level

In addition to "making way for the work" by addressing the executive functions above, effective implementation of MTSS requires coordination of what are known as the *implementation functions*. This requires the coordination of personnel, time, and resources, and the oversight of district action-plan items to effectively install and advance MTSS within a district. It is imperative that coaching, training, and evaluation, are all prominent components of the active and ongoing implementation to support implementing school sites.

TRAINING. From the district level, "training" is the delivery of professional development to site implementation teams on the evidence-based practices that are adopted within the district's Multi-Tiered System. Many Local Education Agencies begin their implementation journey fully supported by the State Educational Agency's training circuits (see Section 3) until local capacity exists to train within-district. The desired outcome is that after 3 to 5 years a core group within each district is established and regularly provides training within the Local Education Agency to build and sustain MTSS practices. Within the implementation function of "training" there are several components that require coordination at the level of the District Leadership Team including:

- a) Developing a 3 to 5 year professional development plan guided by implementation data that is linked to the district vision/mission/goals/outcomes
- b) Creating a professional development calendar with a clear scope and sequence that is publicly posted with defined goals to support implementation of MTSS
- c) Ensuring that MTSS professional development materials and practices are overtly aligned with other relevant district initiatives and
- d) Providing MTSS orientation sessions at least annually with new staff and refresher or “booster” sessions with returning/veteran staff
- e) Identifying school sites that need additional training supports given specific requests for assistance or data indicating that additional training is needed

While training is essential, training alone does not translate knowledge gain into practice within school buildings without the other two implementation functions: coaching and evaluation. There is an unfortunate tendency for educational agencies to pursue training without sufficient staff and resources invested in adequate coaching and evaluation support and structures. If we are not robustly and intentionally coaching and/or evaluating, we are not truly engaging in MTSS.

COACHING. Coaching at the district level is what happens on-site, and in real-time: before, between, and after professional development. Most often, the allocation of resources for coaching MTSS is the first action taken by a district in the installation phase (see Section 2). The individuals who assume roles in coaching have professional backgrounds as diverse as Nevada itself (e.g., teachers or administrators on special assignment, counselors, psychologists, social workers, etc.), but all have expertise, or are developing expertise that aligns with the scope of their Local Education Agency’s MTSS continuum of tiered supports. The number of coaches within a district will vary based on the size of the district, number of schools, and the scale of MTSS implementation. District level coaches provide differentiated coaching support to school MTSS teams within the Local Education Agency based on phases of implementation, relevant tiers, and data-indicated need. Coaching support provided to schools is both proactive, and responsive with the enduring goal to assist teams with the site-based teaming, implementation, and evaluation components of MTSS implementation. What a coach does from day to day will vary but often includes: attending school team meetings, assisting with material development, organizing communities of practice, assisting with Tiered Fidelity Inventory completion, prompting and assisting school teams to complete required information and data submissions, ongoing communication, sharing exemplars, assisting teams with data analysis, identifying and locating site specific resources, providing additional supports to school teams based on outcome data, etc.

As MTSS matures and is refined, the development and dissemination of district-specific materials for implementers and stakeholders to reference is one component of technical assistance that supports durability. It is helpful for Local Education Agencies to develop and adequately revise orientation materials (handouts, videos, website, handbook, etc.) for internal and external stakeholders that include information about the implementation rationale, readiness requirements, process and outcomes. Some districts elect to standardize certain processes and documents for implementation sites for example, Request for Assistance forms and Data Decision Rule Guidance. When that approach is taken, the development of those materials and subsequent training of relevant staff is warranted.

EVALUATION. Each District Leadership Team creates a 3 to 5 year district-level MTSS evaluation plan that includes clearly identified assessments, evaluation questions, school implementation data, social validity survey results, and locally-valued outcomes. In addition to the evaluation plan, district and school level data systems (data collection tools and applications) are put in place to collect common data that allow for continuous decision making where data can be both disaggregated by student group and aggregated for system-wide decision making at all levels (i.e., district, school, classroom). Those data systems are leveraged to provide regular performance feedback to school teams and coaches for problem solving and action planning. Additionally, the data system is in place for identifying school teams in need of additional training and coaching support. There is symmetry in process used at all levels of evaluation (e.g., student, classroom, school, district) for examining both the fidelity of implementation and the impact that implementation is having on student outcomes. The District Leadership

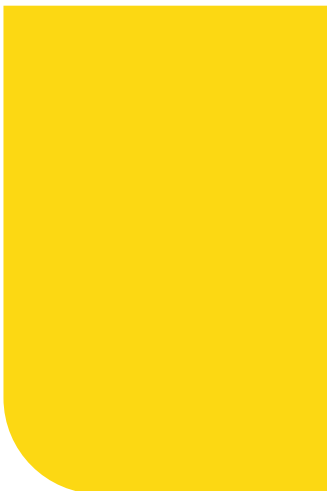


Team utilizes evaluation data to acknowledge the outcomes and accomplishments of school and district level MTSS achievements and disseminates that information, at least quarterly to stakeholders.

There are specific indicators that the district measures and monitors specific to advanced tier implementation. The district develops written guidelines related to student identification data that includes multiple sources of data (e.g., screening scores, nomination, attendance, discipline events, assessment scores, etc.) to inform school level identification of students who may need Tier 2 or Tier 3 support. While the school teams establish population specific data decision rules, guidance related to the data sources for consideration should be created and endorsed by the district to advance equity within the system. The district will also need to identify a system to measure level of use at advanced tiers. This system is utilized to track the proportion of students participating in Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports across the district. And finally, the District Leadership Team tracks the proportion of students experiencing success at the advanced tiers and uses Tier 2 and Tier 3 outcome data and decision rules for system-wide progress monitoring and modification.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION DEMONSTRATIONS. At the district level, the local implementation demonstrations are the school sites that are formally implementing MTSS. To be designated as a “formally implementing” school requires the site based MTSS team to have access to training, to be actively engaged with ongoing coaching, and engage in evaluating their implementation through both the measurement of fidelity and student outcomes. The District Leadership Team has three roles to oversee in this realm. The first role is site selection; the District Leadership Team engages in formal site selection processes (including readiness requirements and commitment procedures) and criteria are developed, adopted, and consistently used to identify initial pilot schools, and to expand to new schools in subsequent years. The second role of the District Leadership Team is to identify “model demonstrations.” Demonstration schools have annual data indicating sustained high levels of fidelity of implementation and serve as local examples of process and outcomes across tiers, and grade band levels (elementary, middle, high). Finally, the District Leadership Team develops a plan for scaling up additional model demonstrations. Given the intentionality required to allocate coaching, training, and evaluation efforts to implement MTSS with fidelity, scale-up plans need to be considered current resources, time, and district priorities.

To summarize MTSS implementation at the district level, the executive and implementation functions described above are facilitated by two formative tools: the District Systems Fidelity Inventory and the district’s 3 to 5 year MTSS action plan. The district’s MTSS action plan prioritizes and sequences the actions needed to install, support, evaluate and sustain all the practices included within that district’s MTSS. Annually the District Systems Fidelity Inventory is re-administered to measure progress in each of the components detailed above (leadership teaming, stakeholder engagement, funding and alignment, policy, workforce capacity, training, coaching, evaluation, and local implementation demonstrations).



DISTRICTS AND CHARTERS

Local Education Agency's Role in Establishing an MTSS Framework

Local Education Agency Leadership Team:

Range of stakeholders including state and district/charter leadership, community partners, family, and youth voice

Local Education Agency Tools:

- MTSS/Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Blueprint
- District Systems Fidelity Inventory

<p>TIER 3: Individualized School Site Support</p>	<p>Local Education Agency Tier 3 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of School Site Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity • Tiered Professional Development Training Supports • Resources • Crisis Response & Support
<p>TIER 2: Targeted School Site Support</p>	<p>Local Education Agency Tier 2 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of School Site Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity • Tiered Professional Development Training Supports • Resources
<p>TIER 1: District/Charter System Development</p>	<p>Local Education Agency Tier 1 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Teaming • Stakeholder Engagement • Funding and Alignment • Policy • Workforce Capacity • Training • Coaching • Evaluation • Site Implementation Demonstration

MTSS AT THE SCHOOL BUILDING

A sustainable MTSS relies on a diverse and range of stakeholders across the building level whose collaborative efforts help coordinate implementation and evaluation at the building level. The collaborative teaming structure promotes shared decision making based on school wide data, and leadership of implementation across the school building. Through the implementation process teams are coached (by their district-level external coach) and supported to engage in data-based decision making, implementing evidence-based practices, and progress monitoring the system at each tier of delivery. Without effective teaming structures driven by action plans, it is unlikely that schools will allocate time and effort needed to build and sustain a MTSS. Additionally, without intentional development of the system, staff do not have access to the necessary infrastructure to effectively engage in the durable implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity. Teams are crucial to implementing a strong MTSS that will address students social, emotional, and behavioral needs in a systematic way. At all three tiers, teams should include defined roles and responsibilities of team members, an agenda, meeting minutes, and a current action plan. The activities and function of the site MTSS team of varies across the tiers and will be described below.

Teaming

TEAMING AT TIER 1. The focus of the team at tier one is overseeing the implementation of core instruction (academically and behaviorally) and installing or enhancing universal prevention strategies. Team representation at this tier should include building administration, individuals who have knowledge about operations across grade levels and/or programs, expertise related to the Tier 1 initiatives, a family member, and student representation (at the secondary level). This team meets at least monthly and has a standard meeting format/agenda that is specifically dedicated to Tier 1 programming. Meeting monthly and utilizing a site-based action planning process, the team facilitates the installation of or sustainment of Tier 1 programming to ensure that all staff are implementing universal strategies with all students.

TEAMING AT TIER 2. The composition and functions of the team at tier two is different than at tier one. The focus of the team at this tier is to identify students who need targeted supports, and to match those students to site-based interventions matched to student needs. The Tier 2 team identifies students who require targeted interventions through two mechanisms: screening and requests for assistance. At advanced tiers the team utilizes universal screening results that are triangulated with other data sources (e.g., academic progress, discipline referrals, attendance, teacher/family/student nomination, etc.) to identify students who present with moderate levels of risks based on multiple indicators. It is best practice for universal screening and the subsequent triangulation of those data with other sources to occur three times a year. The other mechanism utilized is the request for assistance process which allows for students to have access to intervention before, between, and after universal screening timeframes. It is the responsibility of the team to respond to requests for assistance that may come from students, teachers, or family members within three days.

TEAMING AT TIER 3. Like the functions at Tier 2 described above, the systems team at Tier 3 utilizes screening data and the request for assistance process to identify students with high levels of risk. The team matches those students to intensive intervention(s) within the school's continuum of Tier 3 supports. At this tier, the team likely includes additional individuals who have expertise regarding intensive intervention. For each student with an individual support plan, a uniquely constructed student support team is created for each student with input/approval from the student and/or family about who is to be included on their team. This student support team works together to design, implement, monitor, and adapt the student-specific support plan.

Implementation

Although practices are implemented at the level of the classroom and school building, the identification and adoption of the practices to be included with a school's Multi-Tiered System happens at the level of the District Leadership Team. Therefore, the specific programs, curricula, and initiatives within each tier vary across districts. Furthermore, the evidence-based practices that have been endorsed by each district are contextually adapted to meet the needs of the specific population needs and resources available to each school site.



IMPLEMENTATION AT TIER 1. At Tier 1 the core curriculum, instruction, and programming are delivered to all students. In addition to ensuring that all students have access to Tier 1 instruction and supports both academically and behaviorally, we must ensure that the intensity of a school's Tier 1 system is sufficiently meeting the needs of the student population. Approximately 80% of students should be responding (i.e., having their needs met by/making sufficient progress) to Tier 1 supports. When more than 20% of a school's population is not responding to the Tier 1 programming, that indicates that the Tier 1 programming may need to be intensified or certain staff may need additional training or supports on delivering core curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION AT TIER 2. At the secondary tier, students with like needs receive “targeted” interventions. These Tier 2 interventions are provided in addition to universal instruction and supports. As the needs of students vary from year-to-year, the targeted interventions that are within a school's continuum may evolve as the needs of targeted groups are fluid. Recall from the Teaming at Tier 2 section above, that universal screening data are triangulated with other indicators to determine students presenting with moderate level of risk. After each screening period, the needs of those groups of students who are identified, and targeted interventions are provided that match the student needs. Critical features of Tier 2 include a) additional time for student skill/development, b) additional structure/predictability and c) increased opportunity for feedback. It is also important that all relevant staff are taught how to refer students and implement each Tier 2 intervention that is in place. Tier 2 will often be referred to as “small group” interventions and while targeted interventions can be delivered to small groups, that is not necessarily required. A potentially more helpful way to conceptualize this is that “small group” of students who have like needs are accessing the same intervention and the progress monitoring data for all students within that group are standardized.



INTENSIVE INTERVENTION AT TIER 3. At the tertiary tier, significant resources are required to support students with the most intensive needs. Therefore, a unique component of Tier 3 is to ensure that adequate staffing and resources are assigned to facilitate individualized plans for all students receiving these services. Within Tier 3 there is a continuum of supports across a spectrum of intensity. The range of the continuum of interventions is broad. While some individualized support plans can be implemented by homeroom teachers with no additional supports, other interventions may require additional school-based personnel. Additionally, the most intensive offerings within a school's Tier 3 continuum may require access to external support agencies, community crisis resources, and non-school based personnel. Due to the varying resources of school sites and their staffing ratios, support personnel, and other factors the Tier 3 interventions loaded within a school site's Tier 3 continuum is likely to vary more significantly from building to building. Regardless of the specific intervention, it is important to state that students receiving Tier 3 supports continue to have access to Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports, and the support plans, instructional targets, and progress monitoring data are all specifically individualized for each specific student.

Evaluation

Data-based decision making is the essence of MTSS. There are two main lenses for evaluation: evaluating fidelity of implementation and evaluating the outcomes. Fidelity and outcome data are utilized for both formative and summative evaluation.

EVALUATION AT TIER 1. Evaluation of the universal system occurs through the process of monthly evaluation of school wide discipline data and academic patterns, as well as annual review of system components utilizing fidelity measures such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory. Fidelity data to measure how closely the site implements the critical elements of Tier 1 should occur at least annually. This information should be shared with stakeholders and used to drive implementation and sustainability decisions and action planning. As a part of the evaluation process, team members and administration should share school wide data with school personnel and allow opportunities for stakeholder input.

EVALUATION AT TIER 2. At Tier 2, the team will track what is known as "level of use" data. Level of use describes the proportion of students who are accessing Tier 2 interventions. In addition to access, attention is paid to student performance data. Leveraging the progress monitoring data from students who are receiving Tier 2 supports, the team can track the proportion of students experiencing success within and across targeted interventions. For each Tier 2 intervention being deployed within the school, a protocol for ongoing review of fidelity specific to that intervention is required and best practice is to conduct fidelity probes on each Tier 2 intervention monthly. At least annually, the Tier 2 team assesses the overall effectiveness and efficiency of strategies, including data-decision rules to identify students, the range of interventions available, the fidelity of implementation of Tier 2 systems components, and their ongoing support to implementers. This information and evaluation are shared with building staff and district leadership.

EVALUATION AT TIER 3. At Tier 3, the team also tracks level of use for students that are participating in individualized interventions. Additionally, the team will leverage the individualized progress monitoring data for students receiving Tier 3 supports and quantify student performance data (as described above) relevant to the interventions within the school's Tier 3 continuum. In addition, aggregated Tier 3 data are summarized and reported to staff at least monthly on (a) fidelity of support plan implementation, and (b) impact on student outcomes. At least annually, the Tier 3 systems team assesses the extent to which Tier 3 supports are meeting the needs of students, families, and school personnel; and evaluation are used to guide action planning.



SCHOOL TEAM'S Role in Establishing an MTSS Framework

- School Leadership Team:**
- Admin
 - Teachers (gen-ed and sped)
 - Specialized Instructional Support Personnel
 - Community partners

- School Tools:**
- Tiered Fidelity Inventory
 - Practice specific fidelity inventories

<p>TIER 3: Individualized Student Support</p>	<p>School Team Tier 3 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming • Identification of Individual Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Assessment • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity • Tiered Professional Development Training for all Staff • Resources • Crisis Response and Support • Evaluation
<p>TIER 2: Targeted Student Support</p>	<p>School Team Tier 2 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming • Identification of Student Needs • Data Sources/Request for Assistance • Intervention Selection • Fidelity/Progress Monitoring/Social Validity • Tiered Professional Development Training for all Staff • Evaluation
<p>TIER 1: School Site System Development</p>	<p>School Team Tier 1 Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming • Implementation • Evaluation • Family/Community Involvement • Universal Screening



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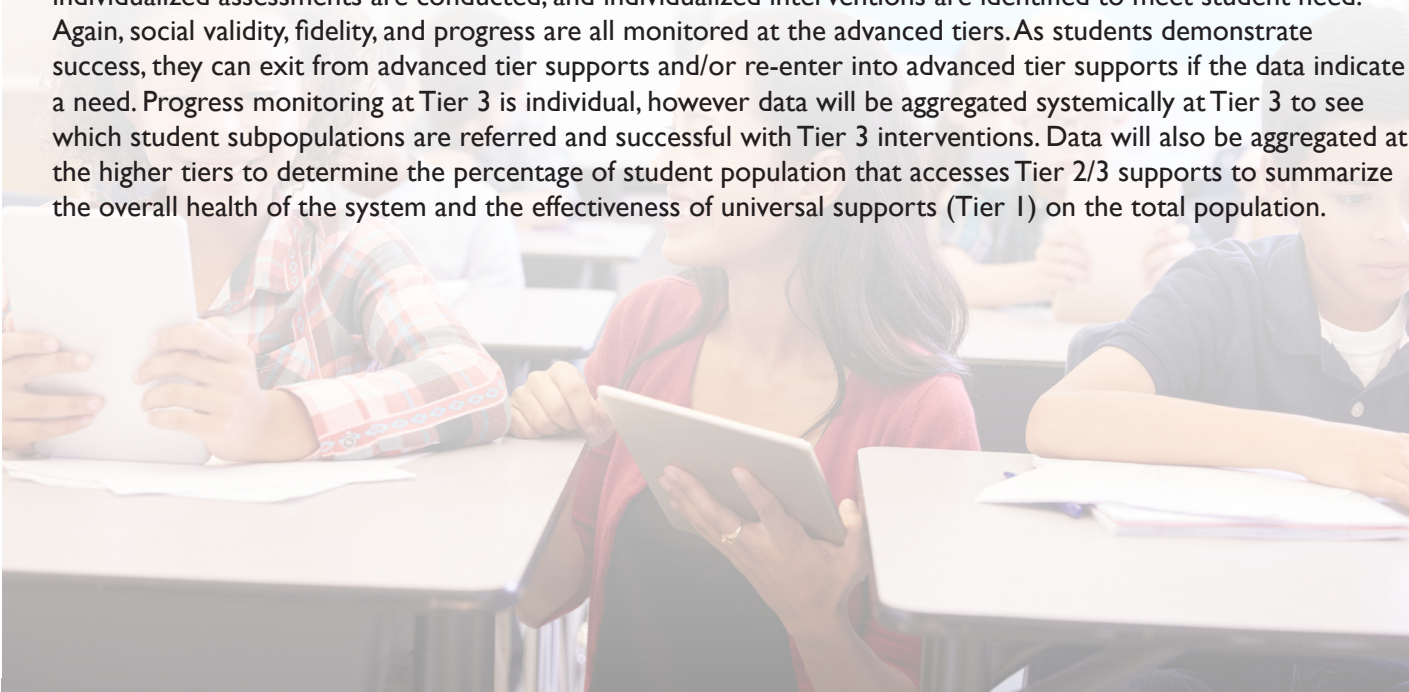
THE MTSS EXPERIENCE

MTSS creates a framework that allows for team-based decision making, organization of interventions, and the data to understand student need. In other words, MTSS is a way to organize data, systems and practices to match students to appropriate interventions. One of the most important conditions of MTSS is that access to interventions is not enough and students should demonstrate outcomes of the interventions used. The “MTSS Flowchart: School-Wide Supports System” shows how data are used at each tier to advance a student into higher level(s) of intervention.

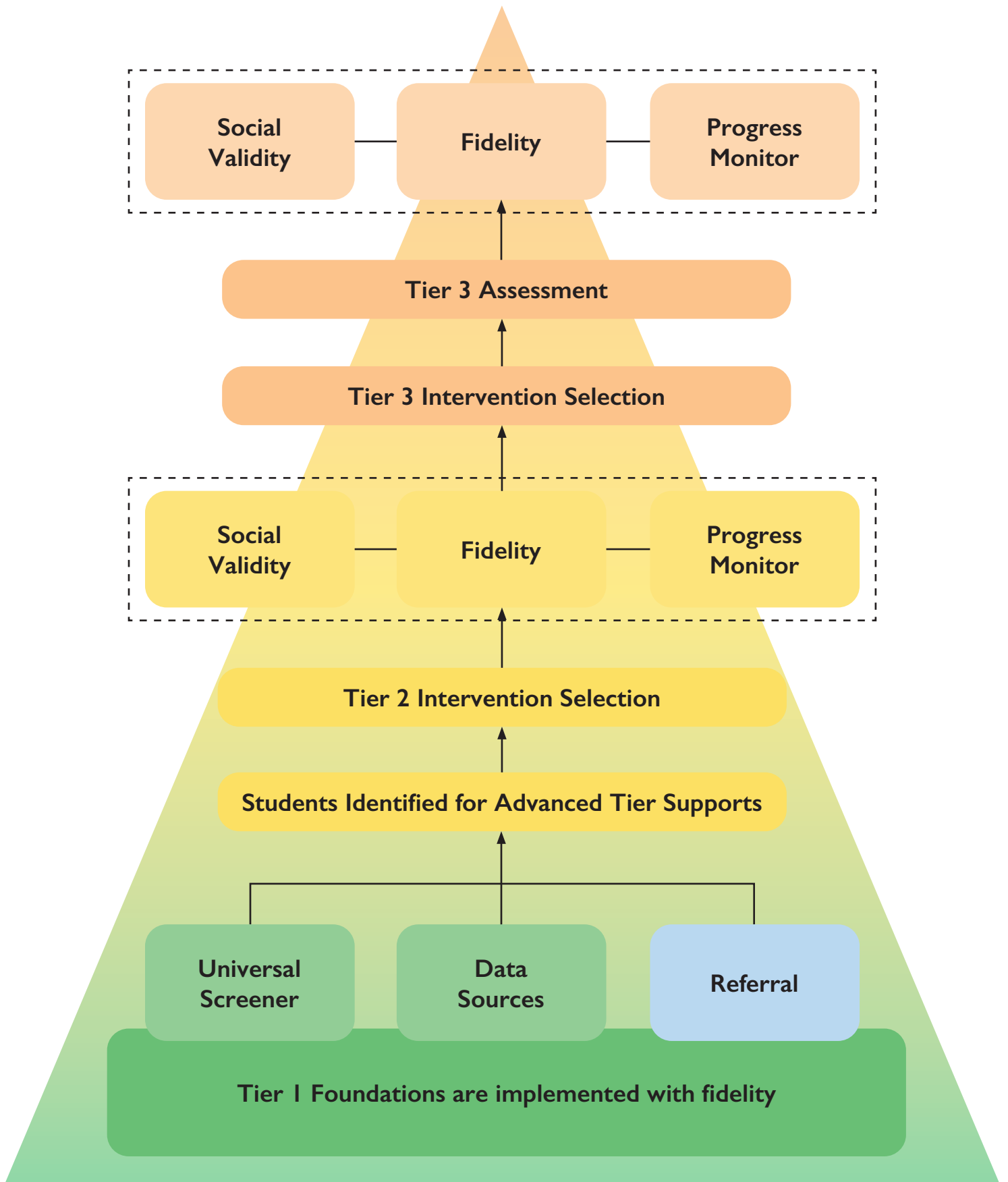
At Tier 1, good universal instruction is provided to create a foundation for success. These universal interventions are unique to each school and Local Education Agency based on the population of students at the school. For example, universal interventions at an urban alternative education high school will look and feel very different from the universal interventions that are used in a small rural elementary school. Specific practices aside, the foundation will be set such that 80% of the student body is demonstrating successful outcomes (behavioral and academic) while accessing Tier 1 supports. At Tier 1, data are aggregated primarily on the system overall but individual universal screeners, attendance data, academic data, and behavior data are collected and used to advance a student into a higher tier, if warranted. Disproportionate rates of discipline and risk ratios are also calculated and analyzed by gender, ethnicity, race, and disability status.

Tier 2 interventions are triggered by multiple sources of data, including the data collected at Tier 1 and any teacher, specialist, or family generated referrals for support that are received. Data should always be triangulated (i.e., multiple sources of data are used to determine a decision) and reviewed by a Tier 2 team in order to identify and advance students into Tier 2 supports. Students receiving Tier 2 supports are considered ‘at-risk’ and should be comprised of approximately 20% of the student body population. At Tier 2, interventions are considered ‘targeted’ or applicable to a group of students that fall into certain categories of need (i.e., students that are underperforming in mathematics). Once students are identified for advanced tier supports, the Tier 2 interventions are selected based on student population needs and social validity data, fidelity data and intervention progress data are collected. The Tier 2 team will meet to review those data on a school-determined timeline and students that are not successful at Tier 2 interventions will be identified for additional advanced tier supports. Data will be looked at systemically at Tier 2 to see which student subpopulations are referred at higher rates to Tier 2 interventions and which subpopulations are most successful with certain interventions.

Tier 3 supports are provided to a student when they continue to demonstrate insufficient progress with Tier 2 supports. Students receiving Tier 3 supports should make up no more than 5% of the student body. At Tier 3, individualized assessments are conducted, and individualized interventions are identified to meet student need. Again, social validity, fidelity, and progress are all monitored at the advanced tiers. As students demonstrate success, they can exit from advanced tier supports and/or re-enter into advanced tier supports if the data indicate a need. Progress monitoring at Tier 3 is individual, however data will be aggregated systemically at Tier 3 to see which student subpopulations are referred and successful with Tier 3 interventions. Data will also be aggregated at the higher tiers to determine the percentage of student population that accesses Tier 2/3 supports to summarize the overall health of the system and the effectiveness of universal supports (Tier 1) on the total population.



MTSS FLOWCHART: School-Wide Support Systems



MTSS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

The role of the classroom teacher in MTSS (see 'MTSS Flowchart: Classroom Teacher Experience') is to provide a good foundation in universal instruction and supports, as identified by their school site. Universal practices in the classroom should be engaging, supportive of all students, culturally responsive, equitable, and effective. Most students in a classroom will be successful with good universal instruction.

Tier I Practices & Supports help ensure that:

- Our school is a safe place, both physically and emotionally, for students, families, and staff
- All students, families and staff are welcomed, valued, and treated with respect
- Our staff has high expectations for all of the students and families in our school
- I know what my role is and how to fulfill my responsibilities in supporting our school family
- There is a clear, consistent, and predictable structure in our school; if there are ever going to be changes, I will be notified so that I know what to expect
- I know what is expected of me and how I can be successful
- I receive regular support from my leadership team and know how to ask for additional support when I need it
- I am selecting universal instruction and supports that are most likely to be effective because I have had time to research them for evidence-base and to align them with the needs/data of my students
- I know how to identify and implement instructional practices that are culturally and linguistically appropriate
- I know what data to use and how to use it to make sure my students are on track

In one of two scenarios, a student may be identified for higher tier supports: a) the teacher notices a need for more student support and notifies the MTSS team, or b) the MTSS team notices a need based on multiple sources of student data and notifies the teacher that their student might need advanced tier supports. In either scenario, the MTSS team will rely upon the teacher to submit a formal request to the MTSS team for advanced tier supports for the student.

The referral to the MTSS team will trigger a decision-making scenario for the MTSS team in which the student will either meet or not meet criteria for advanced tier supports. These criteria are determined by the MTSS team and often referred to as data-decision rules for advanced tiers. If the student is determined ineligible for advanced tier supports, the MTSS team is responsible to provide the classroom teacher with support around the fidelity of implementation of Tier I practices. If the student is identified for advanced tier supports, the teacher will be notified. The advanced tier supports will be determined by the MTSS team however the teacher may play a role in providing those advanced tier supports, as appropriate. The MTSS team will determine who will collect progress monitoring data on the advanced tier support and those data will be reviewed by the MTSS team on a regular basis, as determined by the school. Once sufficient progress has been demonstrated on behalf of the student, supports will be faded over time to ensure sustainability and the teacher will be notified that the student no longer meets the criteria for advanced tier supports. At this time, the delivery of student supports will be returned exclusively to the teacher.

If MTSS is implemented with fidelity, the classroom teacher should feel well supported and available to focus their efforts on the successful outcomes of all students within their classroom. Infrastructure exists within the building to address teacher concerns and students are identified for interventions in a proactive manner (i.e., before a major problem exists) rather than waiting for a crisis to ensue. The classroom teacher in MTSS will be expected to collect data however the data collection will be a pleasurable experience as the teacher will know that the data will be used to their benefit and the needs of their students will be addressed.

Tier 2 & Tier 3 Practices & Supports help ensure that:

- I feel supported in responding to students needs because we have a team and system in place
- I track data regularly so I will notice quickly when one of my students starts to struggle and can respond before they get too far behind
- I know what the process is for referring a student when the data indicates that they need additional support
- Families are respected and included as critical members of a problem-solving team
- Additional supports are matched with the student's needs based on the student's data
- If additional supports aren't working, the school team will adjust quickly to identify a different intervention so my student is able to get back on track quickly

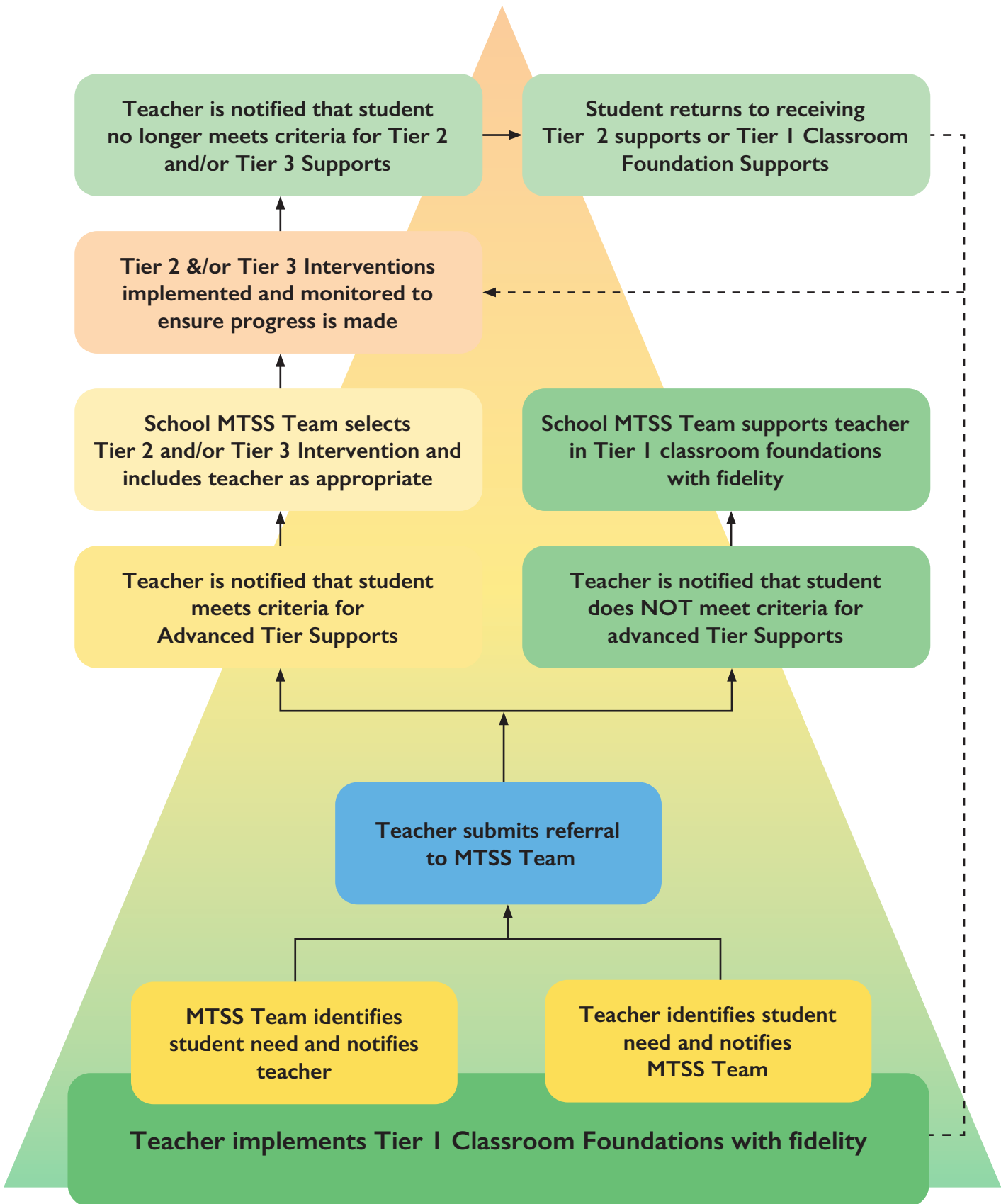
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How I'll know my school is doing these things:

- There is an MTSS Framework in place
- All adults in the building know what the MTSS Framework includes and how to make referrals
- As a school family (staff, families and students) we have identified school-wide goals and expectations for success
- All adults model and reinforce school-wide expectations consistently
- The School MTSS Team meets regularly and responds to referrals in a timely manner
- Data are collected and used regularly to match supports and instruction with needs
- Tiered Fidelity Inventory is above 70%

MTSS FLOWCHART

Classroom Teacher Experience



MTSS FOR THE STUDENT/FAMILY MEMBER(S)

Students attend school to receive instruction across a variety of subject matters and to be supported holistically in their physical development and emotional well-being. All students have the right to access equitable instruction and to be supported in their unique needs. If a student attends a MTSS school (see ‘MTSS Implementation: Student Experience’), the student and family should be able to trust that the teachers at that school are able to teach the student how to be successful and that the teachers are supported and equipped to provide the best universal instruction possible.

Tier I Practices & Supports show me that:

- The adults in my building care about me and my family
- All students and families in my school are welcomed, valued and treated with respect
- My school is a safe place, both physically and emotionally
- All of the adults in my building have high expectations for all of the students and families in my school
- Each adult in my school community has a role and will fulfill their responsibility in supporting our school family
- There is a clear, consistent, and predictable structure in my school; if there are ever going to be changes, someone will tell me so that I know what to expect
- I know and understand what ALL of the expectations are for me and I know how I can be successful in all settings
- I am given high quality instruction by a highly qualified teacher
- All instructions and supports are most likely to be effective because they have been researched to make sure they are evidence-based and match with my school’s needs/data
- Instruction and expectations that are selected are culturally and linguistically appropriate

Not all students are successful with the same resources which is why MTSS is so important. If a student is struggling, the student and family will understand that there is an objective process in place to identify needs early and support the student fully with appropriate resources, interventions, and supports. The student’s teacher, specialist (i.e., guidance counselor), or family member may submit a request for additional assistance to the classroom teacher or MTSS team. The teacher will then submit a formal request to the MTSS team for advanced tier supports for their student. If the data-decision rules outlined by the school suggest that the student qualifies for additional supports, the student and family will be notified, and the student will receive supplementary supports in addition to the core instruction. It may be the case that advanced tier interventions can happen within the classroom but that is determined by the type of intervention and the capacity of the personnel available to provide those interventions. Advanced tier interventions will be closely monitored for effectiveness to ensure that the student is making progress. As soon as the student has demonstrated sufficient progress in an intervention, the supports will be faded to ensure sustainability, and both the teacher and family member(s) will be notified that the student no longer needs advanced tier supports. The student will then return to receiving Tier I instruction exclusively.

Tier 2 & Tier 3 Practices & Supports

show me that:

- If I start to struggle, someone will notice quickly before I get too far behind
- If another student in my school starts to struggle, someone will notice quickly before they get too far behind
- There is nothing wrong with me if I need additional supports in one or more areas
- The school respects my family by including them in decisions about additional supports I may need
- The school cares about my cultural and linguistic needs by making sure additional supports are appropriate
- My school makes sure that additional supports are matched with my needs based on my data
- If additional supports aren't working, the school will adjust quickly to identify a different intervention so I get back on track quickly

It is important for students and families to understand that specialized instruction is a normal part of attending school and there should not be a stigma attached to receiving advanced tier supports. It is merely a part of the system that supports the success of all students! Every person is a different type of learner and the same goes for students. All students should have the opportunity to feel safe, successful, and supported in their learning environments.

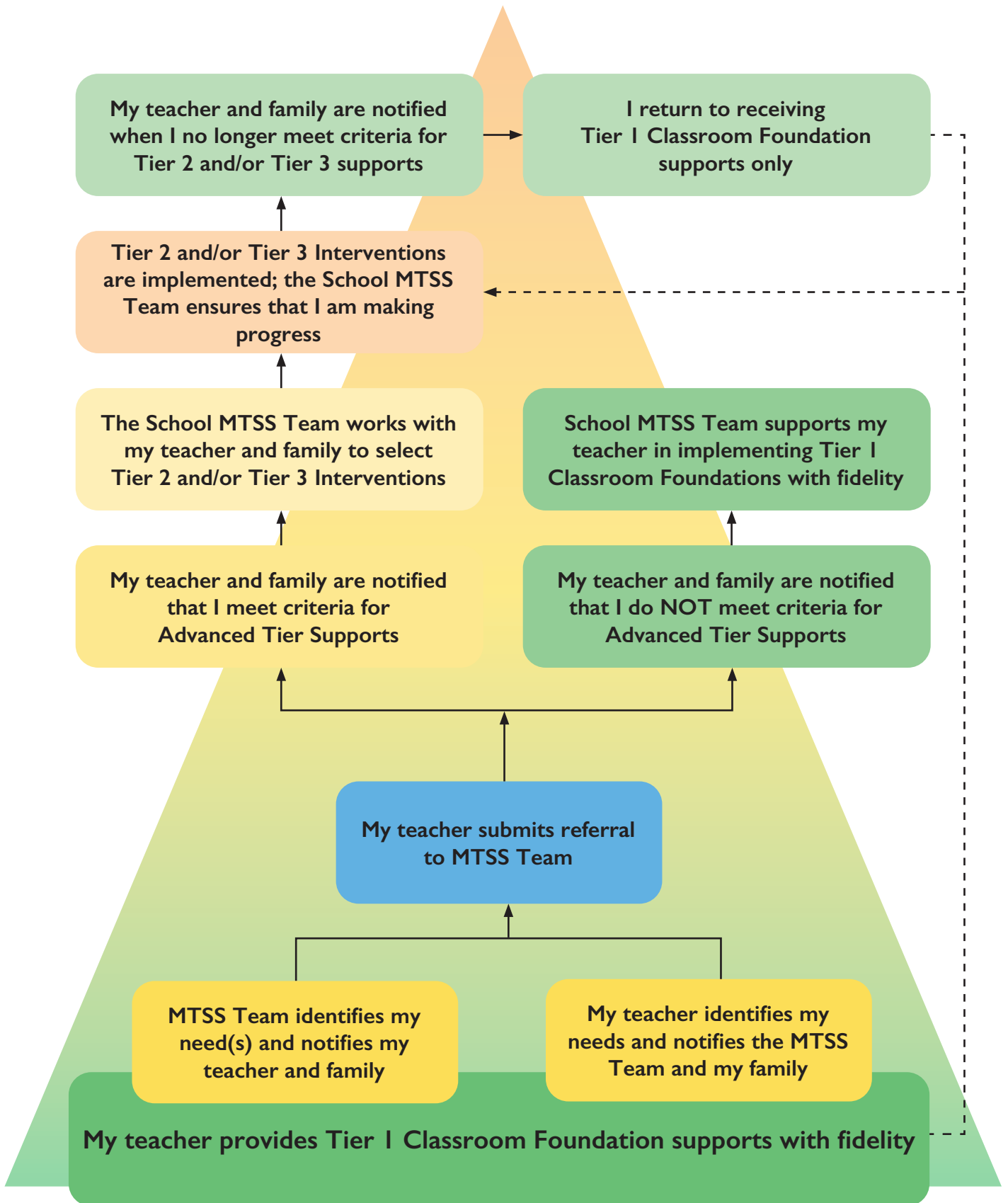
How I'll know I feel these things:

- My attendance data
- My school climate data
- My family is engaged and participates as much as possible
- My academic outcomes show that I am on track



MTSS FLOWCHART

Student Experience







Nevada Department
of Education

Nevada Ready!



**Nevada Department of
Health and Human Services**

DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE FINANCING AND POLICY

<https://www.unr.edu/nced/projects/nvpbista>
<https://doe.nv.gov/SafeRespectfulLearning/MTSS/>