



Guidance Manual for Problem Solving Teams

Alabama State Department of Education • Office of Student Learning
Instructional Services • Multi-Tier Systems of Support



Preface

This resource document serves as a guide for Alabama schools in the implementation of Problem-Solving Teams (PST) using the Response to Instruction (RTI) and Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) models under the Alabama Multi-Tier System of Supports (AL-MTSS) framework. This document guidance provides a framework for school building leadership to improve instruction and intervention at all tiers of instruction for Every Child. Every Chance. Every Day. All educators should be familiar with the contents found within.

This manual provides educators and educational leadership with:

- Overview of AL-MTSS and its relationship to PST
- Description of RTI and PBS models
- Protocols for implementation of the essential elements within the AL-MTSS framework
- Guiding questions, example accommodations, interventions to ensure access for all
- Vignettes of PST as a Professional Learning Community (PLC)

This manual is not intended to be an exhaustive compendium of strategies for the many different types of problems that may arise during the PST process.

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Creation of this document would not have been possible without the support, expertise, and sharing of resources from the Mississippi State Department of Education and the Michigan State Department of Education. The pioneering work in MTSS is an inspiration to us all.

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Referral to the Problem-Solving Team

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Revision History

Every change to the document, subsequent to initial publication April 2023, must be recorded in the Revision History Chart below. There are no exceptions.

Date	Version	Description	Approver
04/01/2023	1	PST Guidance Manual	Sean Stevens
08/25/2025	2	Adoption of additional EL tier I tools; update to state pedagogical language	Sean Stevens

Alabama Achieves

Every Child. Every Chance. Every Day. These six words encapsulate the beliefs and ideals that drive Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)'s initiatives and strategies to ensure Alabama effectively achieves its educational goals and that students are truly prepared for the workforce. Alabama Achieves, Alabama's Strategic Plan, addresses five overarching strategic priorities:

- Academic Growth and Achievement
- College, Career, and Workforce Readiness
- Safe and Supportive Learning Environments
- Highly Effective Educators
- Customer-Friendly Services

Introduction

The Guidance Manual for Problem-Solving Teams provides guidance in the identification of student needs and the alignment of intervention and support through problem-solving teams (PST). The ALSDE believes all students require access to opportunities for high-quality Tier I instruction from highly qualified educators utilizing evidence-based, data-driven curriculum and strategies. Some students need additional support and remediation to master the standards and expectations presented by Tier I Instruction. The purpose of AL-MTSS is to assist in the alignment of all available supports to ensure every child receives every chance to thrive every day. AL-MTSS incorporates the Response to Instruction (RTI) and Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) models and is comprised of five essential elements: data-based decision making, team-driven leadership, safe and supportive learning environments, engaged stakeholders, and PK-12 evidence-based instructional strategies. A system of support, driven by the guidance of the grade level and/or content area professional learning communities (PLCs) begins with examination and improvement of Tier I instruction. During grade level or content area PLC meetings, members present formative, summative, and observational data to identify areas of additional instructional need and support to be delivered by Tier II intervention. It is then the goal of Tier III support to provide additional intensive and targeted remediation, in the rare instance that Tier I and Tier II strategies are unsuccessful. The problem-solving team (PST) is essential for ensuring all student needs identified by the PLC are served. The focus of the grade level or content area PLC is to improve educational outcomes at Tier I and Tier II, and the focus problem-solving team PLC is to identify Tier III support and ensure that support is delivered; however, the work should be collaborative and complimentary. The purpose of the PST is to address barriers to optimal learning and growth for students by identifying the problems that emerge as interferences to student success, then developing solutions for those interferences. Administrative leadership presence and guidance within the grade level/content area and PST PLCs are required for successful implementation.

The Guidance Manual for Problem-Solving Teams is organized using the components of the AL-MTSS Framework, enhanced by the RTI and PBS models as an interconnected system that fosters

student success. Each section of the PST manual contains examples that can be found in the appendix. The digital version includes active hyperlinks allowing for ease of movement among sections and access to helpful outside resources. The print version provides a list of these resources with references. The forms required for documentation of PST are not a component of the guidance manual but can be found online in the ALSDE PST Dashboard.

Overview and Description of AL-MTSS

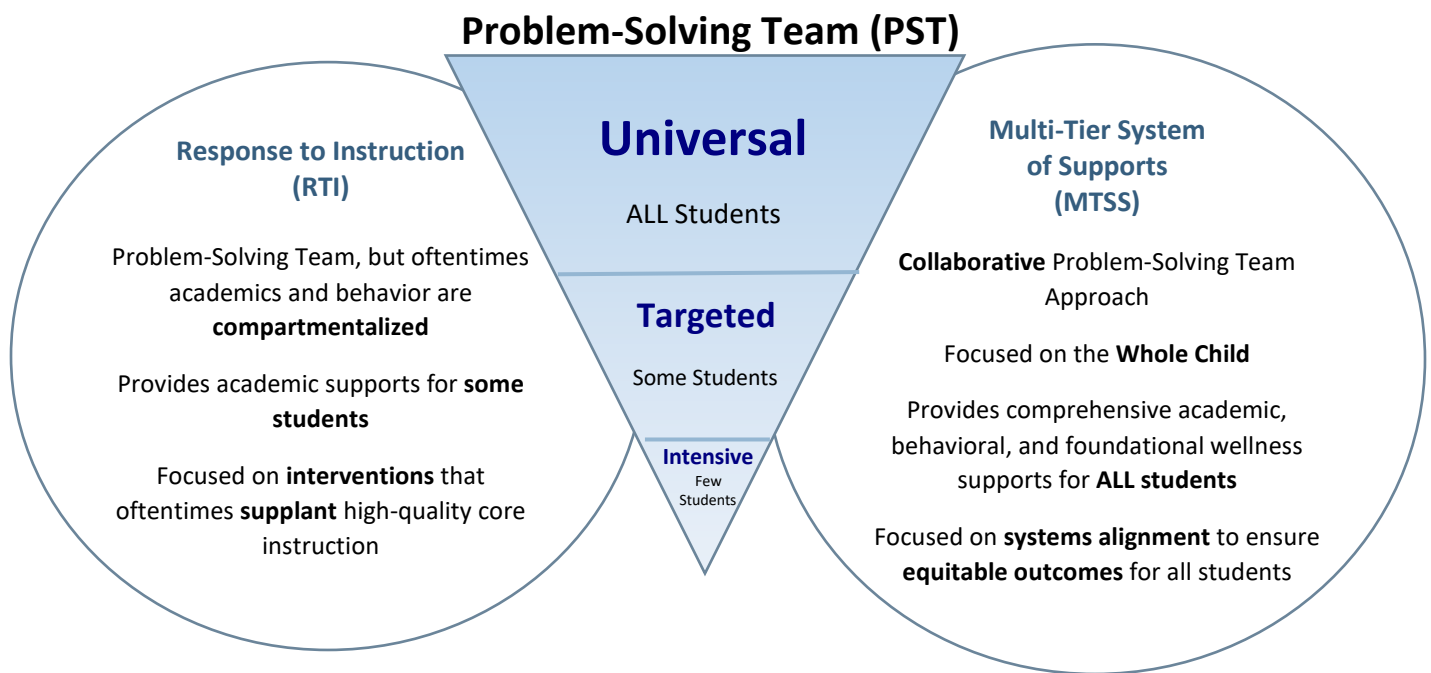
AL-MTSS is a comprehensive framework comprised of a collection of evidence-based strategies designed to meet the individual needs and strengths of the whole child. AL-MTSS, aligned to the Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan, purposefully interconnects the academic, behavioral, physical, mental health and wellness, and other foundational needs to address all components of students' lives which contribute to their performance in school. AL-MTSS uses a proactive, team-driven approach that engages all stakeholders to ensure equitable access to opportunities that will improve outcomes for every Alabama child.

The purpose of AL-MTSS is to implement and sustain a continuum of evidence-based practices, instruction, supports, and intervention aligned with the individualized needs of students while eliminating barriers to help all students find success in academic and nonacademic settings. The AL-MTSS Framework provides schools and districts with efficient means to analyze data and organize resources. Formative and summative data is utilized and analyzed throughout the framework to ensure equitable and personalized supports that assist all students along their educational journey.

AL-MTSS is based on a growth mindset and utilizes a proactive approach to ensure all learners experience quality education designed to expand their potential. Therefore, it is not just a framework for addressing remedial needs but also for extending the strengths of gifted and talented learners.

AL-MTSS is not a replacement for RTI but has a much broader scope and forward-looking focus in providing proactive supports within the tiered model. AL-MTSS strives to target the system of supports at all levels in addressing the physical and mental health, life skills, behavioral, and academic needs of all students; it also works to improve school culture, educator professional development, and family and community engagement. This approach is a cooperative effort among all stakeholder groups.

Key Differences Between Alabama Response to Instruction (RTI) and Alabama Multi-Tier System of Supports (AL-MTSS)



Successful implementation of the AL-MTSS framework strengthened by the support of PST and PBS requires:

- A collective responsibility of educators, families, and community for ensuring growth and success for all learners.
- A proactive approach to ensure every learner experiences a quality education designed to expand a learner's potential.
- A systemic approach to improving instruction and support at all levels.
- An alignment with the school district's continuous and ongoing improvement efforts.

AL-MTSS is a method of organization which ensures optimal educational outcomes for students PK-12. It aligns the entire system of supports, encompasses Response to Instruction (RTI) and Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), and ensures effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed and evidence-based. In Alabama, districts and schools will utilize the cohesive framework, AL-MTSS, to align current resources and initiatives to meet the academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness needs of ALL students, including individuals exhibiting characteristics or dyslexia, individuals involved in the juvenile justice system, and special populations as defined by ESSA:

- Individuals with disabilities (IDEA);
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults;

- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
- Single parents, including single pregnant women;
- Migrant workers;
- Out-of-workforce individuals;
- English Learners (EL);
- Homeless individuals;
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and
- Youth with parents on active duty in the armed forces.

Tiered Continuum of Supports

All students must have equitable access to a tiered continuum of supports, regardless of their achievement level. Effective instruction and meaningful interactions, such as positive student-teacher relationships, are key elements across all tiers. A layered continuum of supports ensures that all students receive equitable access to foundational wellness, behavioral, and academic supports. These supports must be culturally and linguistically responsive, developmentally appropriate, and matched to individual student needs. Each layer of support increases in intensity from universal (ALL students) to targeted (SOME students) to the most intensive supports (FEW students).

This systematic, tiered model approach supports all learners through the selection of evidence-based instructional practices and interventions in response to both academic and behavioral needs based on universal screening methods for early identification. The system includes ongoing progress monitoring of the effectiveness of instruction to ensure that all Alabama students graduate from high school ready for college or a career.

The purpose of a tiered system of support is to provide a framework for an adaptive, responsive continuum of integrated supports at varied levels of intensity. Supports are designed to address a student's academic, physical, social, behavioral, and essential life skills needs by mitigating barriers to learning and development both in and outside the classroom setting.

No students should be labeled by intervention tiers. For example, a student is not a "Tier II student" but a student requiring Tier II support in a specific skill/content area(s). In addition, it is important to remember when a student receives interventions in Tier II, they should not replace Tier I supports. These supports build upon one another. Moreover, students can move fluidly through Tier I, II, and III supports as needed. Consider:

- If data suggests that students are not meeting the standards when receiving Tier I instruction, what additional support(s) may they need?
- If students significantly exceed the standards when receiving Tier I instruction, what Tier II supports may be necessary to optimize, challenge, and promote growth?
- Students may need Tier II support in one area (e.g., math standards) but may only need Tier I support in another area (e.g., relationship-building).

All students must have access to supports when they need them. In addition, obtaining services at one point does not mean that students will always need that level of support. The AL-MTSS process is not always linear because it is centered around solving problems. When data suggests that students require intensive supports for remediation or enrichment, they will move throughout the tiers based on that need. Movement among the three tiers is fluid and is not determined or defined by specific designations, such as diagnosed disabilities. Instead, movement is supported by data from universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, and how a student responds to one level of intervention.

Tier I Supports: Core Instruction and Universal Support

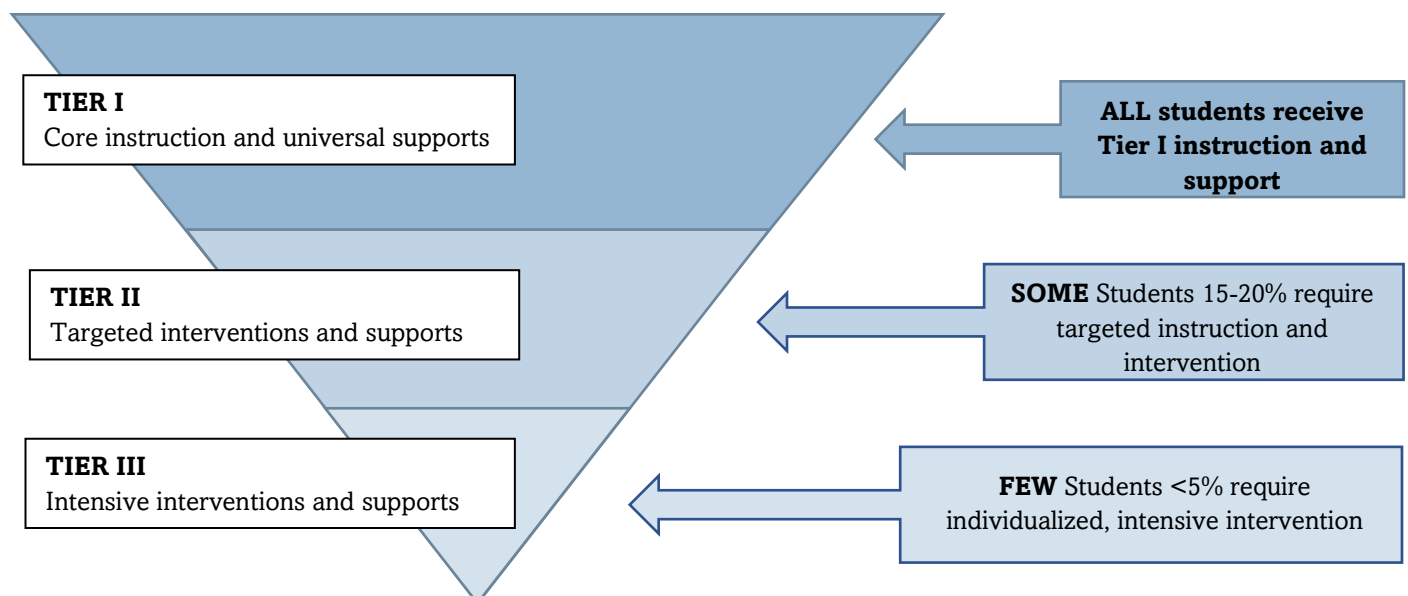
Tier I is the core instruction and universal support for all students and consists of high-quality, standards-based instruction in the classroom setting by highly qualified personnel using evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies differentiated to meet every student's needs. Data from screening and progress monitoring are used to differentiate instruction within Tier I, which occurs in whole group, small group, and individual settings. Tier I must be considered the key component in successful tiered instruction.

Tier II Supports: Targeted Support and **Intervention**

Tier II is targeted support and intervention that consists of supplemental academic and behavioral supports provided in addition to the high-quality core instruction students receive with their peers. These supports are provided in small groups and include additional opportunities to practice necessary skills for core instruction or strategies for enrichment. Tier II support provides opportunities for frequent progress monitoring so that interventions may be adjusted based on student need.

Tier III Supports: Intensive Support and Intervention

Tier III is the most intensive level of support and consists of targeted, explicit instruction and intervention specifically designed to meet the individual academic and behavioral needs of students. Results of universal screeners or observation of consistent deficiencies in prerequisite foundational skills indicate the potential need for Tier III intervention, and progress monitoring should continue so that adjustments can be made for interventions. Tier III supports, and interventions must not supplant core instruction and universal supports; students must continue to receive high-quality, core instruction with their peers. Tier III is not synonymous with special education, but consists of explicit, focused interventions that occur individually or in very small groups.



Essential Elements of AL-MTSS

The essential elements of AL-MTSS become the drivers of successful problem-solving implementation because they guide education organizations at all levels in ensuring the academic achievement and success of every child, every chance, every day.

- *Team-Driven Leadership*

When leadership responsibilities are shared, school decision making becomes more collaborative, comprehensive, and self-reflective because more people are committed to every child's success. This practice fosters personal investment and creates a shared responsibility for the performance and results of a school.

- *Data-Based Decision Making*

An ongoing process of gathering and analyzing different types and multiple sources of data is utilized to make decisions needed toward improving the outcomes for all students.

- *Safe and Supportive Learning Environment*

Every student needs and deserves a safe, supportive, and healthy learning environment in which they feel respected and free from physical harm, intimidation, harassment, and bullying. These environments eliminate barriers to teaching and learning.

- *PK-12 Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies*

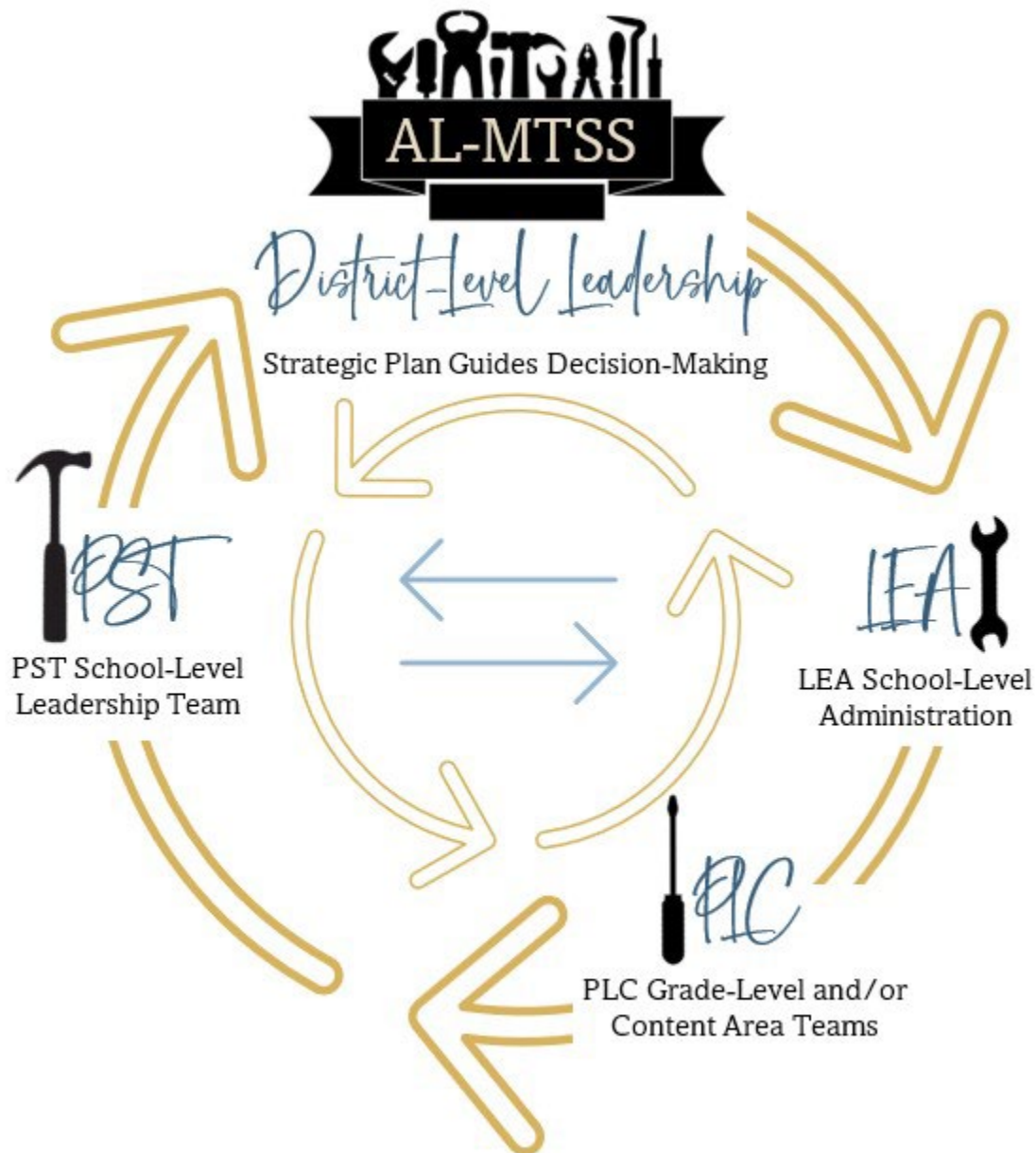
Educators must understand the gap between current practices and prioritized outcomes, work to identify the practices that show a positive impact on student outcome goals, match resources to student need, and then measure formatively and summatively for success.

- *Engaged Stakeholders*

Engaged stakeholders actively work to improve educational excellence and equity, particularly regarding the most vulnerable students and families.



Team-Driven Leadership



Effective leadership is essential for impacting student success. Within AL-MTSS, shared leadership allows for distribution of responsibilities and promotes shared decision-making among a diverse group of individuals with a common vision and common purpose to achieve desired outcomes. For successful implementation of AL-MTSS it is critical to establish leadership teams at:

- District level
- School level

- Grade-level and/or Content area PLC
- PST PLC

The function of these teams is to ensure effective implementation throughout districts, schools, classrooms, and communities through a data-based problem-solving and decision-making process. Leadership teams should hold regularly scheduled meetings to engage in on-going study and analysis of data in order to improve instruction, intervention, and assessment. Other key leadership team responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Making data-informed decisions
- Engaging all stakeholders in the problem-solving process
- Creating an engaging and safe learning environment
- Improving outcomes through collaboration and communication
- Allocating and distributing available resources
- Coordinating and providing professional development
- Supporting fidelity and sustainability

As the instructional leader, the building administrator has the responsibility to establish, oversee, and participate in all aspects of team-driven leadership within the school.

Leadership Teams within the AL-MTSS Framework

When leadership responsibilities are shared, the result is a more collaborative, comprehensive, and self-reflective decision-making process because more people are committed to Every Child. Every Chance. Every Day. Decisions regarding instruction and intervention should be made by a diverse group of educators who share a common goal. This practice fosters personal investment and creates a shared responsibility for the performance and results of a school.

AL-MTSS focuses on highly effective teams and shared leadership on multiple levels. At the district level, district leadership:

- Provides guidance and support to building leadership regarding the AL-MTSS framework and ensures processes are aligned to the district mission and vision among all schools in the district.
- Meets quarterly to review district-wide and school-wide data in all areas of AL-MTSS to determine how best to support schools.

At the school level, an instructional leader:

- Creates an environment of shared leadership that promotes shared decision-making.
- Ensures school-wide expectations, routines, and procedures are aligned to the AL-MTSS framework and the district mission and vision.

- Establishes a yearly calendar with structures in place to allow for needed Grade Level/Content Area and PST PLC meetings and creates a schedule that allows appropriate individuals to attend.
- Participates in monthly data analysis that evaluates programs and creates action plans for the school.
- Oversees and attends Grade Level/Content Area and PST PLCs as listed in the following chart:

PLC Duties within the AL-MTSS Framework	
PLC	Primary Function related to PST
Grade Level/ Content Area PLC	• Applies the expectations, routines and procedures for AL-MTSS framework established by the school leadership team within grade level/content area PLC. • Meets weekly: ○ Every other week to focus on Tier I instruction that meets the needs of all students ○ Every other week to focus on Tier II instructional supports that target the needs of students who are not successful with Tier I instruction (analyze data, identify students, target need, monitor progress, evaluate and adjust as needed) ○ These are embedded, regular PLC meetings that should already be in place and not additional meetings. Schedule considerations may be needed to ensure there is a structure in place for Tier I and Tier II discussions.
PST PLC	• Applies the expectations, routines, and procedures for AL-MTSS framework established by the school leadership team within PST PLC • Meets monthly with a focus on Tier III instructional supports (target specific students whose needs were not met using Tier II instructional support provided by Grade Level/Content Area PLC)

PLC Members

Team membership can change based on the needs of the school, grade level, or individual students and can include the following roles:

Grade Level/Content Area PLC (Led by Instructional Leader)	PST PLC (Led by Instructional Leader)
Administrator Grade-level/Core content specific teachers Elective teacher(s) Support staff	Administrator School Counselor Teachers (General & Special Education) Intervention staff Parent Student
Additional team members may include those who provide other related services such as: Gifted Teacher, Physical/Occupational/Speech/Dyslexia Therapist, Mental Health Professional, District Office Personnel, Social Worker, Behavior Specialist, English Learner Coordinator/Teacher, School Nurse, and representatives from Child Nutrition Program, Transportation, and community outreach members.	

PST Roles & Responsibilities within the AL-MTSS Framework

For all teams to function effectively, it is important to assign individuals roles and responsibilities for each meeting. Based on the team dynamic and function, roles may change every meeting or be assigned indefinitely to each specific person. Administrators and classroom teachers are the primary participants in the grade level/content area PLC meetings; however, additional team members listed below may also provide valuable input to the meetings. The suggested roles and responsibilities of members for problem-solving supports within the AL-MTSS framework are listed below:

AL-MTSS Roles and Responsibilities

School Social Worker/Mental Health Coordinator

Attend AL-MTSS PST PLC meetings

Attend Grade Level/Content Area PLC meetings when needed

Assist with setting up transportation and/or interpreters for parents to attend meetings when needed

Call or meet with parents to complete forms

Assist with completing observations of students

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

School Nurse

Join the AL-MTSS PST PLC when health related issues regarding individual students are a concern

Completes hearing and vision screenings for students when requested

Join the AL-MTSS PST PLC when a student with health-related issues is being considered for Section 504 eligibility

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

Special Education Case Manager

Serve on AL-MTSS PST PLC as needed

May assist in conducting observations for students as time permits

May be involved at AL-MTSS PST PLC meeting when a student is being considered for Special Education referral as time permits

Consult on a regular basis with school psychologist/psychometrist about progress monitoring

Perform educational testing as requested

Stay current on norms and methods of comparing student progress

Provide support to parents who have concerns or who are requesting evaluations

May assist with plan to administer universal and targeted screening as time permits

Provide support in interpreting and utilizing universal or targeted screening data

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

Transportation Manager/ Child Nutrition Manager

Serve on AL-MTSS PST PLC as needed

May assist with student problem solving with transportation or nutritional needs

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

AL-MTSS Roles and Responsibilities

Administrator

Lead PST PLC meetings for school-based AL-MTSS guidance and implementation

Facilitate Grade-level/Content PLC meetings to lead discussions regarding curriculum, instruction and problem solving

Secure professional development opportunities to build capacity with staff regarding the fundamentals of AL-MTSS.

Oversee the integrity of AL-MTSS within the school

Ensure the framework is in place for all tiers of instruction

Lead in establishing the school's plan to administer universal and targeted screening

Ensure all paperwork and information adheres to federal and state guidelines

Identify PST members and their roles and responsibilities

Title I Teacher/Interventionist/Classroom Teacher(s)/Instructional Coaches/ELL/SLP

Attend AL-MTSS PST PLC meetings as well as Grade level/Content PLC when needed

Participate in the problem-solving process regarding assessment and instruction for core and risk systems.

Assist with the plan to administer universal and targeted screening as needed

Deliver and monitor well defined core academic and behavior instruction

Provide and monitor well defined interventions to students indicating academic or behavior risk

Communicate with teachers, school psychologist/psychometrist, parents etc. about student progress

Help in completing Special Education paperwork and attend meetings as needed

Provide support regarding instructional decisions, monitoring progress, data analysis, and problem-solving practices at teacher team as well as AL-MTSS PST PLC meetings

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

AL-MTSS PST PLC Coordinator

Appointed by the administrator to coordinate AL-MTSS PST PLC and individual problem-solving team efforts within the school

Creating an agenda and schedule for each meeting with guidance from the administrator

Execute the plan to administer universal and targeted screening

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

Maintain all paperwork: up-to-date, well-organized, available for personnel

School Psychologist/Psychometrist

Provide support regarding instructional decisions, monitoring progress, data analysis, and problem-solving practices at AL-MTSS PST PLC and Grade level/Content PLC meetings

Conduct classroom observations when necessary

Help teams analyze student and group data

Advise teams in setting individual goals (academic and behavioral) for students as needed

Analyze progress monitoring data for students receiving individual problem-solving

Lead AL-MTSS PST PLC through the functional behavior assessment process when students show the need for intensive behavior support as needed

Consult with interventionists regarding appropriate interventions

Serve as a member of the IEP team during referrals to assist in summarizing and analyzing the data collected during the AL-MTSS process

Ensure that state guidelines are followed for the AL-MTSS process

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

School Counselor

Attend AL-MTSS PST PLC meetings as well as Grade level/Content PLC meetings when needed

Assist with completing observations of students

Conduct interviews of students, teachers, parents, etc. as needed

Assist with designing and implementing behavior plans

Contribute suggestions for individual student problem solving

**Supporting Roles
within PST
Meetings**

Meeting Facilitator

Facilitate and focus meetings

Maintain a collaborative atmosphere

Resolve conflicts

Recorder

Complete implementation plan

Remind team about the implementation plan components

Record meeting minutes

Timekeeper

Monitor meeting time and agenda

Remind team of time limits

Data-Based Decision Making

Data-based problem-solving and decision-making are critical components of AL-MTSS as they drive instruction and intervention. District and school staff should collaborate to create an integrated data collection system consisting of academic and behavioral data such as results of state assessments, universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, formative and summative assessments, attendance, office discipline referrals, and observations provided by school personnel as well as parents/guardians. Data should be collected and analyzed on ALL students, of all subgroups, throughout the year.

Five Purposes of AL-MTSS

Assessment

Diagnostic

Determine specific area(s) of misunderstanding or weakness.

Universal Screeners

Inform overall strength of core instruction; identify individual students' skill deficits.

Progress Monitoring

Monitor student growth progress toward a learning goal(s).

Standardized Assessments

Determine if grade-level outcomes meet the standard proficiency and growth.



Classroom

Formative/Summative

Determine effectiveness in specific areas of core instruction.

Four-Step Problem-Solving Process

The following four-step problem-solving process allows teams to determine appropriate interventions within a three-tiered instructional model to provide for the academic and behavioral needs of all students. Each step of the process is necessary for ensuring that students are prescribed the right interventions at the right time, allowing for increased student outcomes.

Step 1- Define the Problem or Goal

Ask, "What specifically do we want the student(s) to know and be able to do?" In the area of academics, what we expect students to know and do is driven by the *Alabama Courses of Study*, which guide instruction at each grade and relevant content area. In the area of behavior what we expect students to know and do is guided by district and school-wide policies and procedures, age-appropriate student engagement behaviors, and the pro-social behaviors that support a positive school climate.

Step 2- Analyze the Problem

The analysis phase, often referred to as problem analysis, gap analysis, or root cause analysis, is essential. Effective analysis provides the foundation for the rest of the data-based decision-making process. The goal of this analysis is to answer the questions:

- Why is the gap occurring?
 - Why is the student not achieving the desired academic or behavioral outcomes?
 - What are the possible barriers to the student doing and/or knowing what is expected?
- During this analysis, the team uses data to generate hypotheses, or possible root causes, that are grounded in evidence. Data is used to either confirm or disprove the hypotheses.

Step 3- Develop, Implement, and Communicate the Plan

Once the problem/deficit area is confirmed, the team selects the intervention that is best matched to the student's needs. During this step of the process, the team develops a plan to enable the individual student to reach the goal. Details are essential as the team must outline the specifics of the plan. Strategies and instruction included in the plan should be clearly stated (what, who, when, where, how long). The selected interventions must be evidence-based and carried out with integrity.

Once the plan has been implemented, data collection (progress monitoring at agreed upon interval) and fidelity checks begin. Progress monitoring data should directly reflect the target deficit area. Clear communication should occur to all stakeholders, including parents, at all stages of the plan.

Step 4- Evaluate the Plan

How has the student responded to our plan? The data-based decision-making process requires the team to use data gathered from progress monitoring and other sources, as described above, to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. Changes to the plan may occur as student outcomes are continually monitored. As in Step 3, clear communication should occur to all stakeholders, including parents, at all stages of the plan.



A Good Plan:

- Explicitly states what will be taught (the focus of core instruction or student-specific intervention)
- Focuses on measurable objectives
- Defines specifically who is responsible for each action and identifies a timeline
- Describes a procedure for measuring and monitoring the effects of the intervention; identifies a baseline and a target goal
- Describes a plan for monitoring and ensuring fidelity
- Identifies resources available for implementation including key personnel
- Is communicated to all stakeholders

The calendar below provides a month-by-month list, although not exhaustive, of activities that should occur when considering AL-MTSS and PST. The calendar is cyclical in nature and planning for the subsequent school year should begin no later than April of each year, but in some cases, especially in the secondary setting, planning for the subsequent year often begins as early as January.

Month-by-Month Guide to Successful PST through the AL-MTSS Framework	
April 	Leadership Team Meets to <i>Create</i> the Master Schedule and Calendar for the Subsequent Year ☐ Build in times for collaboration at and across grade levels and subject areas ☐ Build in times for interventions -especially at the secondary level ☐ Create opportunities for collaborative PLC and PST meetings ☐ Disseminate to faculty/staff for input ☐ Identify universal screeners and plans for progress monitoring
May 	☐ Conduct transition meetings with teachers, students, and parents for incoming and outgoing student populations (consider feeder patterns) ☐ Conduct transition activities for incoming and outgoing students
June 	☐ Meet with stakeholder groups to begin planning for next year
July 	Leadership Team Meets to <i>Finalize</i> Master Schedule and Calendar for the Subsequent Year ☐ Review incoming student data -is there enough time and opportunity in the schedule to meet RTI needs ☐ Ensure that significant data dates are also on the master schedule ie: PLC mtgs, PST mtgs, grades due, progress reports and report cards ☐ Consider available times for specialists ☐ Training for faculty- universal screeners, progress monitoring tools, procedures

August 	☐ Review any additional data on students who entered the year on Tier II or Tier III ☐ Review master schedule- balance classes, ensure time is built in to meet RTI needs ☐ Develop responsive intervention schedule ☐ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting ☐ Communicate with parents of students identified for services and interventions ☐ Administer Fall benchmark (universal screener) to collect baseline student data
September 	☐ Identify students struggling academically, with multiple discipline referrals, poor attendance- should be discussed and provided interventions ☐ Students begin documented intervention time ☐ Progress monitoring and update data documents ☐ Weekly PLC meetings monthly PST meeting- think about upcoming grades reports ☐ Walk-throughs and observations ☐ Plan and prepare for 1st nine weeks academic and behavior recognitions
October 	☐ Review student data from first 8-9 weeks or early term grades to make decisions about the success of current interventions (Fall benchmark, academic, discipline, behavior, attendance) ☐ Tier I classroom observations- data collected compared to early reports on intervention progress- Remember: students receiving interventions ALSO receive daily high-quality Tier I instruction for most of their day ☐ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- provide work samples, evidence, documentation, and updated student profile sheets (ALA & ANA) ☐ Communicate student's progress toward goals to parents/guardians
November 	☐ Progress monitoring and update data documents ☐ Review report card grades, comments, parent communication/concerns and include specialists as necessary to track individual student progress towards goals ☐ Consider the effectiveness of current interventions given most recent data ☐ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- think about upcoming grades reports
December 	☐ Administer mid-year benchmark (universal screener) ☐ Consider effectiveness of current master schedule in meeting identified students' needs- do instructional changes need to be made ☐ Think about student growth and movement- consider if new students are being identified and if current population requiring strategic and intensive interventions is decreasing ☐ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting ☐ Plan mid-year academic and behavior recognitions
January 	☐ Review mid-year benchmark data ☐ Progress monitoring and update data documents ☐ Review report card grades, comments, parent communication/concerns; include specialists as necessary to track individual student progress towards goals- possible retention notices sent home ☐ Consider the effectiveness of current interventions given most recent data ☐ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- consider upcoming grades reports

February 	❑ Tier I classroom observations- data collected compared to early reports on intervention progress- Remember: students receiving interventions ALSO receive daily high-quality Tier I instruction for most of their day ❑ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- provide work samples, evidence, documentation, and updated student profile sheets (ALA & ANA) ❑ Communicate student's progress toward goals to parents/guardians
March 	❑ Review student data from first 8-9 weeks or early term grades to make decisions about the success of current interventions (academic, discipline, behavior, attendance) ❑ Progress monitoring and update data documents ❑ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting ❑ Plan and prepare for 3rd nine weeks academic and behavior recognitions
April 	❑ Review report card grades, comments, parent communication/concerns and include specialists as necessary to track individual student progress towards goals ❑ Consider the effectiveness of current interventions given most recent data ❑ Prepare for end-of-year benchmark and standardized testing ❑ Communicate testing needs and goals with parents for support ❑ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- begin identifying students for summer programs ❑ Plan for summer programs (Literacy Camp, Math Camp, Summer School) Leadership Team Meets to Create the Master Schedule and Calendar for the Subsequent Year
May 	❑ Weekly PLC meetings, monthly PST meeting- provide work samples, evidence, documentation, and updated student profile sheets (ALA & ANA) ❑ Examine annual actual versus projected growth for students in Tier II and Tier III ❑ Conduct transition meetings with teachers, students, and parents for incoming and outgoing student populations (consider feeder patterns) ❑ Conduct transition activities for incoming and outgoing students ❑ End-of-Year benchmark (universal screener) ❑ Finalize plans for summer programs (Literacy Camp, Math Camp, Summer School)

Data Meeting Guidance

Establish a plan for data analysis and assessment at the district, school, and grade level. Each of these levels plays an essential role in data analysis, with recommended best practices for meetings at each level including:

- Establish dedicated, protected time for meeting as a professional learning community (PLC)
- Make data-based decisions using the four-step problem-solving process
- Use a systems approach model to address whole child needs
- Communicate with all stakeholders

PLC	Primary Purpose related to PST
Grade Level/ Content Area PLC (Tier I)	• Weekly data meeting/planning meeting • Monthly focus • Review progress monitoring • Review work samples
Grade Level/ Content Area PLC (Tier II)	• Meet at least two times a month • Grade level/Content area PLC members plus any additional stakeholders (EL, SPED, etc.) • Run concurrent with grade level/content area PLC
PST PLC	• Monthly meeting • Review and analyze data for students referred • Include administrator, PST coordinator, counselor, Speech-Language Pathologist, mental health coordinator, English language learner support, behavior interventionist, general education teacher, see PST Roles and Responsibilities

Data Meeting Format

In addition to creating a yearly calendar, each PLC needs a defined purpose and protocol for all meetings. Each PLC needs a dedicated and protected time to meet. A suggested framework for each meeting type is listed below.

Grade Level/Content Area PLC at Tier I	
Purpose	Lesson planning, data-based problem solving
Members	Administrator, grade level/content area staff, special education case manager, instructional coach
Review	Literacy, numeracy, behavioral, foundational wellness data
Monthly Focus	Week 1- Core academic/behavioral data Week 2- Core and supplemental data (Tier II) Week 3- Core academic/behavioral data Week 4- Core and supplemental data (Tier II)
Scheduling	Dedicated and protected time each week
Best Practices	Assign roles including timekeeper, notetaker (PST Documentation); have agenda prior to meeting; ensure work samples are reviewed

Within this Grade Level/Content Area PLC, Tier II data is reviewed and discussed every other week. The Grade Level/Content Area PLC utilizes evidence-based strategies for intervention and analyzes the work samples to discuss the effectiveness of the interventions. Based on the success of the interventions, this team determines which students need to be elevated to the school's PST PLC for additional support.

Grade Level/Content Area PLC at Tier II	
Purpose	Data-based problem solving
Members	Administrator, grade level/content area staff, instructional coach, counselor, Speech-Language Pathologist, mental health coordinator, behavior analyst, etc.
Review	Literacy, numeracy, behavioral, foundational wellness data
Scheduling	Dedicated and protected time at least two times a month; held within grade level/content area meetings
Best Practices	Ensure work samples are reviewed; select evidence-based strategies for intervention; review attendance, discipline, and health records; check vision and hearing; discuss action successes, obstacles, etc.

Within the school, a Problem-Solving Team is also established. This team meets monthly to review the data provided by the grade level/content area PLC for students whose needs are not being met by the grade level/content interventions.

PST PLC at Tier III	
Purpose	Data-based problem solving for individual students
Members	Administrator, PST PLC coordinator, instructional coach, counselor, Speech-Language Pathologist, mental health coordinator, behavior analyst, attendance officer, etc.
Review	Literacy, numeracy, behavioral, foundational wellness data
Scheduling	Dedicated and protected time at least one time a month
Best Practices	Ensure work samples are reviewed; select evidence-based strategies for intervention; determine intervention change; communicate with parents; consider student needs and decisions; share action plan with PLCs. Invite parents and students as appropriate.

Data Meeting Requirements

Alabama Literacy Act (ALA)

The Alabama Literacy Act, 2019, was established to improve the reading skills of all public-school students in early literacy so that every student is reading at or above grade-level by the end of third grade. Alabama's RTI Model, as listed in The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide, in conjunction with the Alabama Reading Initiative Dyslexia Resource Guide require:

- Universal Screening for ALL Students (K-3 Early Years Reading Assessments)

- Based on the results of the reading assessment, each K-3 student who exhibits a reading deficiency or characteristics of dyslexia shall be provided an appropriate dyslexia specific reading intervention program to address his or her specific deficiencies
- Provides daily, targeted, small group reading interventions based on student areas of need (Phonological awareness, Phonics (including decoding and encoding), Sight words, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension)
- Dyslexia-Specific Screening for Identified Students
 - Students in grades K-3 will have a Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP) developed by the school team that includes a parent or guardian, while
 - Students in grades 4-12 will have a dyslexia services plan developed by the Problem-Solving Team (PST).
- Tier I Instruction for ALL Students
- Tier II Intervention for SOME students (targets deficit grade-level skills)
- Tier III Intervention for SOME students (targets deficit foundational reading/readiness skills)

Alabama Numeracy Act (ANA)

The Alabama Numeracy Act, 2022, was enacted to implement steps to improve mathematics proficiency of public-school students in grades K-5 and to ensure that those students are mathematically proficient at or above grade level by the end of fifth grade.

A K-5 student who exhibits a mathematics deficiency based on an approved screener assessment, diagnostic assessment, benchmark assessment, or classroom formative assessment shall receive immediate mathematics intervention.

The mathematics teacher of the student receiving mathematics intervention shall prepare reports that coincide with grading periods and a comprehensive end of the year report detailing any mathematics intervention provided. Reports shall be provided to the parent or legal guardian of the student, and his or her mathematics teacher for the immediately succeeding school year, and shall include all the following:

- The name of the student
- The name of the teacher providing intervention
- Mathematics deficiencies identified from a screener, diagnostic, or formative assessment, or any of them.
- Student growth
- Mathematics strengths of the student.

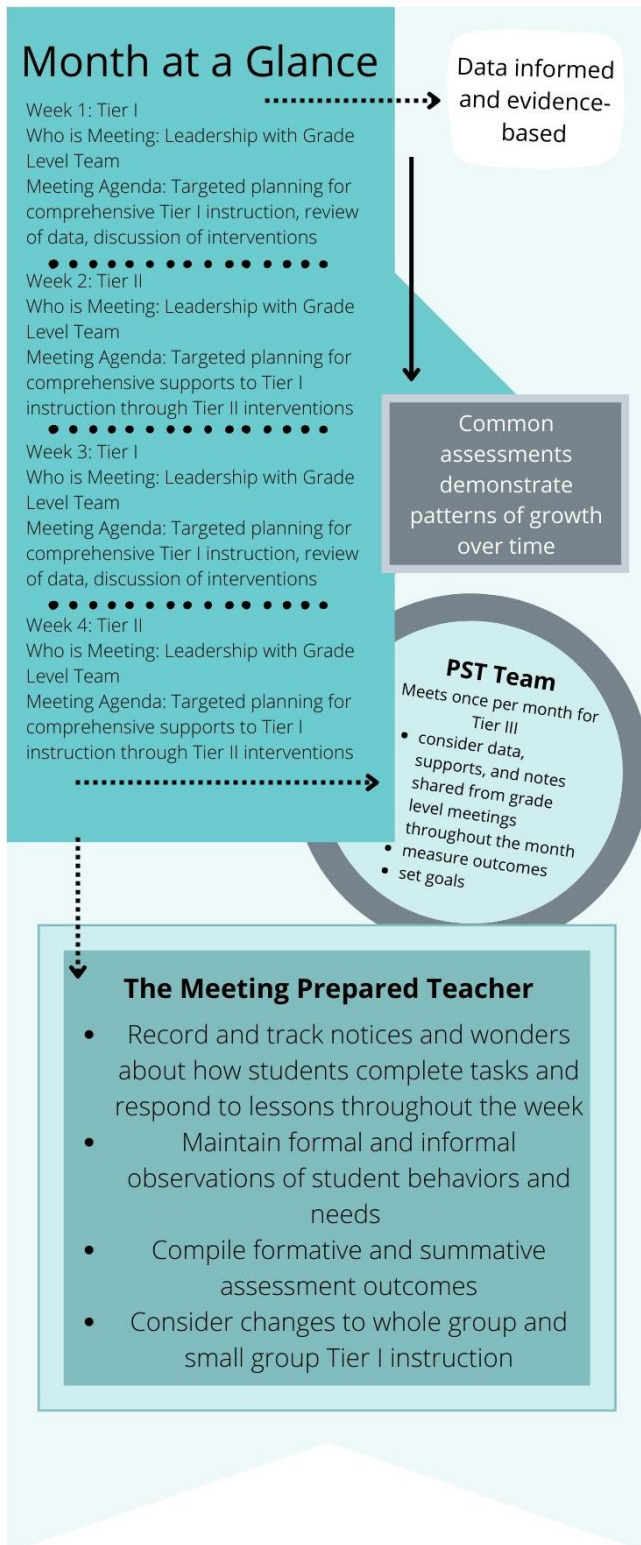
The school administrator, as the instructional leader, guides school level or grade level/content area discussions with an analysis of data from universal screener(s) or grade level/content area common assessments. The [AL-MTSS Assessment Discussion Guide](#) and the [AL-MTSS Assessment Item Analysis Discussion Guide](#) are tools that may be used to guide this process during school wide data reviews or within grade level/content area teams during Tier I PLC. Another essential role of the instructional leader is to evaluate the program's effectiveness over time. The [Implementation Error Chart](#) is helpful in questioning effectiveness based upon observation and initial data collection.

Further guidance for the Alabama Literacy Act (ALA) is available via The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide and the Alabama Numeracy Act (ANA) via the Alabama Numeracy Act Implementation Guide, located at the Alabama State Department of Education website, www.alabamaachieves.com

The following examples may be found in the Tier I and Tier II sections of the document appendix:

- [Master Schedule Reflection Tool](#)
- [AL-MTSS Assessment Discussion Guide](#)
- [AL-MTSS Assessment Item Analysis Discussion Guide](#)
- [Implementation Error Chart](#)

How Often Should We Meet?



Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

All students deserve a safe, supportive, and healthy learning environment where they feel respected and free from physical harm, intimidation, harassment, and bullying. These environments eliminate barriers to teaching and learning.

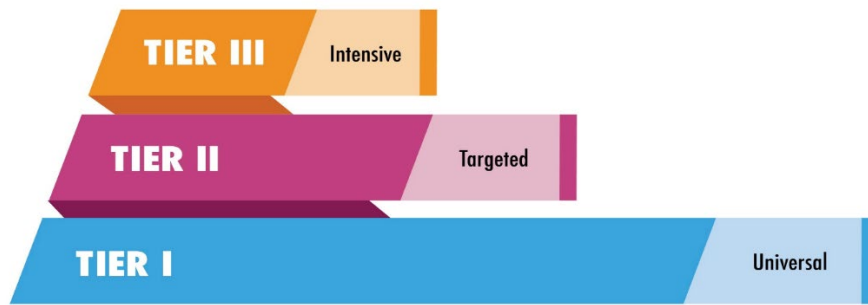


The AL-MTSS Framework emphasizes the importance of the whole child when making decisions about the ways in which schools meet the needs of each student. These needs are examined from multiple perspectives, not limited to only areas of academic and/or behavioral goals, but also incorporating elements of foundational wellness. The creation and maintenance of a safe and supporting learning environment addresses the areas considered as "basic needs" according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. To enable students to realize their potential and work towards actualization of their goals, proactive methods, including intentional

scheduling for collaboration, planning, and the alignment of supports, are essential. Therefore, a multifaceted or layered approach is used to develop safe and supportive learning environments. All stakeholders must understand and commit to their role in the development of an environment that fosters all students' physical and mental well-being, as well as interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships among all peers, educators, and child advocates.

Layered Continuum of Supports in the AL-MTSS Framework

Student access to a layered continuum of supports is essential to creating safe and supportive learning environments. All students must receive equitable academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness supports that are culturally and linguistically responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate. In this layered continuum, support increases with intensity from universal (ALL students) to targeted (some students) to the most intensive supports (few students). However, ALL students must receive quality Tier I instruction and support. Refer to the introduction, on page 9 of this manual, to learn more about the tiered continuum of support.



Proactive Approaches to Creating Safe Learning Environments

The safe and supportive learning environment fosters health and wellness required by students, staff, and faculty alike for the success of academic and behavioral goals. Everyone thrives in spaces designed to meet their unique needs starting with basic acquisition of food, clothing, and shelter. AL-MTSS utilizes a “whole child” and “whole adult” approach to create a safe learning environment; this includes physical, mental, and wellness at all levels for all students, practitioners, and leaders. It is also important to create structures for receiving feedback from all stakeholders. These structures should be formalized and communicated so that students, parents, community members, faculty, and staff are aware of opportunities to express thoughts and/or concerns about the school learning environment.

Health

State and local resources for health and wellness can provide supportive services for members of the school community. School counselors should be familiar with these resources so they can ensure that information about them is made available to all stakeholders in a discreet and empathetic manner and assist in providing access to the various supports available. The following areas impact overall health and therefore optimal academic and behavior performance:

Mental Health	Physical Health	Other Foundational Wellness
• Restorative practices • Anti-bullying program • Suicide prevention • Counseling • Self-help program • 24/hr hotlines	• Physical education program • Sports/clubs/recreation • Outdoor pursuits • Accountability program • Gym membership • Medication access	• Food bank • Grocery incentive vouchers from local stores • Clothing drive • Homeless and displaced • Underserved populations

Safety

Schools must be safe and welcoming spaces for students and families. Safety of facilities includes consideration for the maintenance of the grounds as well as the structural components of buildings and services within such as accessible restrooms and available water stations.

Additionally, drills at the school and classroom levels are imperative for ensuring that every student understands their role in crisis management, even if that role is to quietly stop and listen for directives. Scheduling of drills should be completed by administration when developing the master schedule in the spring of each year. While drills may be both announced and unannounced, leadership should know the details far enough in advance to ensure that the drills are properly implemented.

At the classroom level, teachers can optimize safety by clearly stating classroom rules and expectations and being proactive in the enforcement of those rules and compliance. Teachers must also inform students about the procedures to respond to threats to safety, such as from severe weather or persons intending harm.

Finally, many schools have School Resource Officers or SROs. A school resource officer, by federal definition, is a career law enforcement officer with sworn authority who is deployed by an employing police department or agency in a community-oriented policing assignment to work in collaboration with one or more schools. The Alabama Association of School Resource Officers (TAASRO) Definition of School Resource Officer an Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (APOSTC) law enforcement officer under the direction of a law enforcement agency who is specifically selected and specially trained for the school setting. The role of the SRO is to actively provide a safe school environment that is conducive to learning. Additional guidance about the role of the SRO, as well as other support staff who encounter students on a regular basis, can be found within the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Advisory Committee Recommendations at the ALSDE Alabama Achieves website: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PBIS-Guidebook.pdf>.

Proactive Scheduling Approaches to Creating Supportive Learning Environments

To create a supportive learning environment, strong, collaborative structures must be developed. Effective planning of the master schedule is crucial in ensuring high-quality classroom instruction, collaboration for more effective planning and the development of common assessments, reflection of current practices and policy requirements, and ample time for intervention supports for individual students. For optimal student outcomes within the AL-MTSS Framework, there must be adequate uninterrupted time for differentiated instruction. Schedules should then be reviewed and revised at least annually while recognizing that some schedules may need revision(s) during the school year as indicated by data shared within grade level, content area, and/or PST meetings. There is not one recommended schedule, as this is dependent upon the size and needs of your school. However, a few considerations when reviewing your master schedule should include:

- Structure to allow for weekly PLC meetings (grade level or content areas)
- Consideration of including an intervention or flex time that allows all students to receive intervention, on grade level support, or acceleration
- Plan for when and how Tier III support will be provided that does not interfere with Tier I instructional time

- Opportunities for support teachers to participate in PLC meetings with core teachers when needed

The [Master Schedule Reflection Tool](#) provides additional guidance for the proactive scheduling approach.

Tier I Scheduling Guidance

- Include both whole group and small group instruction for ALL students PreK-12.
- Differentiate instruction based on student needs.
- Adhere to state accountability standards and district policy regarding required instructional minutes.

Intervention Scheduling Guidance (Tier II and Tier III)

- Teachers should allocate time in their daily schedules for Tier II instruction and intervention.
- Follow intervention guidelines for appropriate time (ex. 20-30 minutes, 3-5 days/week).
- Plan intervention and progress monitoring times for consistent execution.

Intervention Scheduling Approaches for Elementary Schools

Within the Classroom

Tier II Interventions may be carried out within the classroom by the classroom teacher or other educators who are highly trained in the intervention. Small groups or individual students can be pulled from center time or independent practice. However, Tier II intervention must not take the place of Tier I instruction.

Walk-to-Learn

Walk-to-Learn opportunities are created by re-grouping students across a team or grade level based on need. Students on grade level and those above grade level are provided enrichment by classroom teachers or other personnel. Students receiving Tier II Interventions are provided interventions by other classroom teachers while students receiving Tier III are provided interventions by an interventionist or the most highly qualified teachers.

Intervention Scheduling Approaches for Middle School and High School

Intervention must be strategically planned and structured to meet individual students' needs effectively. Consistent progress monitoring should be utilized to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. Study halls and stand-alone computer programs cannot substitute for intervention.

30 Minute Period/Block

During this 30-minute period, all students are scheduled with a teacher for intervention, remediation, or enrichment. All staff, including elective teachers, paraprofessionals, school

counselors, etc., are needed to help carry out this plan successfully. This can be scheduled in a variety of ways; the following are three options:

- Six 50- or 55-minute periods with one 30-minute period, OR
- Seven 45- or 47-minute periods with a 30-minute period, OR
- Four 85-minute blocks with one 30-minute block.

Developing a Successful PLC for Secondary Settings



Remember: Tier I instruction includes whole group, small group, differentiation, support, remediation, and extension!

While elementary educational settings appear to have more flexibility and opportunity for weekly grade and content level PLC meetings, secondary settings can also develop successful weekly PLCs. In fact, secondary leaders throughout Alabama who have shared their PLC experiences express that faculty are very protective of their PLC time and credit the meetings for much of their student success. The following suggestions are recommended for introducing weekly PLC meetings at the secondary level; however, the strategies may be applied to any district and school wanting to improve meetings and collaboration.

Collaborate

- Maintain a secure electronic record for every student receiving support that can be accessed by everyone who has interactions with that student
- Set the expectation that team members unable to attend a meeting still contribute their feedback to the student's file so that current updated data can inform recommendations
- PST team meets once per month, that meeting is informed by the work of the weekly PLC

Schedule Smarter

- Develop the master schedule early (January) so that there is time to garner input
- Ensure common planning times for shared content teachers
- Stagger common planning days to allow for administrators to be present during meetings
- Maintain a specific and protected amount of time for meetings

Build a Foundation

- Maintain consistency by starting slowly
- At first, meet weekly just to plan together and share resources
- Ask: What are our students learning? How do we know?
- Gradually develop summative common assessments
- Share the data from the common assessments and use to align teaching practices and monitor student performance

Consider

- Utilize "skinny" periods for prevention, intervention, support, and enrichment
- Assign a community of veteran teachers as a support team
- Assign classrooms/hallways with common content areas to allow for additional planning opportunities
- Develop a PLC planning document to guide meetings
- Team teach where possible to maintain a highly-qualified educator when substitutes are needed

Elective Intervention Course

During these courses, direct instruction takes place beyond that of the required English Language Arts and mathematics courses. Computer-based programs may be used for a portion of the time if they are evidence-based, aligned with the deficit area, and delivered with fidelity. These classes should have a smaller student/teacher ratio than those of other classes.

High Dosage Tutoring

High Dosage Tutoring (HDT) is one of the few school-based interventions with demonstrated large positive effects on math and reading achievement. High-dosage tutoring is different from "regular" tutoring in the design principles including frequency, group size, personnel, focus, measurement, relationships, curriculum, scheduling, and prioritization. Tutoring is considered most impactful when delivered with three or more sessions per week with the same tutor throughout the school year to build consistency and relationships. HDT is treated like a class, happening during the normal school day, rather than after school. The most effective tutoring programs are a minimum of 30 minutes per day with personalized, student-to-tutor ratios of one-to-one or two-to-one. During these sessions, tutors address missed concepts and skills that are

most critical in accessing the upcoming content instead of items the student failed to grasp previously.

Consistent training and open communication are essential measures in the maintenance of safe and supportive systems. Many of the aspects of the safe and supportive learning environment are those addressed in meeting foundational wellness needs and will be further addressed in the *Foundational Wellness* section of this manual.

Appendix

The following examples are located in the Tier I section of the document appendix:

- [Master Schedule Reflection Tool](#)
- [High Dosage Tutoring](#)

The following resources may be helpful in the creation of the Safe and Supportive Learning Environment:

- AL-MTSS Employee Wellness Reference Handbook (will be updated pending publication)
- Positive Behavior Support Reference Handbook (will be updated pending publication)
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Advisory Committee Recommendations at the ALSDE <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PBIS-Guidebook.pdf>.



Things to Consider:

Where should the time come from for implementing the intervention?

Where in the schedule should Tier II and Tier III occur?

Middle schools and high schools –how many periods should be scheduled?

What resources are required to achieve the scheduling goal?

PK-12 Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies

PK-12 evidence-based instructional strategies are practices, techniques, and teaching strategies proven to work through experimental research studies or large-scale research field studies/meta-analyses. Scientifically based research shows that evidence-based strategies have far more impact than others on student outcomes. When teachers and leaders are reviewing and selecting instructional strategies, educators must consider those academic and behavioral practices and programs, grounded in empirical evidence, which leads to improved educational outcomes. Educators must also consider the unique characteristics of the child being served, the setting in which the program or practice will be implemented, and the diverse learning needs of every child. Leaders must understand the gap between current practices and prioritized outcomes, work to identify the practices that show a positive impact on student outcome goals, match resources to student need, and then apply formative and summative measures to ensure individual student success.

Within the AL-MTSS framework, instruction begins with high-quality Tier I instruction for ALL students. Remember that all Alabama students should receive challenging and developmentally appropriate Tier I core instruction delivered by highly effective teachers. This is intended to meet the needs of all students. Districts should equitably allocate resources (fiscal, personnel, time, curricular materials, etc.) to provide all learners access to Tier I instruction, regardless of disability, English language proficiency status, income, race, or academic performance.

High-quality instruction includes:

- Standards-based Instruction
- High-Quality Instructional Materials
- Assessments to Inform Learning
- Supports for All Learners

Standards-Based Instruction

High-quality instruction begins with standards and is designed to help students achieve mastery of the standards. [Alabama's Courses of Study](#) serve as the foundation of all instruction. Assessments, curricula, and instruction of guide students toward demonstrating mastery of the standards. Instructional activities and methods must be chosen with the goal of students becoming proficient.

Another tool for providing standards-based instruction is the use of proficiency scales. Proficiency scales are instrumental to standards-based instruction because they assist teachers in creating a clear understanding of what students are expected to attain at each step of learning and point to the best use of the curriculum to meet the specific criteria referenced in the standards. By breaking down the content of a standard into a sequence of learning goals, proficiency scales clearly indicate a progression of skills or understanding to be demonstrated by

the learner at each level. Therefore, proficiency scales are a vital resource for planning, delivery of instruction, reflection and feedback, and progress monitoring. More information on proficiency scales, along with sample scales for critical standards can be found at [AMSTI Proficiency Scales](#).

High-Quality Instructional Materials

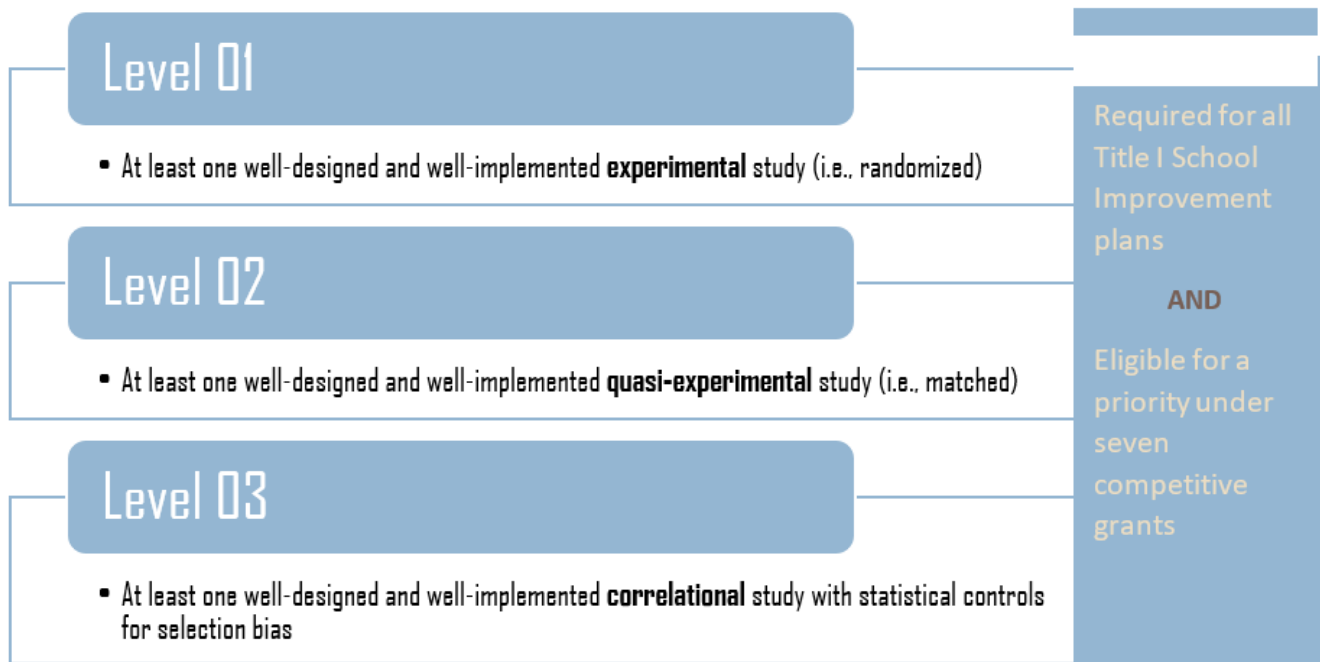
Materials used for Tier I, II, and III should be high-quality; the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) outlines four levels for identifying and selecting evidence-based practices. Educators should identify evidence-based practices, instruction, and interventions before deciding on educational programs and/or resources. Per Section 8001(21)(A), the recommendation is as follows: (A) In general-Except as provided in subparagraph (B) the term "evidence-based" when used with respect to State, local education agency, school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that –

- A. Demonstrates a **statistically significant effect** on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes –
- **Strong Evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; OR
 - **Moderate Evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; OR
 - **Promising Evidence** from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias;

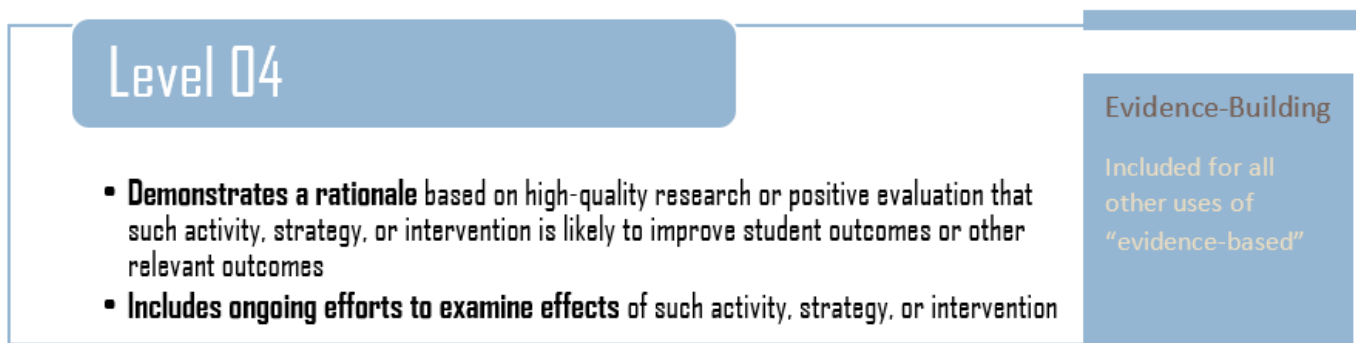
OR

- B. Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

ESSA defines four levels of evidence. The top three levels require at least one study that found a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes. The specific level of evidence (1-3) depends on the study's design:



The fourth level of evidence includes ideas that do not yet have an evidence base qualifying for the top 3 levels. Given the requirement to examine the effects of these ideas, this level can be referred to as “evidence-building”.



Note: Schools identified as school improvement schools must choose an intervention that is Strong, Moderate, or Promising, in order to purchase said intervention using federal monies. ALSDE provides vetted lists through Federal Programs to ensure compliance with the Alabama Literacy Act and Alabama Numeracy Act.

Assessments to Inform Learning

An assessment is a guide for instructional decision-making. In addition to the use of universal screeners and standardized assessments, classroom teachers include formative as well as summative assessments. It is beneficial for grade levels to use common assessments related to exit tickets and end of unit assessments.

Universal screening is a process in which academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness data are collected and analyzed to determine whether a student is likely to meet, exceed, or not meet benchmarks.

Universal screeners:

- Formative assessments used to measure progress
- Conducted 3-4 times per year
- Establish a baseline to make decisions about interventions

Universal screeners should be vetted by the ALSDE (Alabama State Department of Education). A list is available of approved universal screeners that are aligned to the Alabama Literacy Act and Numeracy Act guidelines.

Multiple types of data are collected to assist in a complete universal screening process. Academically, in addition to a universal screener used multiple times per year, data from nationally or state-normed summative assessments should be reviewed annually. Proficiency levels are reported for normed assessments and provide additional data. Additionally, districts may want to consider the use of benchmarks given quarterly to ensure proficiency in critical standards across all grade levels.

It is important to remember the whole child when reviewing data. Attendance and discipline data should be considered at all grade levels. Checklists, teacher behavior scales, and life skills rating scales completed by teacher or student should be considered as appropriate.

Each district leadership team should make individual decisions regarding assessment and screenings. Possible suggested examples for the PST (Problem-Solving Teams) team to use are listed below:

Grade Levels	Academic		Foundational Wellness	
	Reading	Math	Behavior	Social
K-8	Universal screener selected from ALSDE vetted list (used at least 3 times per year)		Attendance (absent and tardy)	ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) completed by caregiver Daily check-in tool completed by students (if used)
2-8	ACAP Summative Proficiency scores (prior year data used at initial PST meeting)	ACAP Summative Proficiency scores (prior year data used at initial PST meeting)	Discipline data (Prior year data then at least quarterly)	

K-12	Common assessments administered quarterly to ensure proficiency in critical standards in core subjects.	Student and or teacher reported behavior and essential skills rating scales.
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At the high school level, some districts may choose to continue the use of the universal screener selected for K-8. However, if this is not feasible or practical for your district, here are some other practical options:

Academic			Foundational Wellness	
Grade Levels	Reading	Math	Behavior	Social
9-12	8 th grade final Universal Screener and ACAP should be used at beginning of 9 th grade		Attendance (absent and tardy)	ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) completed by student or caregiver Daily check-in tool completed by students (if used)
	GPA (establish criteria for mild to moderate risk determination)		Discipline data	
	Pre-ACT, ACT with Writing Proficiency scores for English Language Arts	Pre-ACT, ACT with Writing Proficiency scores for Mathematics	(Prior year data then at least quarterly)	
	ACT WorkKeys Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents proficiency scores	ACT WorkKeys Applied Math proficiency scores	Student and or teacher reported behavior and essential skills rating scales.	

Progress monitoring is a process used to assess a student's academic and behavioral performance and measure student improvement or responsiveness to instruction and intervention. Progress monitoring can be formal (quantifiable, norm-referenced tools) or informal (teacher-developed, formative tools) and can be implemented with individual students or an entire class. The frequency of progress monitoring will increase with the intensity of an intervention or additional

challenge. Like universal screening, progress monitoring is a process, and therefore, data should include multiple pieces of evidence with a focus on individual student improvement.

Universal screening and progress monitoring are central to making educational decisions. Data is used to adjust the intensity and nature of interventions depending on a student's responsiveness.

Progress Monitoring and Data Discussion

Frequent sharing, discussion, and analysis of data and supports are essential for demonstrating success and identifying areas in need of additional supports or change. Weekly grade level/content area meetings with a clearly set

Things to Consider:

- Tier II progress monitoring should be completed once every 2 weeks
- Tier III progress monitoring should be completed once every week

Establish a measurable goal before implementing progress monitoring.

Progress monitoring results should be graphed or charted against the established goal to determine student growth.

Progress monitoring tool measures specific deficit area for which student is receiving intervention, therefore will vary.

agenda and goal(s) assist in aligning the purpose, mission, and vision of the school with the daily practices of instructors and instructional leaders. Building administration should lead and attend these meetings to ensure schoolwide consistency as well as to disseminate information across grade levels and content areas.

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day, Data Discussions

Tier I Discussions

Most students should be able to master content at Tier I. Before considering additional support at another Tier, the instruction delivered during Tier I should be assessed. Adjustments must be made to Tier I instructional strategies to ensure that all students are receiving quality Tier I instruction.

Students Discussed: ALL

Purpose: Determine the effectiveness of Tier I instructions utilizing universal screeners, formative and summative assessments, exit tickets, observations, and sample students work.

Outcome: Adjust Tier I instruction based upon the data, identify scaffolds to support struggling learners and extension/acceleration opportunities for students already demonstrating mastery.

Tier II Discussions

Students Discussed: Student(s) identified for Tier II intervention by the Grade Level/Content PLC

Purpose: identify a measurable goal and establish a specific intervention for individual or group of students based on highest leverage deficit. Review the data determined for progress monitoring (PM). PM should be completed every two weeks and data graphed or charted against the established goal to determine growth.

Outcome: Determine the effectiveness of the intervention, adjust the intervention, add, or dismiss students from Tier II through the PST process.

Tier III Discussions

Students Discussed: Student(s) recommended to PST from Grade Level/Content PLC after at least 8 weeks of documented intervention

Purpose: identify a measurable goal and establish a specific, intensive, targeted intervention based on highest leverage deficit. Review data submitted by Grade Level Tier II PLC and Tier III Interventionist. PM data should be collected weekly.

Outcome: Determine the effectiveness of the intervention, adjust the intervention, add, or dismiss students from Tier III through the PST process.

Write measurable and quantifiable goals for individual students in need of Tier II or Tier III support. When goals are written in this format, data-driven decision-making regarding progress is clear. The chart below provides examples to illustrate the creation of these goals.

This means the goal specifies:

- **Learner Performance** (what will the student do to demonstrate proficiency)
- **Quality** (how – under what conditions)
- **Criteria** (Frequency/Duration/Accuracy/Speed or Latency/Intensity)
- **Conditions** (location and any criteria regarding level, format, or medium)

Content or Skill Area	Goal	Measurability
Literacy Phonics and/or Decoding	After three weeks of targeted intervention, the student will be able to blend words with vowel teams and VCE words using Elkonin boxes with 80% accuracy in 4 out of 5 trials. Upon mastery, move to next phonics goal.	be able to blend words with vowel teams and VCE words using Elkonin boxes 80% accuracy in 4 out of 5 trials
Comprehension	By October 1, the student will answer comprehension questions related to a 6 th grade text with 70% accuracy in 4 out of 5 opportunities presented orally.	answer comprehension questions related to a 6 th grade text with 70% accuracy in 4 out of 5 opportunities presented orally
Use of electronic intervention	By the end of 6 weeks, the student will increase from emerging grade 1 to grade 2 in phonics by working within (identified computer program) lessons for 45 minutes per week.	increase from emerging grade 1 to grade 2 in phonics by working within (identified computer program) lessons for 45 minutes per week
Writing	After two weeks of targeted intervention, the student will be able to write numbers to 120 with 100% accuracy using lined paper.	be able to write numbers to 120 with 100% accuracy using lined paper
Math	Following 5 intervention lessons, the student will be able to calculate the unit rate of two mixed numbers presented in isolation in 4 out of 5 attempts. Upon mastery, problems will be presented in word problem format.	be able to calculate the unit rate of two mixed numbers presented in isolation in 4 out of 5 attempts presented in word problem format
Behavior	By the end of 4 weeks, the student will readily respond to teacher non-verbal correction cues regarding off-task behavior for 5 consecutive days.	readily respond teacher non-verbal correction cues for 5 consecutive days

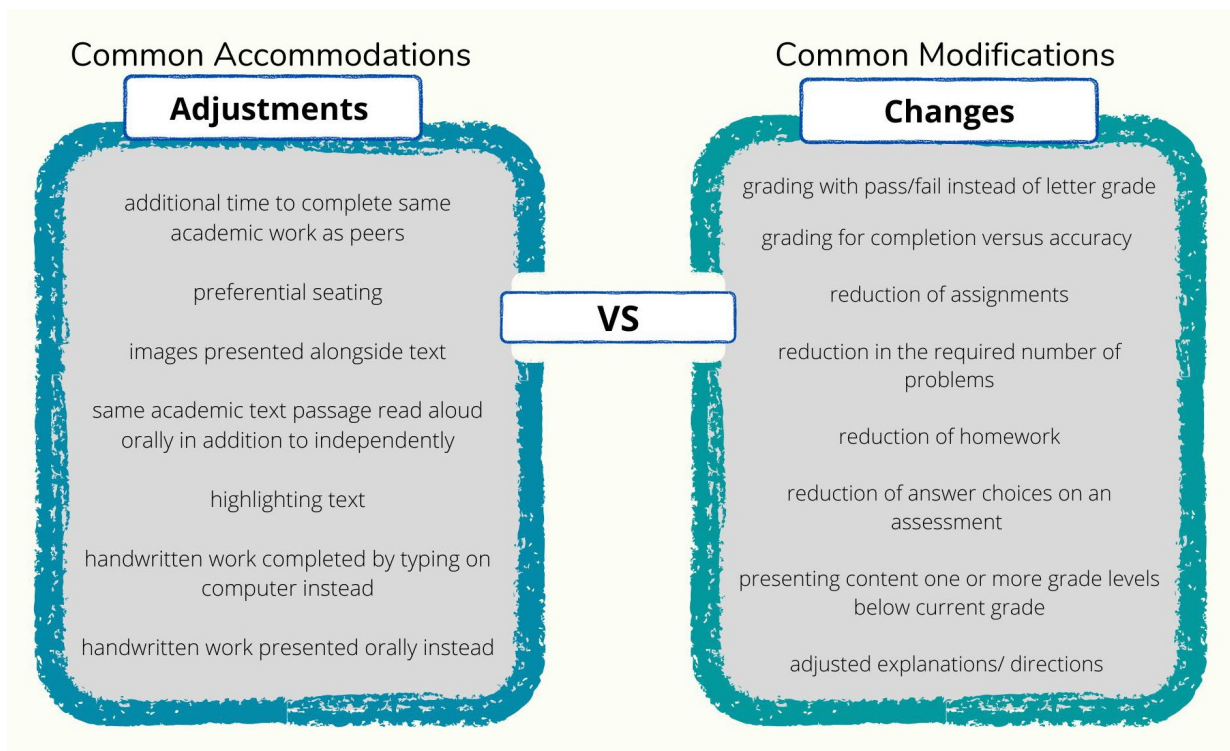
Supports for All Learners

Access to mastery of instructional standards, content, and skills can be enhanced by the incorporation of accommodations or modifications. Accommodations and modifications function in differing ways and while at times a student may require both, they are not the same nor interchangeable. Accommodations are adjustments to the demonstration or delivery of knowledge, or a skill based upon student abilities. The content and/or information remains the same, but the modality or method is flexible. For example, a student struggling with writing long passages may have the option of reciting and recording their response verbally. In this example, the content that the student provides remains the same as does the lesson and outcome, only mode of presentation of that information has been altered. This type of accommodation does not require a 504 plan or an IEP, it is one in which all students could be offered and benefit from

depending upon the needs of the student(s), instructor, and the standard being met. Accommodations are intended to create equitable learning experiences for all students.

Modifications are changes to grade-level programming in order to make them ability-level appropriate. These changes are made to the lesson, the outcome expectations, and/or assessments as needed. Using a modification, because it is a change to content, instruction, curriculum, and/or assessment means that there is also a change to grade-level performance expectations requires an IEP.

All accommodations and modifications should be documented and tracked for later data analysis. This documentation demonstrates the ways in which the student(s) is uniquely finding success and showing growth towards mastery and serves as a way to communicate successful strategies to that student's other instructors.



Accommodations should be considered as fluid and adjustable, however, changes should be based upon documented evidence and data collection and shared with all members of a students' support team.

Additional information may be found in the [AL-MTSS Instructional Accommodations Guidance](#) located in the appendix.

Supports for English Learners

As part of our commitment to ensuring every student is given every chance every day, we must consider ways to support English Learners in the classroom. English learners bring a rich culture and numerous strengths to the classroom environment; however, they need support with

language acquisition as they learn content. When developing instruction for English learners, it is important to consider the stages of language acquisition to match the appropriate strategy with each students' level. It is also crucial to understand the cultural norms and background of the English learner to avoid cultural bias when making decisions regarding instruction and intervention.

Tier I Instruction for English Learners

English learners must have access to high-quality general education curriculum and appropriate EL supports based on language development levels. Therefore, all educators who work with English learners must receive training on best practices for instructing students learning English and the specific Tier I instructional strategies to support English language acquisition.

English learners often require additional supports at the Tier I instructional level. These supports must be applied regularly and consistently before the student is considered for further interventions and discussed with the PST. These supports include but are not limited to:

- Greater scaffolding
- Additional time
- Introduction to cultural expectations of the learning community
- Introduction to the expectations of the school setting
- Modeling and mentoring by peers

Tier II and III Interventions for English Learners

Interventions and other services for ELs must take place outside of Tier I instructional time. Tier II and Tier III supports must not replace Tier I instruction. Often, this has not been the case, and they miss out on the richness of the curriculum content, vocabulary, oral language practice, and basic skills learned in ELA and math.

If additional Tier I supports alone are not sufficient for student growth, the following intervention steps should be taken:

- Review available data from multiple sources (ACAP, ACCESS, classroom performance, diagnostic assessments, and universal screeners).
- Discuss strengths and areas of concern with parents, general education teacher, EL teacher, and all other teachers who work with the student.
- Determine the specific deficit(s) and select an intervention to best address the targeted area(s).

When meeting to discuss students who are English learners, it is important to include the student's parent/guardian, content-area or general classroom teachers, staff to interpret WIDA assessment scores, EL staff, school administrators, school counselors, and intervention teacher.

Prior to determining intervention and support, consider the experience of the ELs, such as limited or interrupted formal education and or trauma. These students may benefit from structure and attention delivered in a small group setting with the same students and teacher.

When determining interventions and supports, consider the number of transitions a student makes during the day and the amount of class time missed. For elementary students, this may mean reducing the number of transitions and classroom switches throughout the day. For secondary students, consider connecting students with adult mentors that can provide a check-in each day, as well as a place to take a break when needed. Revisit staff and EL student schedules as needed to find creative ways to provide support.

Guiding Questions for Tiered English Learner Support

- Have we involved EL support staff in conversations and decisions for our English learners? (EL teachers, specialists, etc.)
- What strategies and supports have already been tried during Tier I instruction?
- How are students' English language proficiency levels considered when developing Tier I supports and Tiers II and III supports as necessary?
- Which supports do our English learners need to be successful in the areas of academics, behavior, and foundational wellness?
- Have we considered all data available when determining supports? (Assessment data, attendance, classroom observations, etc.)

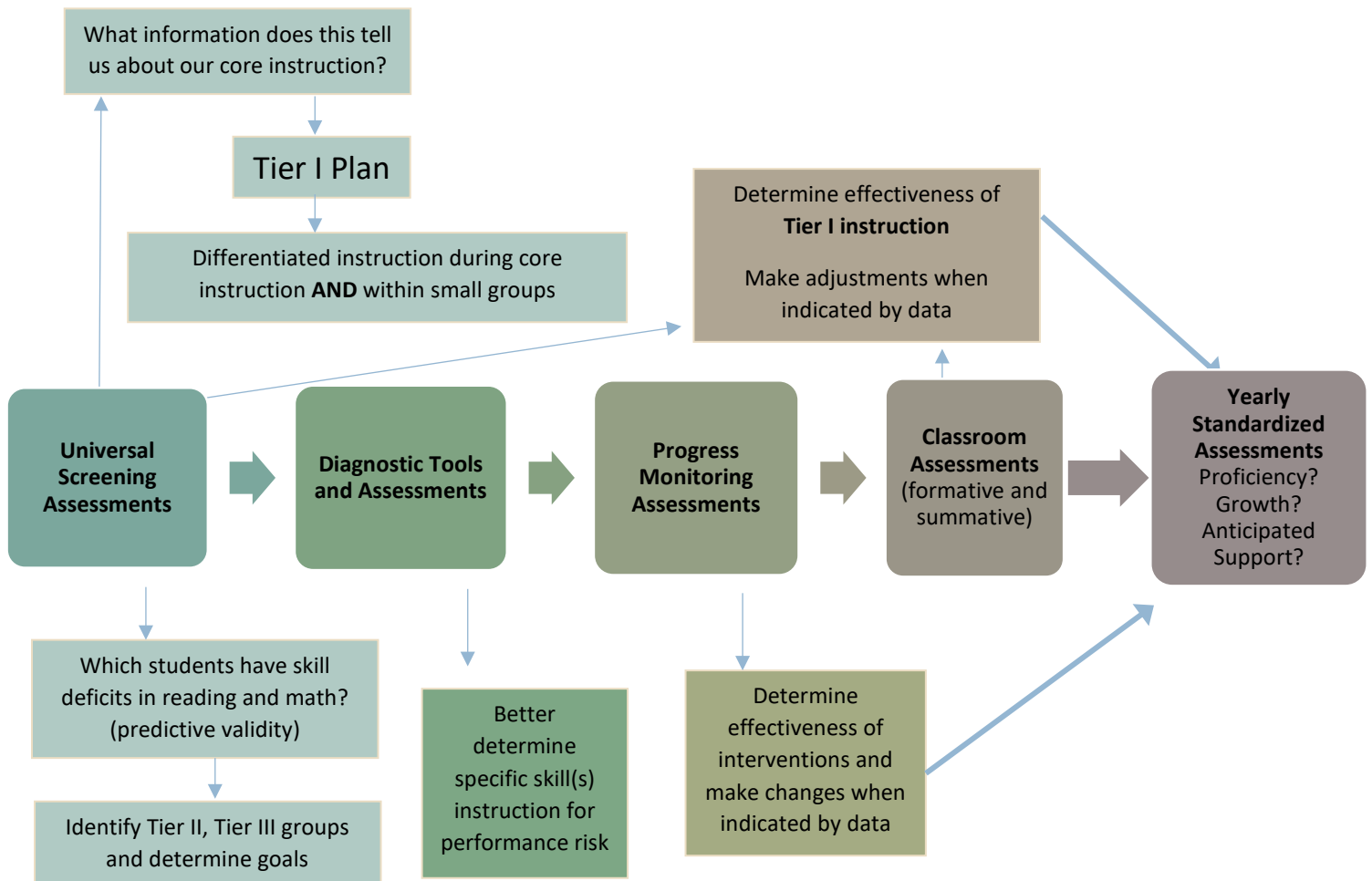
Importance of Leadership in Supporting English Learners

It is necessary for leadership to support educators as they continuously expand their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the classroom.

- Increase the use of high-quality instruction and assessments in every classroom every day to engage ELs.
- Foster and build the capacity of all school and district staff to serve ELs.
- Establish, communicate, and implement coherent and equitable systems.
- Utilize data and research to refine EL education to provide individualized and systematic supports.

Tier I Plan Flow Chart

As your district or school reviews your Tier I Core Systems, the following flow chart and guiding questions can be beneficial in targeting your next steps:



Appendix

The following examples can be found in the Tier II section of the document appendix:

- [Stages of Language Acquisition table](#)
- [AL-MTSS Instructional Accommodations Guidance](#)
- SMART Goal creation examples: Writing Measurable Goals and Objectives, Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks Tracking, and Annual Goal(s) are located in Tier I of the appendix

The following externally linked resources may be helpful in developing PK-12 Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies:

- Alabama Courses of Study <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/academic-standards/>
- ALSDE EL Resources <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/english-learners/>
- AMSTI Proficiency Scales <https://www.amsti.org/amsti-proficiency-scales>
- Instructional Strategies for Bilingual Learners http://www.dustywittman.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SIOP_99_Strategies.pdf
- Essential Components of RTI—A Closer Look at Response to Intervention https://mtss4success.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/RTIessentialcomponents_042710.pdf

For more information, see the Alabama Framework for English Learner Success and the Guidance for High-Quality Instruction and Assessment (HQIA) for English Learners <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Implementation-Guidance-of-the-Alabama-Literacy-Act-for-English-Learners.pdf>, for resources, tips, and videos for instructing English learners.

Additional information for districts in determining fiscal responsibility when selecting instructional programs may be found in the Alabama Fiscal Guidance for Implementing a Multi-Tier System of Supports (AL-MTSS) Manual.

Engaged Stakeholders

The goal of family, school and community relations is to create partnership practices to support all students. Evidence indicates that students are more successful when families and schools are connected, and students feel that adults are invested in their learning. When students feel connected, motivation and attendance improve, directly affecting academic and behavioral outcomes. With effective partnerships in place, families are empowered to ensure that students have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Families, educators, and community members possess varied levels of education, cultures, languages, needs, and interests. District and school staff should consider the diverse needs of families and the community as they create opportunities to establish trusting relationships. The collaboration of families, schools, and communities as equal partners will increase student, classroom, school, and district outcomes through the promotion of equity for all. These partnerships are critical for the successful implementation of AL-MTSS.

Students as Stakeholders

As the primary stakeholders in their education, students play a vital role in their own success. Therefore, schools should encourage students to be active participants in their learning and should promote student agency by accentuating student choice and voice. To amplify student voice, schools should provide students with consistent and frequent opportunities to reflect on and discuss their own learning through conferences and student data chats. To be effective, feedback delivered to students must be consistent, specific, clear, and timely. In addition to receiving feedback, students should also be given the opportunity to provide their own feedback concerning the foundational, academic, and behavioral components of learning. Examples of strategies to promote student input are hosting class meetings, implementing exit slips with open-ended questions, utilizing digital platforms to collect student thoughts and ideas, and establishing a classroom parking lot for students to post ideas. Additionally, student council and other student voice groups may be utilized to support consistent communication between the problem-solving team and students.

Student choice is also instrumental in the problem-solving process and can be achieved by student involvement in the design of their learning through input into topics ranging from the physical arrangement of the classroom to the assignment type. Examples of strategies to encourage student choice are preference surveys to gather student input on learning styles and learning preferences, choice boards or menus to provide choice of activities to demonstrate proficiency, and task cards to provide differentiation opportunities and choice of skill. In addition, students may be involved in designing their own supports or interventions geared to their individual strengths and needs.

Reflection Questions for Student Feedback

- Are students provided consistent, specific, clear, and timely feedback? How so? How can we strengthen our methods for providing feedback to students?
- Are students given frequent opportunities for input concerning the learning environment and learning activities? How so? How can we amplify student voice during tiered instruction and the problem-solving process?
- Are students provided choice during Tier I and Tier II instruction? How so? How can we encourage more student choice in the learning and problem-solving process?

Communication with All Stakeholders

Communication between schools and families is imperative for student success. Providing information to families and community stakeholders is an effective way to facilitate support, educational progress, and encourage active involvement. Schools should have an open-door policy for families and community members and welcome all feedback. Resources and services for families, students, and the school through community groups, including businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities should be available as part of the AL-MTSS implementation. Communication with all stakeholders can be disseminated through various channels; however, it should be considered that access to technology and other resources varies among families. Additionally, it is imperative that communication be provided in the parent's native language. Information regarding communication with families who do not speak English may be found in the [ALSDE EL Resources](#).

Parent Communication Tips

Teachers, or other school personnel as designated, should consistently communicate with parents of all students at all academic and behavioral tiers. It is essential to provide parents with methods to help their child at home and follow-up to see what additional supports might be needed. Parents can serve as integral participants in PST meetings, providing important student data; they should be kept abreast of scheduled meetings and when unable to attend, be provided with a meeting summary. Parents may benefit from attending virtually if unable to attend in person.

Parents MUST be notified when students are placed in Tier III. It is best practice to notify parents when students are identified to receive Tiers I and II interventions. Progress monitoring of intervention results should be sent home regularly and also shared with parents at PST meetings. Establish a plan for parent communication BEFORE there is a need for calls concerning failing grades or negative behavior. Steps in establishing positive communication include:

- Use a regular, consistent format for communicating with all parents in a variety of mediums.
- Inform parents at the beginning of the year of procedures to schedule a conference and communicate questions or concerns.

- Include regular plans for positive calls or written communication when students are performing or behaving positively.

When students are struggling, do not wait for parents to communicate their concerns. Provide parents with specific information regarding a student's area of difficulty, expectations, and steps or strategies already taken. Suggest ideas for next steps, but also allow parents to make suggestions as well. Follow-up with parents to update whether there has been progress.

Depending on cultural expectations, parents, guardians and community members may vary in their expectations for collaboration, which educators should respect by accommodating differences to best support learners' education. Additionally, the importance of community and family support in the education of English learners and other diverse learners cannot be overstated. As partnerships are strengthened through collaboration, educators become more informed of student strengths, qualities, learning preferences, and needs.

Guiding Questions for Effective Engagement

Instructional Leader	Teacher
• What protocol is used for Tiers I and II PLC grade level/content area meetings (who MUST be included/who MIGHT be included)? • What protocol is used for Tier III PST meetings that includes who MUST be included in meetings and who might be included based on student needs or required by law? • What practices are in place to ensure students receive and provide consistent and timely feedback? • What practices are in place to ensure student voice and choice are emphasized? • Is there equity among PLC meetings for including outside stakeholders if needed (EL, Nurse, Mental Health coordinator, Social Worker, Juvenile Justice)? • Have you explored the use of outside resources for volunteering, career development, or mentoring opportunities? • Is there a best practice in place for Tier I communication to parents? • What is required in Tier II grade level/content area PLC? • What documentation is used in PST PLC for items such as (Parent Invitation to meeting, Awareness/Progress within Tiers, Dismissal from PST/Referral for additional testing (Parent AND PST Team referrals)?	• Are you including parent communication methods & content in Tier I PLC? (Upcoming topics, assignments/tests, ways to support learners at home) • Is it appropriate to include the student in Tier II/III discussions? What insights have you included from the parent? • How do you know parents are receiving student progress in Tier II? (Invitation, status of intervention, and suggested support at home) • When and how are you sharing progress monitoring with parents? Are parents aware of critical routines/ procedures they can follow at home? • When and how are you providing feedback to students concerning their progress? • What opportunities are available for student input? • What additional stakeholders would be beneficial to include in the Tier II PLC?

Appendix

The following externally linked resources may be helpful in developing a community of engaged stakeholders:

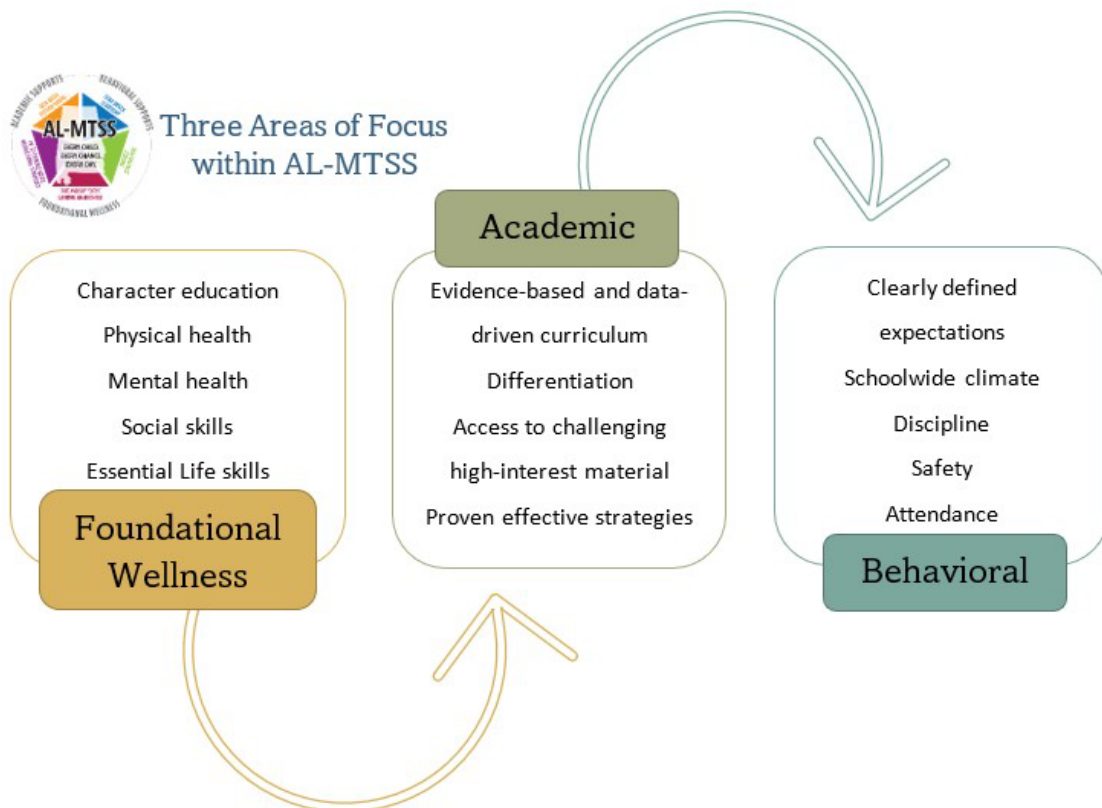
April 2023

- AL-MTSS Documentation for sample protocols and forms to use when communicating with parents (the linked text will be updated pending publication)
- ALSDE EL Resources [English Learners](#)
- ALSDE Attendance Manual [ALSDE Attendance Manual](#)
- Attendance Works [Attendance Works Handout](#)
- [Sample script for contacting parents about PST referral and intervention](#)

Focus Areas of Support

The Alabama State Department of Education believes the needs of every child are not left to chance, but are in the hands of highly effective, compassionate education professionals and strong caring communities every day. The ALSDE is committed to a multi-tier system of supports to collaborate with districts, schools, and communities to meet the needs of the whole child. The commitment is to provide for the academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness needs of every child, every chance, every day. The focus areas of support are what all systems develop, implement, and sustain to ensure every child's achievement and success.

Academic support is addressed through the RTI model, whereas behavioral (including attendance) and foundational wellness are addressed through PBS. Your school-wide PST meets to discuss students submitted by grade-level PLC's and should consider factors in all of these areas:



Foundational Wellness

Establishing a strong foundation of wellness support requires addressing basic human needs, including consistent and secure access to nutritious food, appropriate clothing, and stable shelter. This foundation should be complemented by a safe and supportive environment that promotes student health, safety, and overall well-being. Furthermore, it should empower students to succeed academically and behaviorally, make responsible decisions, demonstrate positive peer interactions, and develop self-awareness and self-management skills.

Students who are engaged and feel connected to their education, school, and community are more likely to experience academic achievement and behavioral success. Schools must take a proactive approach in ensuring all students have their foundational needs met. When students receive interactive and metacognitive support that is aligned with academic and behavioral efforts, the ‘whole child’ is addressed, and the student achieves a higher degree of success. Therefore, foundational wellness is an important component of successful Tier I instruction. Awareness and consideration of the foundational wellness areas listed below are vital for all school leaders and educators.

Mental and Physical Health

Ensuring students’ physical and mental health can help students feel engaged and connected to their education, school, and community. As a result, they are more likely to experience academic achievement and behavioral success. Use of strategies from the Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) Training, awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), and an environmental checklist, can be beneficial in determining whether to include additional members in discussions to support individual students. Often, a struggling student’s physical health concerns, such as asthma, diabetes, and obesity may contribute to a lack of success in the classroom. When determining appropriate members of the PST, consider adding professionals such as the school nurse, social worker, juvenile justice liaison, mental health coordinator, or school counselor. Additionally, schools should ensure that all staff are familiar with state and community resources for student family well-being and that a plan is in place to clearly communicate these resources and refer families to them as needed.

Safety

Safety is an important component of foundational wellness, and every effort should be made to ensure school buildings and classrooms are safe learning environments. This includes confirming all stakeholders know and adhere to safety protocols, measures are in place to prevent bullying, and a positive and proactive behavior system is adopted by the school. Additional information and resources regarding school safety may be found in the School Safety section of the ALSDE Prevention Support Resources at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/prevention-and-support/>.

Essential Work Skills

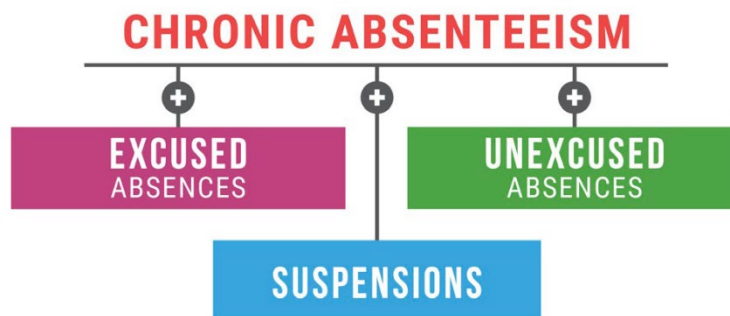
A major review of 213 studies evaluating social learning programs in schools found that students who participated in life and work skills learning programs, compared with students who did not, demonstrated the following attributes:

- Increased academic achievement
- Increased peer interactive skills
- Improved attitude toward self and others
- Improved positive classroom behaviors, and
- Decreased conduct problems and emotional distress

Warm welcomes and a focus on character-building may already be in place. Additional support may include daily or periodic check-ins or a method for the student to identify his or her zones of regulation.

Chronic Absenteeism

A student who misses 10% or more of school days for any reason (including excused, unexcused, and suspensions) is considered chronically absent and at risk of falling behind academically. Parents and students should be made aware of the adverse impact absences have on academic and behavioral success. When viewing student data, if the team determines that absences are the root cause of the student's academic struggles, attendance barriers should be identified, and the student should be placed on a plan to improve attendance and attendance should be monitored.



Tier	Number of Absences (per 9-weeks)	Suggestions for Use at Each Tier
Tier I Use school-wide	2 days or less	• Advisory lessons focusing on developing and maintaining specific behaviors and social skills • School and grade-level expectations • Modeling of behaviors incentives (Caught You Being Good, celebrations, rewards and recognitions)
Tier II Target small group	3-5 days	• Lunch bunch • Reflection room • Peace circles • Peer mediation • Calls home or family meetings • Young parent focus groups • Opportunities for support to catch up and make up work
Tier III Intensive, focused per student	5 days or more	• Referral to social worker/school psychologist/psychometrist • Intensive anger management • Family meetings • Other outside agencies • Drug/alcohol counseling • Daily contracts and contacts

Guiding Questions for Foundational Wellness

Administrator	Teacher
• Have we explored resources for training the entire staff (including CNP, transportation, office staff, as well as teachers and support staff) in understanding foundational wellness, and ACES? • What is the role of the teacher, administrator, school counselor, interventionist, and other school personnel regarding the reduction of chronic absenteeism? • How can we proactively address student behavior to avoid student suspensions, causing them to miss class time? • Are all school staff familiar with community resources to refer students and families to as needed? (Partnerships with state agencies as well as local agencies) • Are safety protocols in place and clearly communicated to all staff?	• Is there information (in records or from family) that would clarify a student's mental, physical, or foundational wellness needs? • Are we considering how a student's mental, physical, or foundational wellness needs might contribute to their academic success? What specific supports are we providing to address these foundational needs? • How are we using warm welcomes/morning meeting in your classroom to build relationships? • Why are students missing school (contributing factors), and what evidence-based practices can we put in place to decrease the number of absences? • Are classrooms safe, supportive, and conducive to learning?

Appendix

The following externally linked resources may be helpful in developing Foundational Wellness Strategies:

- ALSDE Prevention Support Resources <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/prevention-and-support/>
- Alabama Attendance Manual https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/PS_202224_AmendedAlabamaAttendanceManual2422_V1.0.pdf
- Environmental Checklist <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Environmental-Cultural-and-or-Economic-Concerns-Reeval.pdf>

Academic Supports

All educators need to be prepared to meet the academic needs of every PK-12 child so that they are intellectually challenged and academically prepared for success in school and their lives thereafter: college, career, and beyond.

It is crucial that every child has equitable access to high-quality, evidence-based core instruction and universal supports along a continuum of tiered, evidence-based supports and early intervening services to ensure success. The design and delivery should allow all students equitable access to grade-level standards with learning experiences that are engaging and personalized to meet their needs. High-quality academic instruction integrates evidence-based practices in all content areas so students can make effective and sustained progress.

High Quality Tier I Instruction

Tier I high-quality, core instruction is present at all three levels of the tiered model and includes the use of an evidence-based curriculum that is aligned to the Alabama Course of Study standards, available via the ALEX Alabama Learning Exchange at [ALEX | Alabama Learning Exchange \(state.al.us\)](https://alex.state.al.us). Tier I instruction should include the use of a developmentally appropriate universal screener for academics and behavior. The data obtained from the universal screening assessments, as well as formative and summative assessments, should be used to inform instruction and lesson plan development. Instruction should then be differentiated and scaffolded based on the specific needs of students. During Tier I, students must be given time to observe explicit modeling of new concepts and skills, as well as allowed time for guided practice and independent practice of the newly introduced skills. However, during Tier I mathematics instruction, students **must** have access to tools and tasks that promote student reasoning, student discourse, and student questioning to promote sense making in mathematics. With effective high-quality instruction, most students' needs are met at the Tier I level; therefore, Tier I is the first level of prevention.

Questions to ask when evaluating the effectiveness of Tier I instruction

Academic and Behavioral Expectations

- What are our academic and behavioral expectations?
- How have our academic and behavioral expectations been communicated clearly to all stakeholders, including staff and students?
- What percentage of students are achieving academic and behavioral expectations?
- What percentage of students in *subgroups* are achieving academic and behavioral expectations?

Classroom and School Environments

- How is the school/classroom environment conducive to learning?
- What measures can we implement to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment?
- Are current practices inclusive for all students (cultural and experiential perspectives)?

Quality Instruction

- What are our non-negotiables for quality instruction? How are these clearly communicated and evaluated?
- Which systems are in place, and are they being implemented effectively?
- Are students provided with options for demonstrating knowledge and skills?
- Does the teacher use multiple methods of engagement and representation?
- How is instruction differentiated to meet needs of all students (interest level and challenge)?

According to the Alabama Teaching and Learning Instructional Framework (the linked text will be updated pending publication), educators should plan standards-based instruction that allows all students to have equitable access to grade-level standards in learning experiences that are engaging and personalized to their needs. The goal is to proactively provide appropriate accommodations and supports to allow for high achievement expectations for all children, regardless of their unique strengths and challenges.



Ask:

Does the curriculum and instruction provide multiple means of engagement? Representation? Expression?

How is this evidenced?

In what ways can engagement, representation, and expression be improved?

Providing students with a high-quality, coherent curriculum that offers options and choices for learning (i.e., access to books, videos, or direct teacher instruction), materials, scaffolds and supports they need to learn (i.e., visuals, exemplars, graphic organizers, rubrics, etc.), ways to determine what they have learned, and the incorporation of small and whole group instruction will allow more students to access rigorous, standards-based instruction. Therefore, Tier I supports are proactive and necessary for all students to prevent the development of deficiencies and the widening of skills gaps.

Tier II Supplemental Instruction

Tier II instruction and intervention (which typically serves 10-15% of the population) is supplemental, targeted academic and/or behavioral instruction that is provided in addition to the core instruction. (It is critical to understand that Tier II supports do not take the place of high-quality Tier I instruction but are provided in addition to the high-quality instruction students receive with their peers.) Tier II interventions are designed for students who have not positively responded to Tier I efforts, instruction, and/or behavior management within the general classroom. It is recommended that a hearing screening and a vision screening take place as

students transition from Tier II to Tier III to rule out an underlying problem that might be causing lack of progress.

Within the Tier II level of support, the teacher must provide additional instructional support within the classroom, aligned to core lessons. These interventions should be carefully developed using various instructional planning resources. Tier II interventions focus on specific, identified skill gaps, and are closely monitored. Additionally, Tier II interventions must be data-driven and follow a progression of skills. The interventions are scaffolded based on the individual needs of the student. Intervention sessions can be conducted one-on-one or in a small group setting for 20-30 minutes 3-5 days per week. Key instructional features that characterize Tier II intervention sessions should include differentiated instruction, modeling, multiple student responses, and immediate feedback. Students receiving Tier II supports are progress monitored minimally every other week (twice a month). Regular fidelity checks are administered at equal intervals to ensure implementation of the intervention is carried out with integrity.

Examples of Possible Tier II Supports	
Elementary	Secondary
• Teach word reading strategies (e.g., letter-sound relationships, reading by analogy, variable vowel sounds, affixes, etc.) • Highlight unfamiliar words and main points in reading material. • Give directions in small steps (Rewrite or simplify the directions as needed.) • Allow students to perform alternate versions of assignments, including role playing the sequence of events in stories. • Reteach specific concepts and then allow for retesting of material.	• Provide a study guide for the student to follow during lectures that contains the most important content. • Allow students to type rather than write and encourage use of spell check. • Provide graphic organizers to brainstorm vocabulary and ideas before writing. • Provide outlines, summaries of chapters, vocabulary words, and preview questions before reading. • Reteach specific concepts and then allow for retesting of material.

While these supports are categorized as elementary or secondary, many are interchangeable and can be adjusted for application at all instructional levels. Student support should always be aligned to student need(s).

Additional examples can be found in the AL-MTSS Instructional Accommodations Guidance located at the end of this manual.

Referral to the Problem-Solving Team

A student should be referred to the Problem-Solving Team (PST) if progress monitoring data does not show adequate student progress with Tier II academic support and more intensive academic intervention is needed. See [Guidance for PST Referrals](#).

Tier III Intensive Interventions

Tier III intervention (typically serving 1-5% of the population) provides the *most* intensive, targeted instruction specifically designed to meet the individual needs of the student. Tier III instruction should be designed to increase an individual student's rate of progress, close deficit gaps between the student and their peers, based on the student's need as determined by assessment data (universal screenings, hearing and vision screenings, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, etc.) and aligned to core curricula. Intensive interventions should be evidence-based, taught explicitly and systematically, and judiciously monitored for fidelity during implementation. Intensive instruction is provided in small groups or on an individual basis as dictated by the collected data. Tier III intervention should occur:

- As outlined by the intervention program,
- In accordance with the individualized plan, or
- For 30-60 minutes daily

Note: Tier III supports, and interventions must not supplant core instruction and universal supports. Students must continue to receive high-quality, core instruction with their peers. Tier III is not synonymous with special education; students with disabilities may not need Tier III support, and students not identified with a disability may in fact need Tier III supports. The overall goal of the PST process is to enhance the success of students who display a variety of needs, rather than solely a means to determine whether a student qualifies for special education.

Tier III interventions should be progress monitored weekly (one data point per week). Also, it should be determined that a student's lack of growth is not due to a hearing or vision problem that may be keeping him/her from mastering skills.

Appendix

The following examples can be found in the Tier II section of the document appendix:

- [Student Academic Problem-Solving Guide \(Tier I\)](#)
- [Academic Risk Problem-Solving Guide \(Tier II\)](#)
- [Kindergarten Guidance \(Tier II\)](#)

The following externally linked resources may be helpful in developing PK-12 Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies:

- Alabama Teaching and Learning Instructional Framework

Behavioral Supports

The ALSDE is committed to a multi-tier system of supports to collaborate with districts, schools, and communities to meet the needs of the whole child. This results in a commitment to provide

for the behavioral needs of every child by ensuring equitable access to opportunities that build success, confidence, and skills, while communicating a high level of expectations so that every child feels valued and accepted. Behavioral skills must be explicitly taught, and modeled while being positively and consistently reinforced. For students to be successful, they must be given ample feedback and opportunities for practice.

The Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) framework provides guidelines and suggestions for each tier.

Tier I Behavioral Supports

Tier I incorporates best practices that should be school, program, and/or facility wide and included in every classroom.

The following steps should be performed by all schools in the context of PLCs to provide Tier I behavior supports for all students:

- Develop school, program, and/or facility wide expectations, classroom/area rules, a reinforcement and consequence system, and a consistent office discipline referral (ODR) system.
- Teach the developed expectations and rules, as well as classroom and area procedures.
- Analyze data from ODRs and other linked data sources for planning with staff, students, families, and the community.
- Make changes as needed based on the gathered data.

Tier II Behavioral Supports

Tier II incorporates best practices for those students who are not making progress with Tier I supports. Unsuccessful behaviors are not only those external behaviors like physical aggression and not following rules (i.e., running in the hallway, repeatedly out of seat) and norms/laws (i.e., stealing, truancy) but also other, less noticeable external behaviors and internal behaviors. These may include off-task behavior, not completing assignments, difficulty with peer relationships, sleeping in class, etc. To address these behaviors, a targeted support plan that includes specific intervention recommendations is encouraged.

Examples of Possible Tier II Supports

Elementary

Secondary

- Use a special sign or signal between teacher and student to notify student of an inappropriate behavior occurring.
- Offer facilitated socialization at recess, lunch, and breaks.
- Conduct structured role playing, both with successful and undesired outcomes (i.e., troubleshooting).
- Teach and implement self-monitoring and self-control techniques.
- Use a variety of groupings to determine the situation in which student is most comfortable.
- Provide alternative activities to stress-producing tasks (e.g., writing a poem instead of reciting it to the class).
- Create a quiet space for students to retreat when feeling stressed or when they need a quiet place to complete assignments.
- Check with students every day, saying hello and asking them open-ended questions.
- Allow frequent structured breaks.

Note: Additional examples can be found in the AL-MTSS Instructional Accommodations Guidance.

Referral to the Problem-Solving Team

A student should be referred to the Problem-Solving Team (PST) if progress monitoring data does not show adequate student progress with Tier II behavioral support and more intensive support is needed.

Tier III Behavioral Supports

Tier III utilizes best practices for students who are not making progress with Tier II supports. The supports provided at Tier III should be individualized to each student. To provide individualized supports, it is important to understand the function(s) of a student's behavior(s). Without determining the function of a behavior, it is difficult to develop individualized interventions. Though not required by law, functional behavioral assessments (FBA) provide information from multiple sources in the form of observations, interviews, and anecdotal notes. The data collected through FBAs make it possible to develop function-based behavior intervention plans (BIP), individualized to each student. BIPs define the target behavior(s), provide information on current behavior(s), and detail interventions to use to assist the student in meeting the target behavior(s). At a minimum, observation notes should be used to create a BIP that lists possible interventions to use. Behavioral interventions at Tier III include individualized reinforcement and consequence systems with specific reinforcement options gathered through an interest inventory or observation, individualized schedules, replacement behaviors, etc.

For students who are in Tiers II or III due to behavioral needs, it is important to determine the amount of behavioral support needed versus the need for both academic and behavioral support, as many inappropriate behaviors are exhibited due to struggles with academic work (in length, in difficulty, in type of assignment, etc.). For example, a student who talks to and disturbs others at the end of whole groups may do so because his attention span has ended. Another student

may become angry or upset at the difficulty of a math worksheet and have verbal outbursts or kick chairs. These students may be provided with both academic and behavioral interventions.

Behavior Expectations and Responses to Behavior

The guidance for school-wide behavior expectations and responses to behavior located in the appendix provide a resource for thinking about how schools communicate behavior expectations and the responsibilities that students, staff, administrators, and parents each have in responding to the academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness needs of every student.

Appendix

The following examples can be found in the Tier II section of the document appendix:

- Student Behavior Problem-Solving Guide (Tier I)
- Behavior Risk Problem-Solving Guide (Tier II)
- Kindergarten Guidance (Tier II)
- Elementary School-Wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior
- Secondary School-Wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior
- Behavior Plan Decision Tree

Guidance for PST Referrals

The information in this section provides guidance for referral, documentation, suggestions for forms, child find, and frequently asked questions.

Referral to the PST

The grade level/content PLC should refer a student to the Problem-Solving Team (PST) if progress monitoring data does not show adequate student progress after eight weeks (or four weeks if on a block schedule) and additional intensive support is needed. Additionally, a transfer student should be referred if he/she has one of the following indicators:

1. Grades K–3: Student has failed one grade. Grades 4–12: Student has failed two grades.
2. A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than 20 days in the current school year.
3. A student who did not score at the required achievement level on any part of the Grade 3 statewide accountability assessment.
4. A student is promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

Documentation of the PST Process

Proper documentation is essential in the PST process. Written summaries of the team's actions should be kept for every meeting. The actions of the PST should be so clear that new teachers each year will have no difficulty determining what has been tried and found successful for the student in the past. All information should be dated.

Documentation of PST activities should include the following:

- Student's name
- Name of team members
- Meeting dates
- Identification of student learning or behavior problems in objective and observable terms
- Any records of assessment, including progress monitoring data
- Educational plan and implementation results
- Follow-up and, as appropriate, continuous evaluation

A Note about Child Find

Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children aged 3 to 21 with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. The Child Find mandate applies to all children who reside within the state, including children who attend private schools and public schools, highly mobile children, migrant children, homeless children, and children who are wards of the state.

The district is responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating all students suspected of having a disability significantly affecting performance as compared to that of their peers and expectations for grade/level. Students may be identified for a suspected disability regardless of

tier or placement within the continuum of supports. Documentation of accommodations and interventions, the duration of those supports, and evidence of the effectiveness of supports must demonstrate need beyond high-quality tiered instruction.

Students suspected of having a disability that are identified through Child Find continue to receive high quality classroom instruction and supports for academics and behavior. All requests for comprehensive assessments for children suspected of having a disability should be submitted immediately to the district's special education director or school administrator. Written consent for the evaluation must be obtained from the parent prior to the assessment.

IDEA does not require all students to go through PST prior to a comprehensive assessment if a disability is suspected. Students eligible for special education services after comprehensive assessments will have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) put in place. Students that are not eligible for an IEP must be referred (or referred back) to the Problem-Solving Team and may be eligible for a 504 plan.

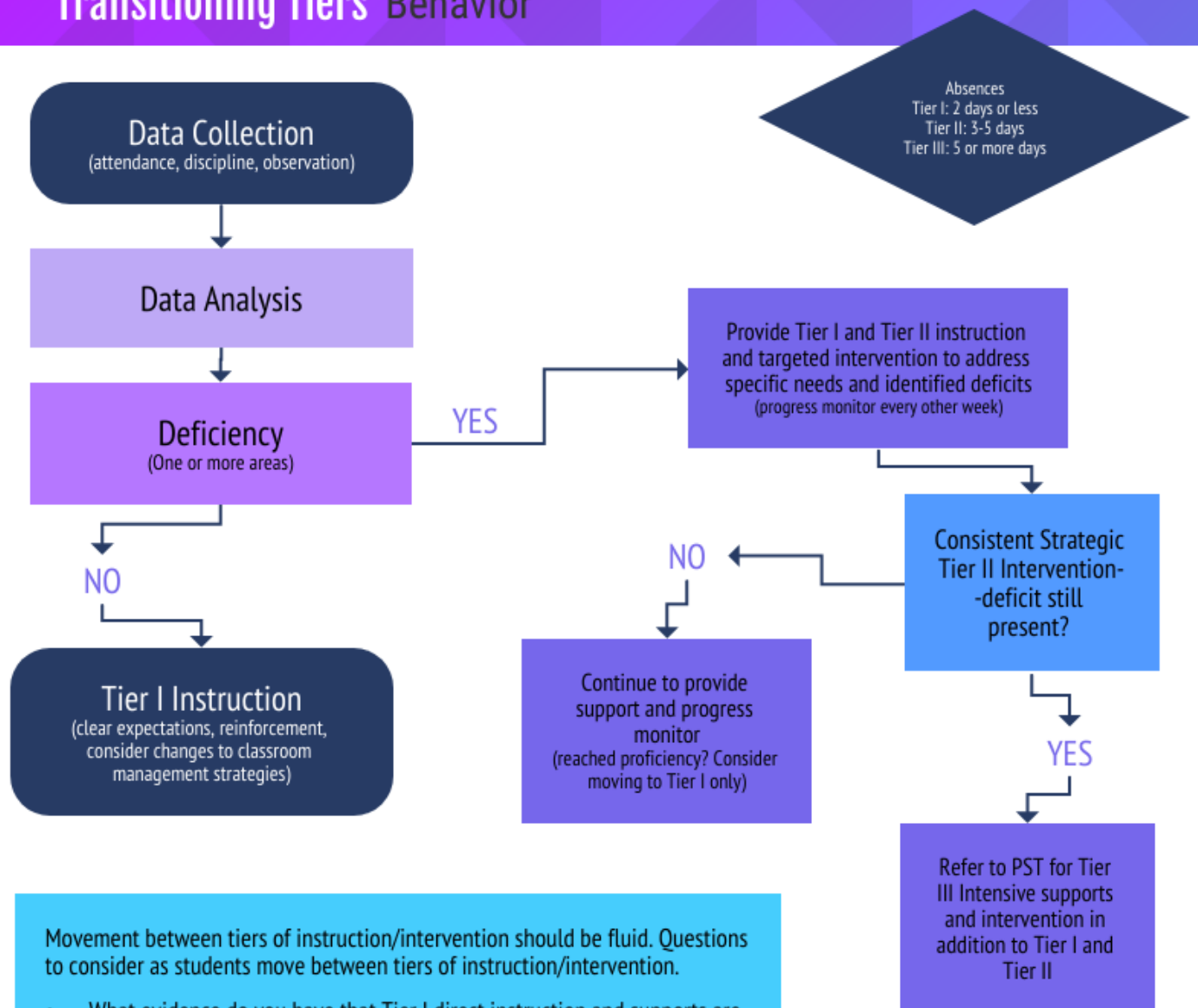
Second Grade Child Find

Child Find procedures include the identification of potential students to be served and supported within gifted education. According to the ALSDE Special Education Services Supp. No. 07-2, 290-8-9-12., Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform to who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth processing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

In an effort to promptly and consistently identify students showing early potential for gifted education support, Second Grade Child Find dictates that all second-grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist provided by the State Department of Education. Every LEA is required to have a team dedicated to evaluating referred students in aptitude, performance, and characteristics using the ALSDE approved assessments, data collection materials, and forms.

Additionally, students may be referred for gifted screening by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals outside of the Second Grade Child Find procedures providing that the student is six years of age or older and has not previously been determined to be unqualified within a single school term. More information about Gifted Education and Special Education Services can be found within the Divisions and Offices, Special Education page on the Alabama Achieves website.

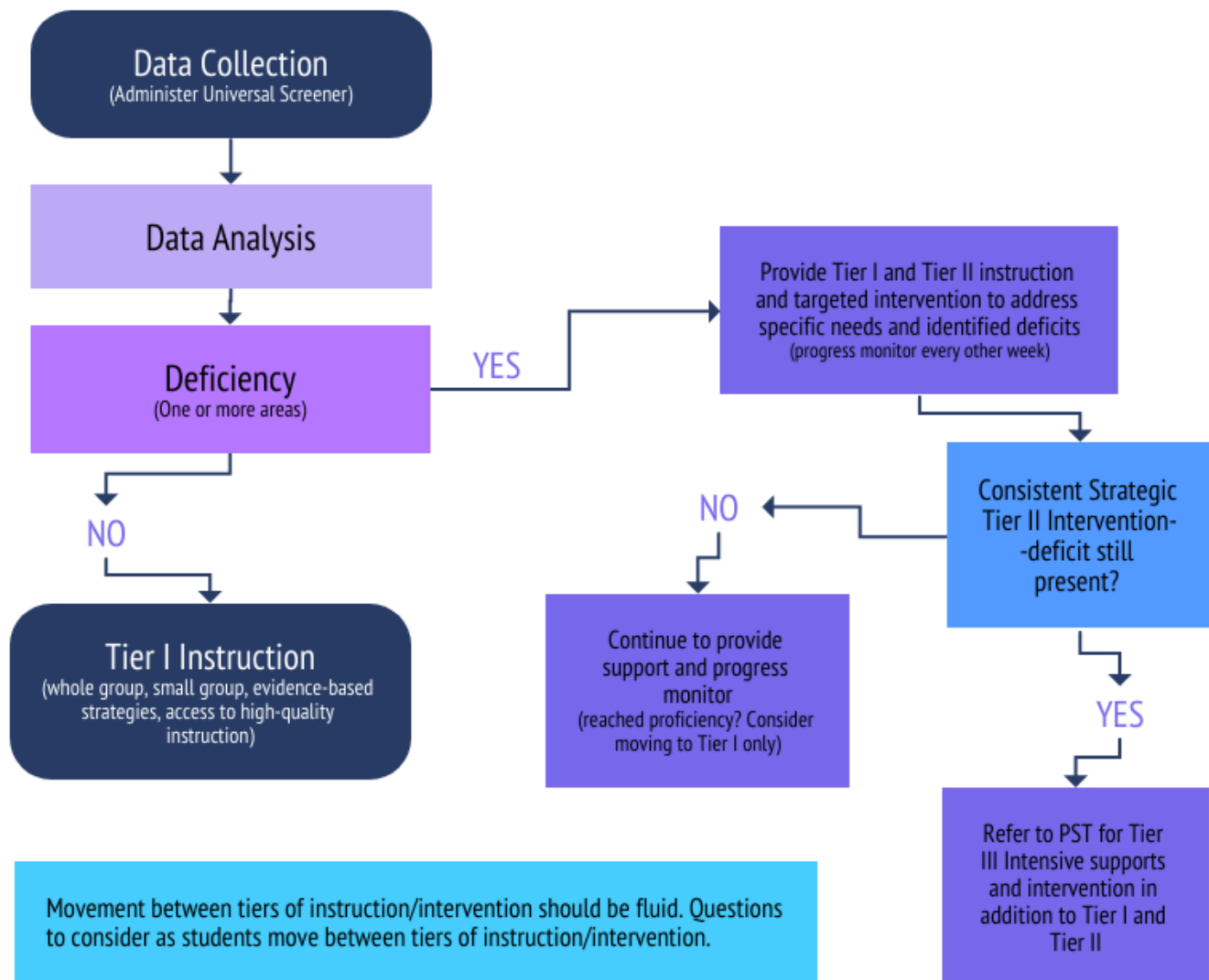
Transitioning Tiers Behavior



Movement between tiers of instruction/intervention should be fluid. Questions to consider as students move between tiers of instruction/intervention.

- What evidence do you have that Tier I direct instruction and supports are ineffective?
- Has there been a recent increase of performance?
- Has the student spent sufficient time with this intervention?
- Has there been an investigation to fidelity of instruction?
- Has instruction followed the plan of an instructional protocol?
- Has the instruction been an appropriate match to skill need?
- Does the student participate actively in the intervention instruction?

Transitioning Tiers Academic



Movement between tiers of instruction/intervention should be fluid. Questions to consider as students move between tiers of instruction/intervention.

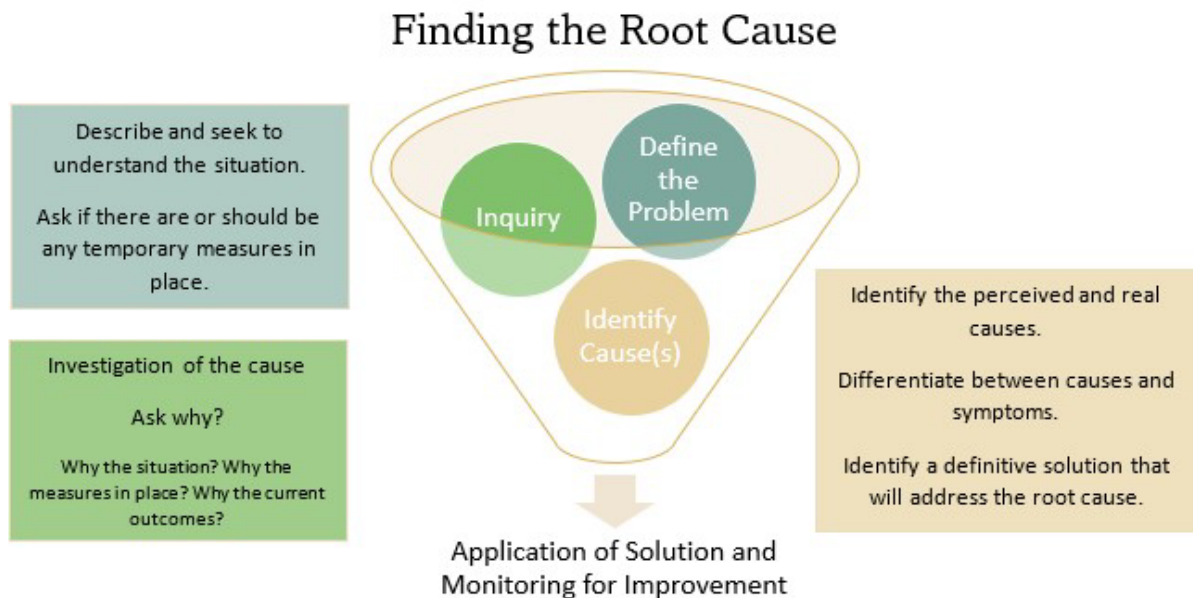
- What evidence do you have that Tier I direct instruction and supports are ineffective?
- Has there been a recent increase of performance?
- Has the student spent sufficient time with this intervention?
- Has there been an investigation to fidelity of instruction?
- Has instruction followed the plan of an instructional protocol?
- Has the instruction been an appropriate match to skill need?
- Does the student participate actively in the intervention instruction?

Suggested Forms for PST Tasks

Name of Form	Purpose	Suggested Format
PST Request	Provide information about the student's difficulties, strengths, and weaknesses.	Combination of checklist, narrative, and incorporate student records are most beneficial
Parent Invitation to Meeting	Clearly inform parents of the purpose of the request and invite their participation in the process	Proactive phone call followed-up with written documentation as required by Alabama Literacy and Numeracy Acts. The letter should request parent return with signature
Meeting Summary	Document the actions of the PST in each meeting. PST members should refrain from making diagnoses/judgement statements. Problems should be clearly defined in objective language.	Discussion should be summarized, and recommendations documented. If the student is being referred to special education, considered for 504 eligibility, or no longer needs the services of the PST team, the summary should reflect this decision.
Educational Plan	This may be included with the summaries or developed as a separate document. Team members should develop an appropriate Educational Plan based on the student's strengths and weaknesses.	Specific goals selected to address the student's needs, interventions used, what and when progress monitoring data will be collected, and the outcomes after implementation. The plan should be implemented for an appropriate period as designed/researched in the intervention. Plans should be updated as needed based on student response to the intervention. The outcome for each intervention should be clearly documented with the student's specific response in progress monitoring data clearly documented with analysis of trends.
Behavior Documentation	Contain progress monitoring data compared to baseline information which documents the student's behavior difficulties.	Includes antecedent, behavior, and consequences, such as a functional behavior assessment.
Dismissal Letter	Used to explain the decision to dismiss a student from PST if the parents do not attend the PST meeting.	Proactive phone call followed-up with written documentation as required by Alabama Literacy and Numeracy Acts. The letter should request parent return with signature

Conclusion

The PST Resource Manual provides guidance in the identification of student needs and the alignment of intervention and support through problem-solving teams (PST). The school administrator, as the instructional leader, determines not only the culture and climate of the school, but the way in which all staff and faculty respond to student need. Recognizing students as multifaceted, experiencing influences and trauma in numerous aspects of their lives and acknowledging that students may require attention and support, is the first step in building a whole-child responsive learning environment. The foundation of strong evidence-based instructional practices delivered with fidelity to all students during core Tier I instruction is essential in creating equitable academic success for all students. The RTI (Response to Instruction) and PBS (Positive Behavior Supports) models are complimentary to that core instruction, providing additional support and intervention when required as identified by the data-gathering practices of the PLC and PST teams. Administrative leadership presence and guidance within the PLC and PST is necessary for successful implementation. The AL-MTSS Framework, therefore, provides tools for both district and school leadership to incorporate five essential elements: data-based decision making, team-driven leadership, safe and supportive learning environment, engaged stakeholders, and PK-12 evidence-based instructional strategies applicable to all aspects of school life.



Leadership-led proactive approaches to the unique academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness needs of students reduce the instances for reactive solutions and strengthen the relationship between student, family, school, and community. Ultimately, the goal is to find the root cause of any student learning interferences so that real solutions can be developed to target those causes. AL-MTSS supported by RTI and PBS function to discover those root causes—whether the cause(s) identified be a discrepancy in delivery of instruction, lack of access to supports, basic functioning needs, or a combination thereof.

April 2023

The ALSDE has a wealth of knowledge and supports available to further aid in the implementation of PST. AL-MTSS Regional Implementation Coaches are also available for consultation and guidance. For immediate assistance, refer to the state website at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/> or contact Kristie Shankles at the Office of Student Learning at 334-694-4692, email kristie.shankles@alsde.edu, or write:

Office of Student Learning
Alabama State Department of Education
50 North Ripley
Montgomery, AL 36104



Frequently Asked AL-MTSS PST Questions

AL-MTSS Regional Implementation Coaches are great area resources for more PST answers and support.



How does PST relate to AL-MTSS?



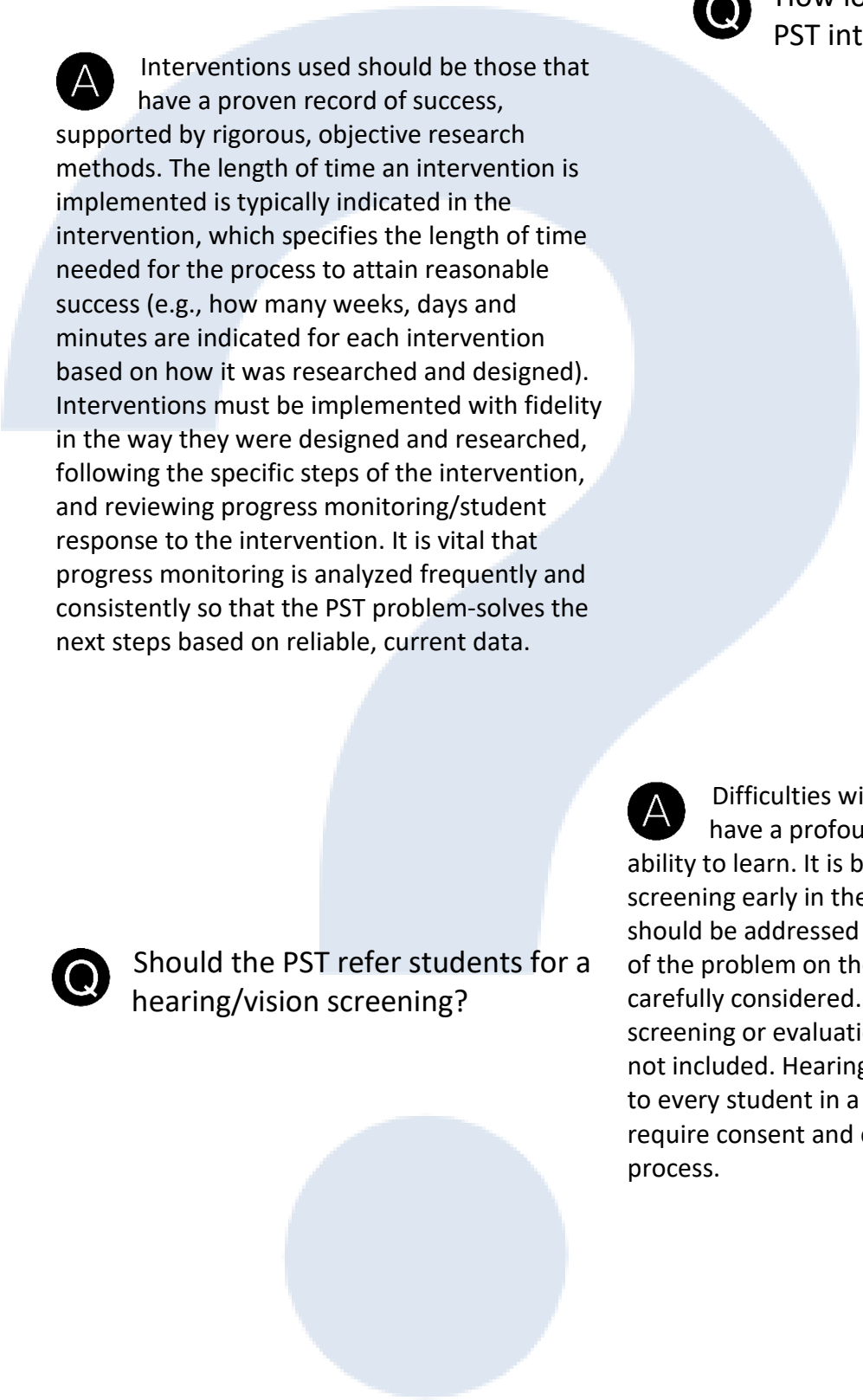
The problem-solving team is an important element of AL-MTSS, the framework that ensures all students have the foundational, academic, and behavioral supports necessary to be successful. Students are referred to the PST when they do not show success with Tier I and Tier II supports.

Q How does PST relate to RTI and PBS?

A RTI and PBS provide the structure and support for students to be successful with academics and behavior. The PST utilizes RTI and PBS to ensure all students are provided with the appropriate support for their individual needs.

Q What happens when PST addresses a problem?

A A systematic, collaborative problem-solving process is used to generate recommendations that are targeted to the student's learning and/or behavior problem. These recommendations, which include a specific academic and/or behavior plan, are documented in PST records and provided to the student's teacher (s) and/or others to implement with the student. The team then meets monthly to review the student's progress monitoring data and determine the need for continuing, modifying, or concluding the intervention (e.g., increase time, additional supports).



A Interventions used should be those that have a proven record of success, supported by rigorous, objective research methods. The length of time an intervention is implemented is typically indicated in the intervention, which specifies the length of time needed for the process to attain reasonable success (e.g., how many weeks, days and minutes are indicated for each intervention based on how it was researched and designed). Interventions must be implemented with fidelity in the way they were designed and researched, following the specific steps of the intervention, and reviewing progress monitoring/student response to the intervention. It is vital that progress monitoring is analyzed frequently and consistently so that the PST problem-solves the next steps based on reliable, current data.

Q How long is the research-based PST intervention implemented?

Q Should the PST refer students for a hearing/vision screening?

A Difficulties with hearing and/or vision can have a profound impact on a student's ability to learn. It is beneficial to complete a screening early in the PST process. Any problems should be addressed immediately, and the impact of the problem on the student's learning should be carefully considered. Consent is required for any screening or evaluation in which all students are not included. Hearing and vision screenings given to every student in a particular grade do not require consent and can be used as part of the PST process.



Can the PST refer students for evaluation for special education consideration?



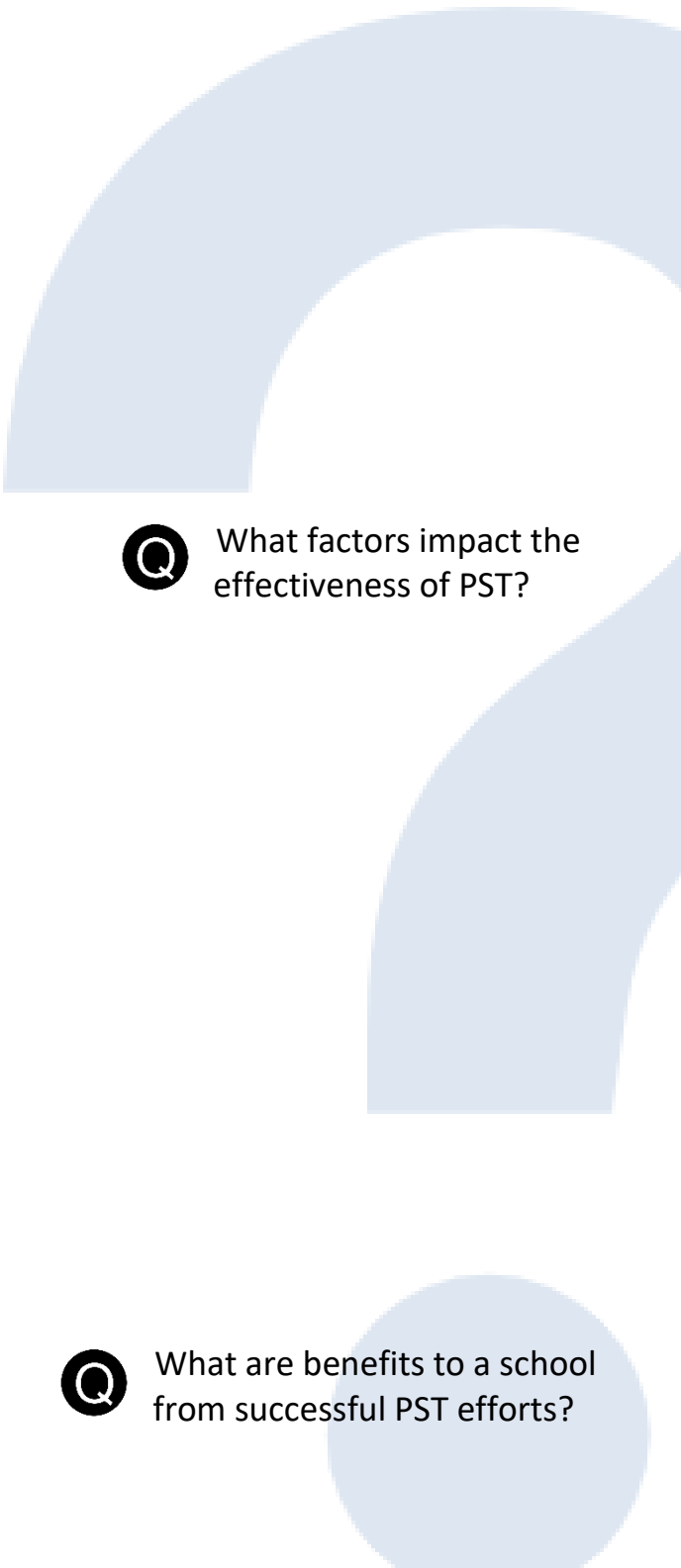
Yes, but only after several important decision criteria are met: 1) Reasonable PST interventions of sufficient duration have been carefully attempted, without success; and 2) the cause of the problem is suspected to be a disability that cannot be resolved without special education services. Interventions to support the student must be continued during the special education evaluation period. Keep in mind the goal of the PST process is NOT qualifying for special education. Rather, it is a proactive and preventative process to give students the specific supports or interventions needed to be successful. When the process is working correctly, most students will respond to the instruction (intervention) and be ultimately dismissed from PST



Many indicators can show success of the PST process, from parent/faculty satisfaction; to pre/post student performance; to placement rate for initial referrals to special education, i.e., that a high percentage of referrals to special education indeed were found eligible.



How can local school systems determine the effectiveness of their PST process?



Q What factors impact the effectiveness of PST?

A The most important factor in the success of a PST is the attitude with which school personnel view the process. It is most effective when looked upon as a team process for supporting the teacher and student. The effectiveness is greatly reduced when administrators and/or teachers see the process as being simply a paperwork requirement for special education placement. Secondly, the PST must use a data-driven problem-solving process, be well-organized, and have clear definitions of roles and responsibilities. All participants should be appropriately trained in the process, procedures, and legal aspects. Finally, the paperwork should be teacher friendly and efficient while still meeting legal requirements and providing enough information to future teachers and service providers. Ultimately, the success of any PST relies on the foundation of support at Tiers I and II. Success is defined by schools analyzing their data to identify school-wide, classroom, and individual student needs; using research-based strategies and interventions; and providing ongoing professional learning, coaching, and measurement of student response to these supports. When these are successful, the number of students referred for PST is reduced, which increases the time and opportunity to provide intensive/individualized support with better outcomes.

Q What are benefits to a school from successful PST efforts?

A An effective PST and RTI/PBS are highly correlated with positive school climate and successful outcomes for students. Some benefits of an effective PST often include higher graduation rate, better test scores, fewer students retained in grade, better attendance (by teachers and students), less teacher turnover, better discipline, ready-made needs assessment on teacher needs, more parent involvement, more successful inclusion of special education students in regular classes, and more.



Should parents be invited to participate in PST meetings held for their child?



Yes, parents must be notified when students move to Tier III. The Alabama Literacy Act (ALA) and Alabama Numeracy Act (ANA) require parental notification for an opportunity to participate in PST meetings. While it is best practice to notify parents of students receiving Tier II interventions, it is required to notify parents of students receiving Tier III interventions.



Do parents have to provide consent for a PST meeting?



Although parents should be invited to all PST meetings, they do not have to give consent for the PST meeting to take place or to give consent for the PST plan to be implemented. Every effort should be made, however, to help parents view the problem-solving team process in a positive light and to understand that this process is not a special education placement.



Everyone who works with the student should continue to implement the research-based interventions and other efforts outlined in the student's plan.



The PST has referred a student to special education. What should happen while the special education evaluation is in process?



Do students who have difficulty with communication, such as articulation, have to be assisted by the PST before they can be referred to special education for a speech evaluation?



The PST process applies to all students. Attempts to assist students should occur through the PST with interventions targeting articulation, speech, or language difficulties documented with progress monitoring before a referral to special education is made. Of course, if there is clear evidence that strongly suggests the presence of a disability, the school may bypass PST interventions and refer the student to special education. The evidence considered and the reasons for the PST bypass must be clearly documented by the PST team. A SLP may work with a student prior to a referral on articulation.



Can special educators be members of a school's Problem-Solving Team?



Problem-solving teams should invite appropriate specialists to meetings based on individual student need(s). These specialists include special education teachers, administrators, school psychologists, or any other individuals with specialized training who can provide insight about the student and focus on matching research-based interventions to student need(s) and analysis of response to intervention/progress monitoring. PST is envisioned as a collaboration between general and special education. IDEA contains a provision that addresses "protections for [students] not yet eligible for special education and related services."



What does this mean for the PST Process?



Simply stated, a general education student whose behavior elicits disciplinary action of the school or school system must be afforded all the rights and procedural safeguards (due process) under the IDEA if the school or school system knew or should have known that the student was a student with a disability. At the very least, the PST should consider inviting the school psychologist and/or the special education teacher to attend a PST meeting for the student in order to assist the team in decision making about a special education referral. Students with persistent or escalating behaviors should not remain on the same PST plan when there is documentation of lack of response or poor response to, research-based interventions matched to their need(s).

Appendix

The appendix of the Guidance Manual for Problem-Solving Teams contains tools that may be utilized in implementing problem-solving teams. The tools are not required forms, but they are guides to foster analysis and conversation during the problem-solving process. The vignettes are designed to be illustrative for the reader and generate thoughts when planning for PST work.

Tier I Academic Problem-Solving Guide

Tier I Behavior Problem-Solving Guide

Developing and effective RTI Model Master Schedule Reflection Tool

Summative Assessment Discussion Guide

Item Analysis for Assessments Discussion Guide

Writing Measurable Goals and Objectives

Short-Term Objective/Benchmarks Tracking

Annual Goals

Tier I Conversation Guide for ELs and EL Reflection & Feedback Tool

Tier II Academic Risk Problem-Solving Guide

Tier II Behavior Risk Problem-Solving Guide

Implementation Error Chart

Stages of Language Acquisition

Foundational Wellness MTSS for Kindergarten Guidance

Elementary School-wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior

Secondary School-wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior

Behavior Plan Decision Tree

Individualized Behavior Plan

High Dosage Tutoring

AL-MTSS PST Referral – Parent Contact Script

Vignettes

Student Academic Problem-Solving Guide Tier I
Date:
Team Members Present:
<i>Sort data prior to discussion.</i>
1. List and discuss observations of the number of students indicating high academic risk, including the most typical reasons for elevated scores (grades, attendance, or graduation path).
2. List ideas for addressing the needs of individual students with highest academic risk.
3. List and discuss observations of the number of students indicating some academic risk, including the most typical reasons for elevated scores (grades, attendance, or graduation path).
4. List ideas for reducing the number of students indicating some/high academic risk.
5. Other comments/concerns/suggestions.

Student Behavior Problem-Solving Guide Tier I
Date:
Team Members Present:
<i>Gather data relevant to student behavior and sort by date.</i>
1. List and discuss observations of the number of students indicating high behavior risk (discipline, attendance, life skills).
2. List ideas for addressing the needs of individual students with highest behavior risk.
3. List and discuss observations of the number of students indicating some behavior risk (discipline, attendance, life skills).
4. List ideas for reducing the number of students indicating some/high behavior risk.
5. Other comments/concerns/suggestions

Master Schedule Reflection Tool

The purpose of this tool is to develop a critical questioning of the master schedule to identify areas for improvement and build in specific targeted time for intervention, meeting, and communication. An RTI-conscious master schedule must be constructed well in advance of the upcoming school year; therefore, this tool should be used before preparing for that schedule creation.

Questions to Consider	Response	Plan for Implementation
How was the current schedule created? - What priorities were set when creating the current master schedule? - How did those priorities positively affect learning? Evidence? - How did those priorities negatively affect learning? Evidence?		
What support is needed within the master schedule to build student success? - Is there sufficient quality instructional time primarily in Tier I for all students? - How much time is spent in intervention? - Is more time spent in robust Tier I instruction so that intervention is a support and not a replacement? - Is there time available for some students to meet with specialists? - How is time spent addressing universal learning skills?		
Are there barriers preventing the creation of a schedule of support, inclusivity, and rigor? - Are specialists shared with other schools creating limitations on services? - Do some students require class attendance at specific times, limiting when they could receive instruction in grade-level essentials?		
What are the master schedule nonnegotiable(s) for our school and/or district? - What core elements of the current schedule are essential and cannot be adjusted? - Where is their flexibility in the current master schedule? - What are the important elements that must be included in the new master schedule?		
What are next steps towards progress? - Can the master schedule be adjusted, or does it require permission or approval? - Does their need to be consideration and collaboration for the sharing of specialists across schools? - How will changes be received by faculty? Should there be efforts to bolster climate around scheduling decisions? - What is the timeline for this completion and implementation?		

Summative Assessment Discussion Guide Grade Level/Content Area PLC (Tier I)		
Date:	Grade:	Subject:
Teacher:		Assessment/Standard:
Team Members Present:		
<i>Discuss the overall success of your class with this assessment.</i>		
☐ The majority of the students did pass.		☐ The majority of the students did not pass.
Evidence: How many students passed the assessment? How many students did not pass the assessment?		
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the instruction that led to this assessment.</i>		
☐ The instruction was aligned to the Alabama Course of Study. ☐ The instruction was aligned to common unit and scope and sequence of instruction ☐ The instruction was well understood by all those taking the assessment.		
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the fidelity of instruction for this assessment. What obstacles to instruction need to be addressed? (Check all that apply.)</i>		
☐ Student or teacher absences	☐ Instructional preparation and plan	
☐ Inadequate amount of time	☐ Instructional resources	
☐ Student engagement	☐ Behavior problems	
For any areas checked above, list suggestions for addressing the obstacles to instructional fidelity for this group.		

Item Analysis for Assessments Discussion Guide Tier I			
Date:	Grade:	Subject:	Teacher:
Assessment:		Total # of Items:	
Grade Percent Correct:		Class Percent Correct:	
<i>List below the standards that were assessed and commonly missed items for each standard.</i>			
Content Standard		Items for this standard below 70% correct for the class	
<i>What are the possible points and average percent correct for each standard for your class?</i>			
Standard	# of questions	# of possible points	Avg. percent correct
<i>What do these scores indicate about your students' success with this assessment?</i>			
<i>How well aligned was your instruction to the standards measured on this assessment?</i>			
<i>What are common missed items on this assessment due to the design of the assessment? What do those items indicate as questions that need to be rewritten or better aligned to the content?</i>			
<i>What are common items missed on this assessment due to student misunderstanding? What do those times indicate about content that needs to be retaught?</i>			

Writing Measurable Goals and Objectives

Learner Performance		Quality	Criteria	Conditions
- Alphabetize - Answer - Arrange - Ask - Bring - Chart - Choose - Compare - Compile - Complete - Compose - Contrast - Contribute - Correct count - Create - Decode - Define - Demonstrate - Describe - Determine - Differentiate - Does not ____ - Edit - Explain - Follow - Generate - Give - Greet	- Identify - Include - Initiate - Imitate - Label - List - Maintain - Make - Match - Name - Organize - Outline - Paraphrase - Point - Pronounce - Provide - Read - Record - Retell - Say - Select - Self-correct - Share - Solve - Speak - Spell - Summarize - Type - Volunteer	- Independently - With prompting: -verbal -visual -physical -gestural -limited - In the correct order - With correct capitalization - With correct punctuation of periods, question marks, commas... - With a main idea and (#) of supporting details - Legibly - Without assistance - Instantly and correctly - On the first attempt - At a level judged satisfactory by teacher - With a score of ____ from the ____ grading rubric	Frequency ____ x each day ____ x in ____ minutes each week - Whenever it appears Duration - For ____ minutes - For ____ repetitions in ____ (amount of time) Accuracy ____% of the time ____ out of ____ trials - No more than ____ errors - With ____ errors - No more than random error (define) Latency/Speed ____ words per minute ____ letters per minute - In less than ____ minutes ____ seconds or less ____ complete work in ____ minutes - Within ____ minutes of a verbal prompt Intensity - Within ____ pounds of pressure/force	Location - During lunch - In a large group - In a small group - In a 1:1 setting - During free/play time - Across environments - During time readings - In a sharing routine - In the community Givens - Given ____ paragraphs - Given pictures - Given unfamiliar material - Given words or letters - Given a topic - Given a story starter - Given CVC words - Given a calculator - given a model - given a writing prompt Misc - With typical peers - With adults - With ____ software (do not use brand names) - With ____ grade vocabulary - With two hands - With L/R hand - With a (#) key hit sequence through use of ____ (AT) - Through use of ____ strategy and/or behavior - In (type of) writing - In (grade level) test and/or material

Non-Measurable: comprehend, enjoy, feel, increase (from what to what?), know, listen, learn, manipulate (how?), participate (how?), realize, understand

Adapted from HCESC Smart Sheet, Chalfant and McGraw, 4/2004

Short-Term Objective/Benchmarks Tracking	
Action Analysis (define the skills needed to attain the annual goal)	
From action analysis, select one skill and indicate: Who Will do what How well Under what conditions	Create a short-term objective/benchmark from defined skill. Include all four pieces of information in any order.
Determine progress monitoring for short-term objective/benchmark. Who Using what From where How often	

Annual Goal(s)
Who (student)
Will do...what (performance/action)
How well (quality/criteria)
Under what conditions (context)
Draft an annual goal statement using the information in the boxes above. Be certain to include all pieces of information; the order of the information is not critical.
Neal, E., CCESC, 2005



**ENGLISH LEARNER
EDUCATION**
ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

EL Feedback/Reflection Tool

This tool is not intended to be used for evaluative purposes. It is designed to be used for reflection, to gather information about current practices and identify areas for growth.

Teacher Name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Subject: _____

Instructional Practices		No Evidence	Some Evidence	Substantial Evidence	Supporting Evidence/Observation Notes
General Instructional Practices	Is instruction clearly focused on the development of both content and academic language?				
	Is academic vocabulary taught explicitly and in context?				
	Does the classroom environment support and encourage participation from all students, including those from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds?				
	Does the teacher connect new learning to prior knowledge and/or cultural experiences?				
	Does the teacher maintain high expectations for all learners?				
	Does the teacher differentiate instruction and assessment based on English proficiency levels?				
	Is there evidence that the teacher has a foundational understanding of how to support ELs and/or collaborates with EL support staff?				
Scaffolding and Supports		No Evidence	Some Evidence	Substantial Evidence	Supporting Evidence/Observation Notes
Sensory	Does the teacher use various visuals (illustrations, photos, diagrams) to clarify concepts?				
	Is multimedia and/or technology (videos, simulations, virtual labs, podcasts) leveraged to facilitate learning and expression?				
	Are hands-on materials (manipulatives, realia, models) used to make learning concrete?				
	Does the teacher demonstrate or model tasks physically with clear actions?				
	Does the teacher use physical activities or gestures to convey meaning and engage students?				
Multimodal	Does the lesson design provide opportunities for ELs to learn through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing/representing?				
	Does the teacher consistently model multimodal communication (e.g., drawing while explaining, gesturing while speaking)?				
	Are ELs allowed to demonstrate understanding in various ways (e.g., drawing, labeling, creating presentations, using physical responses/acting out)?				
Interactive	Are opportunities for structured small group discussions frequent and purposeful?				
	Are activities organized in a way that allows all voices to be honored and heard (i.e., provide wait time, strategic grouping, use of roles)?				
	Is time provided for students to organize their thoughts and plan before writing or speaking tasks?				
	Are sentence stems/frames provided to guide ELs' conversations and promote use of academic language?				
	Is peer-to-peer learning or tutoring evident (e.g., buddy reading, paired problem-solving)?				
	Does the teacher conduct targeted opportunities to check understanding or provide specific feedback?				
	Are ELs prompted to clarify their ideas and negotiate meaning during discussions?				
Graphic	Does the teacher use graphic organizers (e.g., KWL, concept maps, T-charts) to structure information and make it visible?				
	Are flowcharts, timelines, or cycle diagrams used to illustrate processes or sequences?				
	Are charts, tables, or graphs used to organize and present data, facilitating interpretation?				
Linguistic	Is student's first language used as a support, when needed (e.g., cognates, translanguaging, allow student to respond/discuss in first language then transfer to English, etc.) rather than relying solely on direct translation?				
	Does the teacher utilize strategies to promote comprehension of complex text (i.e., text engineering, chunking, annotated visuals, pre-teaching essential vocabulary, etc.)				
	Does the teacher provide explicit instruction in academic English (e.g., vocabulary, sentence structures, discourse patterns)?				
Recommendations					
Next Steps					

Tier II

Academic Risk Problem-Solving Guide Tier II		
Date:	Grade:	Skill Deficit:
Team Members Present:		
<i>Discuss the overall progress of the group.</i>		
_____ Most students are meeting weekly goals.		_____ Most students are not meeting weekly goals.
What evidence indicates that students are meeting weekly goals?		
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the intervention plan for this group.</i>		
_____ The instructional plan for this intervention group is clear to the classroom teacher and is being implemented with fidelity.		_____ The instructional plan for this intervention group is unclear to the classroom teacher and additional supports are needed to implement with fidelity.
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the fidelity of instruction for the group. What obstacles to instruction need to be addressed? (Check all that apply.)</i>		
_____ Student or teacher absences	_____ Instructional plan	
_____ Inadequate amount of time	_____ Student engagement	
_____ Size of group	_____ Behavior problems	
For any areas checked above, list suggestions for addressing the obstacles to instructional fidelity for this group.		

Behavior Risk Problem-Solving Guide Tier II		
Date:	Grade:	Skill Deficit:
Team Members Present:		
<i>Discuss the overall progress of the group.</i>		
_____ Most students are meeting weekly goals.		_____ Most students are not meeting weekly goals.
What evidence supports students are meeting weekly goals?		
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the intervention plan for this group.</i>		
_____ The instructional plan for this intervention group is clear to the interventionist(s) and is being implemented with fidelity.		_____ The instructional plan for this intervention group is unclear to the interventionist and additional supports are needed to implement with fidelity.
Additional Information/Other Concerns:		
<i>Discuss the fidelity of instruction for the group. What obstacles to instruction need to be addressed? (Check all that apply.)</i>		
_____ Student or interventionist absences	_____ Instructional plan	
_____ Inadequate amount of time	_____ Student engagement	
_____ Size of group	_____ Behavior problems	
For any areas checked above, list suggestions for addressing the obstacles to instructional fidelity for this group.		

Implementation Error Chart		
Implementation Error	Signs that it occurred	Repair/prevent future errors
Implementation model is too loosely defined	- Getting results in some places, but not others - Differences in results across schools	- Establish desired outcomes of implementation & establish a plan for implementation - Follow implementation data & outcomes to know when it is off-track - Align organization training activities and management procedures
Interventions are not managed well	>10% of students have a failed response at Tier II and proceed to Tier III <5% of students have a failed response following Tier III	- Road test intervention before deploying it - Ensure appropriate training of those delivering intervention - Provide a written protocol for intervention delivery - Provide all needed materials to implement the intervention - Monitor fidelity - Measure integrity of intervention implementation - When integrity is strong, adjust intervention and continue monitoring
The school tries to run too many Tier III interventions	>20% of students are below criteria at screening >10% of students are eligible for Tier III according to local decision rules	- Verify that screening data is adequate - Examine patterns in screening data - Ensure the following are arranged for optimal learning: - Classroom conditions - Teacher-student interaction - Consequences during and outside of instruction - Gradewide, class wide, and small-group interventions have been implemented with integrity - Distinguish tiers by intensity - Expect/plan for errors in intervention implementation - Ensure decisions correspond to data and decision rules

Implementation Error Chart		
Implementation Error	Signs that it occurred	Repair / prevent future errors
The results are poor or are not known	- No data on student learning outcomes by class, grade, school - No disaggregated student learning data by demographic characteristics of students - No means of measuring progress toward system goals or making “apples to apples” comparisons - No evidence of AL-MTSS implementation	- Use data for multiple purposes - Resource allocation - Instructional time allocation - Rewarding teacher and student performance - Evaluate supplemental resources - Evaluate purchased programs - Use data to evaluate the efficiency of assessment systems - Brief and time efficient - Reliable - Valid - Accurate and efficient basis for decision-making
The implementation has lost momentum after some period of initial enthusiasm	- Absences from implementation meetings - No data, no follow-through - Signs of integrity problems surface - Suggestions of new model begin to surface	- Use data for multiple purposes - Resource allocation - Instructional time allocation - Rewarding teacher and student performance - Evaluate supplemental resources - Evaluate purchased programs - Use data to evaluate the efficiency of assessment systems - Brief and time efficient - Reliable - Valid - Accurate & efficient basis for decision-making
Implementers feel stuck at a phase of implementation (paralysis by analysis)	- Long delays between decisions - Large numbers of students for whom decisions have not been made - Begun implementation without committing to an implementation plan that specifies operational details of AL-MTSS - Contemplating implementation for one year	- Start small and expand with quality - Track student performance data as you go - If the answer is unknown, try something a measure, monitor and adjust
Scaling has outpaced capacity for effective implementation (too big, too fast)	- Different schools are getting different results - Rates of intervention failure are high - New teachers do not know how to implement procedures - Data are frequently missing - Decisions are made that do not correspond to the data - Long delays between decisions are occurring - Demand is outpacing ability to deliver - Coaches do not have sufficient knowledge and skills	- Ensure that implementation is not dependent upon one person - Integrate data on implementation and student learning outcomes in all decisions - Integrate professional development and personnel evaluations with AL-MTSS - Integrate assessments for efficiency - Integrate intervention resources for efficiency - Integrate program evaluation or system improvement with AL-MTSS data-based decision making

Stages of Language Acquisition		
Stage	Instructional Strategies	Assessment Strategies
Preproduction • Little or no comprehension • Survival English • Silent period • Learning basic conversation	• Visual supports/reinforcement in classroom • Recognition that students are building language even if they aren't demonstrating understanding • Cooperative learning • Peer mentoring • Inclusion in classroom life as much as possible	• Allow students to draw or use playdough to communicate what they have learned • Sequencing cards with illustrations • Gestures • Yes or no answers
Early Production • Limited comprehension • One or two-word responses • Simple vocabulary • Understands more than they are able to express • Students have between 500 and 1,000 English words they can use to communicate • Students usually use one or two-word phrases • Vocabulary and understanding are growing but students may be unable to demonstrate knowledge yet	• Visual supports • Picture books • Predictable text • Graphic organizers, charts, graphs • Total physical response • Sentence stems/labeling activities	• Yes or no questions • Accept one or two-word answers • Continue allowing visual representations and gestures
Speech Emergence • Understands social English/not much academic • Writes simple and complex sentences • Difficulty with content area vocabulary • Grade-level reading a challenge • Students have about 3,000 words they can use and understand • They can have short conversations • They are able to understand simple stories, especially with visual supports	• Provide modified texts • Offer written notes if possible • Continue providing some visual supports • Provide vocabulary in a manipulative form • Use choral reading and song • Include shared writing activities • Continue to use cooperative learning	• Allow extra time • Allow shortened assignments • Permits answers orally or pictorially • Continue to allow yes or no answers

Stages of Language Acquisition		
Stage	Instructional Strategies	Assessment Strategies
Early Fluency • Fluent in conversation • Difficulty with academic English • Literacy skills below a native speaker • Have about 6,000 words they use and understand • Use more complex sentences • Are more willing to express opinions	• continue to provide visual supports for complex vocabulary • provide sentence stems and writing frames as needed • explain figurative language or avoid entirely • push students to complete more complex, longer writing, accepting there will be grammatical errors	• completion of graphic organizers • extra time • opportunities to demonstrate knowledge orally • yes/no shortened answers • sentence stems to begin writing prompts
Fluency • Near native English speakers • Still some difficulty with academic vocabulary • Struggles with figurative language • Students are close to performing like their native English peers • May still struggle with figurative language • May still have an accent (particularly if they entered puberty before they began learning English)	• Completion of graphic organizers • Extra time • Opportunities to demonstrate knowledge orally • Yes/no or shortened answers • Sentence stems to begin writing prompts	• Continue strategies from earlier stages as needed; scaffolding to allow students to gain greater independence

Foundational Wellness

Multi-Tier System of Support Kindergarten Guidance

When Should You Write a Tier II Plan for Kindergarten Students

The majority of kindergarten students should not need a Tier plan during the first semester of instruction.

During the first semester, kindergarten teachers should:

- Closely monitor the progress of their core academics.
- Develop a Tier I plan to focus their core instruction on common areas of need.

However, there may be times when a Tier II or Tier III plan is warranted for specific students under the following circumstances:

- Student has significant behavior problems. (Use [Behavior Plan Decision Tree](#) to guide decisions).
- Student has significant gross or fine motor deficits.
- Student has significant adaptive behavior concerns (Toileting, Social Skills, Health and Safety, etc.).
- Student has significant communication deficits (Understanding and/or Producing Speech).
- Student has significant academic deficits in multiple areas (as shown by universal screening or classroom performance; pre-school skills, etc.).

By mid-year universal screening and performance, there may be indications to write individual Tier II plans based on:

- Student showing little to no growth from beginning to middle of the year based on universal screening and classroom performance.

Other Considerations:

- Tier II or Tier III instructional plans should be written as an alternative to retention. A student should not be considered for retention if a plan has not been written.
- The vast majority of students should be given the opportunity to have interventions as part of Tier II before a Tier III plan is written.

Elementary School-wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior

An established expectation for managing behaviors will support a proactive approach to classroom discipline. Prior to developing a plan, goals aligned to the vision and mission at the district and school level are important and should be communicated to all stakeholders.

District Vision/ Mission:	
School Vision/Mission:	

School-wide Expectations:

Once the district and school have established a vision and mission, the building leadership team should establish school wide expectations related to academics, behavior, and foundational wellness. These school wide expectations can be broken down into responsibilities for

- Students
- Faculty and Staff
- Parents
- Administrators

As leaders of their own learning, students should be encouraged to take ownership of their actions and be responsible for managing behaviors that will contribute to their success and well-being. It is useful to provide students with responsibilities you expect from them and then monitor them for effectiveness:

Elementary Student Responsibilities		
Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness Skills
I will: ✓ Be ready to learn on arrival. ✓ Be prepared with assignments and all necessary materials. ✓ Actively participate in all learning opportunities. ✓ Show my best effort on all assignments and not give up even when I struggle. ✓ Turn in all assignments neatly, completely, and on time. ✓ Ask for help when needed and communicate with teachers and parents. ✓ Make up work when absent.	I will: ✓ Meet or exceed school-wide behavior expectations. ✓ Use strategies learned in behavioral lessons to prevent or minimize triggers and manage agitation. ✓ Take responsibility for my own actions and their effect on others. ✓ Tell an adult about any unsafe behaviors or bullying behaviors I witness. ✓ Ask adults for help when needed.	I will: ✓ Take responsibility for my personal health (eat well, sleep, hygiene). ✓ Apply lessons from curriculum to interactions with peers and adults. ✓ Use positive social skills at school, at home, and in the community and encourage peers to use these skills. ✓ Cooperate with others, using kind words and actions. ✓ Listen politely and resolve conflicts peacefully.

The faculty and staff must hold themselves and all students accountable for the expectations that have been agreed upon. In order to accomplish this, all faculty and staff should demonstrate and adhere to the following academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness best practices:

Elementary Faculty and Staff Responsibilities	
Academics	Behavior
I agree to: • Provide core instruction according to district and state standards • Use proactive evidence-based strategies to support students' active engagement including but not limited to the following examples: ○ Active Supervision ○ Anticipate misconceptions ○ Instructional feedback ○ Instructional choice ○ Increased opportunities to respond ○ High probability requests ○ Anticipatory set ○ Daily objective or learning target ○ Lessons that include Direct instruction, Modeling, Guided and independent practice ○ Support students who miss instruction. ○ Accommodate students who have unique learning needs. ○ Embed literacy strategies in all subjects taught. ○ Collaborate with colleagues and prepare instruction with inclusion teachers and staff. ○ Provide meaningful and appropriate practice opportunities. ○ If you assign homework, make it relevant and meaningful and used for subsequent lessons during the week. ○ Provide feedback in a timely manner to students and parents. ○ Communicate with parents and students in a variety of ways. ○ Conduct, report, and use screening and assessments. ○ Benchmark reading and math 3 times a year ○ Use schoolwide data to consider Tier II or Tier III instruction. ○ Conduct regular progress monitoring with identified students.	I agree to: • Demonstrate professional behavior and positive attitude. • Implement behavior instruction with fidelity and consistency. • Foster a safe environment for all students. • Teach expectations for all settings within the first week of school and reteach according to schedule. • Continue to teach expectations informally each day through modeling and reinforcing. • Display and model school-wide expectations in classrooms and other key settings. • Use a positive response to initial indicators of not meeting expectations. • Praise students meeting expectations. • Redirect students who are struggling. • Allow student time to respond to request and re-engage. • Recognize/reinforce/change behavior. • Follow Reactive Plan for responding to repeated difficulties. (See Below) • Conduct, report, and use screening assessments to determine risk. (See assessment schedule.) • Monitor progress using a behavior screener. • Use behavior data to consider students' needs and guide instructional decisions. • Enter behavior data in management system on same day incident occurs. • Communicate with parents and students in a variety of ways. • Respond to behavior following the behavior reactive plan below.
Foundational Wellness	
I agree to: • Meet school-wide expectations. • Teach curriculum related to social skills/character according to schedule conducted by school counselor, school psychologist, or classroom teacher. • Collaborate regularly with colleagues. • Model social skills expected. • Provide reinforcement paired with behavior specific praise when students meet expectations. • Maintain communication with students and parent/guardian.	

The partnership between home and school is also a critical component of student success. For this reason, schools should include parent communication as an expectation for all faculty and staff. Parents in turn should be asked to partner with teachers in sharing these responsibilities:

Elementary Parent Communication Responsibilities		
Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
I will ensure open parent communication and will: • Explain and encourage parents to monitor student grades online regularly, communicating with student and teacher as needed. • Communicate the importance of making learning a priority because parents are their child's first and most important teachers. • Demonstrate ways parents can reinforce appropriate academic behavior at home. • Communicate that parents should schedule student appointments (e.g., doctor, dentist) outside of school hours when possible. • Encourage parents to provide a place for their child to study at home that is as free from distractions as possible. • Give parents ideas to encourage children to complete all practice opportunities and read at home (or read with child) daily. • Explain the importance of parent conferences and meetings, contacting school reschedule as needed.	I will ensure open parent communication and will: • Communicate the importance of following the district attendance policy. • Familiarize parents with the behaviors in the expectation matrix. • Explain the importance of modeling positive behaviors and reinforcing behavior expectations demonstrated at home. • Help parents understand the importance of supporting teacher and school efforts to promote positive behaviors. • Communicate the need for parents to support regular school attendance (on time and remaining all day). • Ensure parents recognize the need to communicate via email, phone, note, or in-person about any home circumstances that may affect their child.	I will ensure open parent communication and will: • Encourage parents to reinforce school expected behavior at school. • Explain the benefits of parents working as partners with teachers. • Reiterate the importance of open communication between parents and students about the bullying prevention program and life skills instruction. • Help parents to understand the importance of communicating social concerns about their child with school faculty and staff.

School administrators must establish, model, and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and practices within the school related to academics, behavior and foundational wellness.

Elementary Administrator Responsibilities		
Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
As the administrator, I will:	As the administrator I will:	As the administrator I will:
• Plan and provide professional learning with input from staff, featuring staff strengths. • Provide and support professional learning opportunities for faculty and staff to increase the use of researched based strategies with fidelity. • Organize and provide access to data and facilitate discussions related to data at least 4 times a year. • Provide resources and time for staff to use data to determine Tier II and Tier III intervention needs for students. • Provide fair, timely, and constructive feedback to staff. • Set high expectations for all stakeholders. • Attend PST Meetings as the instructional leader.	• Implement a proactive and reactive behavior plan. • Use behavior data to inform instruction. • Provide a safe and orderly environment. • Provide guidance to teachers for teaching, reinforcing, and monitoring student behavior. • Develop relationships with parents and families. • Attend various team meetings periodically to ensure fidelity and assess needs for resources and professional learning.	• Support staff in the implementation of the social skills program and bullying curriculum. • Provide resources as necessary. • Model and reinforce positive respectful social interactions with adults and students.

Once school-wide expectations for all stakeholders have been established, the next step is to determine how you as a school will respond to major and minor offenses. Although the goal is to take a proactive approach, it is necessary to identify how you will react when behaviors occur. This includes determining which offenses should be managed within the classroom and which should be handled by the office.

Classroom Managed vs. Office Managed Behaviors

Behavior Response Plan

Minor offenses: *Behaviors that impact the student and their learning or cause disruption to others (teacher managed)*

Minor Offenses include but are not limited to:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| • Distracting behaviors | • Non-compliant | • Talking out of turn |
| • Lying | • Unprepared for class | • Teasing |
| • Not doing classwork | • Not taking responsibility for actions | • Touching others' materials |
| • Out of seat/not in line | | • Playing with objects |

Initial Response is intended to support students to be successful in all settings by taking an instructional approach to behavior and responding calmly, supportively, and respectfully.

Minor Offense Steps:

1. Show empathy: Identify with student by making eye contact, showing concern, and considering triggers for the student. The goal is to support the student in making good choices and to create a positive, productive, and safe environment. It is important to assess whether the student can do what is being asked of them (won't do or can't do a problem?).
2. Maintain the flow of instruction: Give attention to students displaying appropriate behavior first and ensure instruction is moving forward. Consider the plan.
3. Acknowledge other students: Praising those who are meeting expectations is important to show students doing the appropriate behavior will get attention rather than those doing the inappropriate behavior.
4. Redirect and Reteach: Prompt students who are struggling by providing verbal and/or nonverbal reminders in private. (Identify with student by making eye contact and keep language clear, minimal and positive.) If behavior continues, reteach and model expectations for the student. Consider providing choices to help break the behavior chain (e.g., choice of task location or choice of task sequence).
5. Allow time and space: This allows students time to process, respond and re-engage.
6. Recognize/Reinforce: Reinforce students when appropriate behavior is demonstrated.
7. Record the incident.
8. The next day, use pre-correction by stating expectations before class or activity begins.
9. After the second incident of the same behavior within the same week, contact the parent.
10. On the third incident of the same behavior within the same week, report as a major referral.
11. Check with other teachers to see if the behavior occurs in multiple settings and review data sources for Tier II and Tier III support consideration.

Behavior Reactive Plan

Major offenses: *Behaviors that impact safety or are illegal (office managed)*

Major Offenses include but are not limited to:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| • Any action that causes harm | • Illegal substances | • Throwing objects |
| • Biting | • Intimidation | • Vandalism |
| • Credible threat to injure others | • Sexual behaviors | • Self-injurious behavior |
| • Fighting | • Stealing – major | • Weapons |
| • Forgery | | |

Initial Response is intended to support students to be successful in all settings by taking an instructional approach to behavior and responding calmly, supportively, and respectfully.

Major Offense Steps:

If danger is present, maintain room safety.

If needed, exit other students from instructional area following practiced plan.

Call for assistance if needed.

1. Show empathy; listen, provide wait time, and keep instruction moving forward.
2. Offer choices and wait time: ex: "I can see you are upset about ___, do you want to ___ or ___?"
3. Return to instruction and plan to debrief later: "We can talk later, right now I need to teach, and I need you to ..."
4. Focus on what you need the student to do: Use specific directives like "take your seat", not what you want them to stop doing.
5. Monitor student and use behavior specific praise and reinforcement.
6. Meet privately with student to debrief.
7. Complete office discipline referral.

Secondary School-wide Expectations and Responses to Behavior

An established expectation for managing behaviors will support a proactive approach to classroom discipline. Prior to developing a plan, aligned goals related to the vision and mission at the district and school level are important and should be communicated to all stakeholders. This may also include a purpose statement in order to help all stakeholders understand the why behind the district and school mission and vision.

District Vision/ Mission:	
School Vision/Mission:	
Purpose Statement:	

School-wide Expectations:

Once the district and school have established a vision and mission, the building leadership team should establish school wide expectations related to academics, behavior, and foundational wellness. These school-wide expectations can be broken down into responsibilities for

- Students
- Faculty and Staff
- Parents
- Administrators

At the secondary level, it is crucial for students to be prepared to navigate their future by advocating for themselves, monitoring their own behavior, and identifying areas they need to grow in order to be competitive in society.

It is useful to provide students with responsibilities you expect from them, and then monitor them for effectiveness:

Secondary Student Responsibilities		
Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
I will: • Be at school on time and stay all day. • Be prepared with completed homework and all necessary materials. • Actively participate in standards-based, core instruction and all learning opportunities. • Demonstrate best effort in all assignments and turn them in on time. • Ask for help when needed and communicate with teachers and parents. • Make up work when absent within an allowable timeframe.	I will: • Meet school-wide expectations stated in expectation matrix. • Use strategies learned in behavioral lessons to prevent or minimize triggers and manage agitation. • Take responsibility for my own actions and recognize the effect they have on others. • Inform an adult about any unsafe behaviors or bullying behaviors. • Report any suspicious or unsafe behavior.	I will: • Actively engage in lessons about social skills. • Apply lessons on social skills to interactions with peers and adults. • Use positive social skills at school, at home, and in the community and encourage peers to use these skills. • Cooperate with others, using kind words and actions. • Listen politely and resolve conflicts peacefully.

The faculty and staff must hold themselves and all students accountable for the expectations that have been agreed upon. In order to accomplish this, all faculty and staff should demonstrate and adhere to the following academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness best practices:

Secondary Faculty and Staff Responsibilities		
Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
I agree to: • Provide core instruction according to district and state standards with fidelity: ○ Teach strong, standards-based core lessons. ○ Differentiate and accommodate instruction to meet student needs. • Plan for learning opportunities that maximize the use of instructional time and student engagement. • Use proactive, evidence-based strategies to support students' active engagement. • Include evidence-based instructional practices to support quality lessons and the cycle of instruction. • Support students who miss instruction. • When possible, embed active literacy strategies in all subjects taught (e.g., reading, writing, vocabulary development, and collaboration). • Co-prepare lesson plans when working within an inclusion classroom. • Update online gradebook weekly. • If you assign homework, make it relevant and meaningful and use it for subsequent lessons during the week. • Provide feedback in a timely manner to students and parents. • Collaborate regularly with colleagues. • Communicate with parents and students in a variety of ways. • Conduct, report and use screening tools and assessments. • Use schoolwide data to consider Tier II or Tier III instruction. • Conduct regular progress monitoring with identified students.	I agree to: • Demonstrate professional behavior and a positive attitude. • Implement behavior instruction with fidelity and consistency: ○ Foster a safe environment for all students. ○ Teach all expectations within the first 2 weeks of school and re-teach according to schedule. ○ Continue to teach expectations informally each day through modeling and reinforcing. ○ Display and model school-wide expectations in classrooms and other key settings to promote consistency. • Use a positive response to initial indicators of not meeting expectations: ○ Praise students for meeting expectations. ○ Redirect students who are struggling. ○ Reteach expectations. ○ Allow student time to respond to requests and re-engage. ○ Recognize/reinforce changed behavior. ○ Follow Reactive Plan for responding to repeated difficulties. (See Below) • Conduct, report, and use screening tools and assessments. ○ Monitor progress using a behavior screener when appropriate. ○ Use behavior data to consider students' needs to guide instruction. ○ Communicate with parents and students in a variety of ways about behavioral performance. ○ Respond to behavior following the behavior reactive plan below.	I agree to: • Meet school-wide expectations stated in expectation matrix. • Teach lessons related to social skills/character (at least one lesson per week conducted by counselor, school psychologist, or classroom teacher). • Collaborate regularly with colleagues. • Model social skills expected. • Provide reinforcement paired with behavior specific praise when students meet expectations. • Maintain communication with students and parent/guardians.

Secondary Parent Communication Responsibilities

Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
• Explain and encourage parents to monitor student grades online regularly, communicating with student and teacher as needed. • Communicate the importance of making learning a priority because parents are their child's first and most important teachers. • Demonstrate ways parents can reinforce appropriate academic behavior at home. • Communicate parents should schedule student appointments (e.g., doctor, dentist) outside of school hours when possible. • Encourage parents to provide a place for their child to study at home that is as free from distractions as possible • Give parents ideas to encourage children to complete all practice opportunities and read at home (or read with child) daily. • Explain the importance of parent conferences and meetings, contacting school to reschedule as needed.	• Be sure to communicate the importance of following the district attendance policy. • Familiarize parents with the behaviors in the expectation matrix. • Explain the importance of modeling positive behaviors and reinforcing behavior expectations demonstrated at home. • Help parents understand the importance of supporting teacher and school efforts to promote positive behaviors. • Communicate the need for parents to support their child attending school regularly, arriving on time, and staying all day. • Be sure parents recognize the need to communicate via email, phone, note, or in-person about any home circumstances that may affect their child.	• Encourage parents to reinforce school expected behavior at home. • Explain the benefits of parents working as partners with teachers. • Explain the importance of asking their student about the bullying prevention program and social skill instruction. • Help parents understand the importance of communicating social concerns about their child with school faculty and staff.

Secondary Administrator Responsibilities

Academics	Behavior	Foundational Wellness
• Plan and provide professional learning with input from staff, featuring staff strengths. • Provide and support professional learning opportunities for faculty and staff to increase the use of evidence-based strategies with fidelity. • Organize and provide access to data and facilitate discussions related to data at least 9 times a year. • Provide resources and time for staff to use data to determine Tier II and Tier III intervention needs for students. • Provide fair, timely, and constructive feedback to staff. • Set high expectations for all stakeholders.	• Implement the proactive and reactive behavioral components of the behavior lessons/behavior plan. • Collect and monitor data from behavior screening to inform instruction. • Provide a safe and orderly environment. • Reinforce teachers for teaching, reinforcing, and monitoring student behavior. • Develop relationships with parents and families. • Attend various team meetings periodically to ensure fidelity and assess needs for resources and professional learning.	• Support staff in the implementation of the social skills and anti-bullying lessons. • Provide resources as necessary. • Model and reinforce positive respectful social interactions with adults and students.

The faculty and staff must hold themselves and all students accountable for the expectations that have been agreed upon. In order to accomplish this, all faculty and staff should demonstrate and adhere to the following academic, behavioral, and foundational wellness best practices:

Behavior Reactive Plan

The purpose of this plan is to take a proactive approach to behaviors and respond reactively, when necessary, in a way that reduces office referrals and maintains learning for all students.

Minors (teacher managed*):

Behaviors that impact the student and their learning or cause disruption to others

*indicates that most often the teacher should be responding in such a way that doesn't require intervention by administration or further disciplinary action. It is important to consider the behavior plans set forth by the LEA and follow those policies and procedures.

If these become chronic, move to major
(chronic = >3 in a day)

Common Examples of Minor Offenses

- Distracting behaviors
- Lying
- Not doing classwork
- Out of seat/not in line
- Non-compliance
- Unprepared
- Not taking responsibility for actions
- Playing with objects
- Talking out
- Teasing
- Touching others' materials
- Cell phone
- Dress code

Initial Response is intended to support students to be successful in all settings by taking an instructional approach to behavior and responding calmly, supportively, and respectfully.

Minor Offense Steps:

1. **Show empathy:** (Get down on a student's level, show concern, and consider triggers for the student. The goal is to support students in making good choices and to create a positive, productive, and safe environment.) It is important to assess whether the student can do what is being asked of them (won't do or can't do problem?)
2. **Maintain flow of instruction:** Tend to students displaying appropriate behavior first and ensure instruction is moving forward. Consider plan.
3. **Acknowledge other students:** Praising those who are meeting expectations is important to show students doing the appropriate behavior will get attention rather than those doing inappropriate behavior.
4. **Redirect and Reteach:** Prompt students who are struggling by providing verbal and/or nonverbal reminders in private. (Get down on their level and keep language clear, minimal and positive.) If behavior continues, reteach and model expectations for the student. Consider providing choices to help break the behavior chain (e.g., choice of task location or choice of task sequence).
5. **Allow time and space:** This allows students time to process, respond and re-engage
6. **Recognize/Reinforce:** Reinforce students when appropriate behavior is demonstrated.
7. **Record the incident.**

The next day, use pre-correction by stating expectations before class or activity begins.

If the same incident occurs:

- After the second incident of the same behavior within the same week, contact the parent/guardian.
 - On the third incident of the same behavior within the same week, report as a major referral.
8. Review classroom practices for possible adjustments needed.
 9. Check with other teachers to see if behavior occurs in multiple settings and review data sources for Tier II and Tier III support consideration.
 10. Consider how expectations are communicated and consider additional proactive behavioral strategies.

Behavior Reactive Plan

Majors (office managed*): Behaviors that impact safety or are illegal

*indicates that most often administrator support is necessary for this type of disciplinary action. It is important to consider the behavior plans set forth by the LEA and follow those policies and procedures.

Common Examples of Major Offenses

- Any action that causes harm
- Biting
- Credible threat to injure others
- Fighting
- Forgery
- Illegal substances
- Intimidation
- Sexual behaviors
- Stealing – major
- Throwing objects
- Vandalism
- Self-injurious behavior
- Weapons

Initial Response is intended to support students to be successful in all settings by taking an instructional approach to behavior and responding calmly, supportively, and respectfully.

Major Offense STEPS:

1. Show empathy: listen, provide wait time, and keep instruction moving forward.
2. Offer choices and wait time:
ex: "I can see you are upset about ___, do you want to ___ or ___?"
3. Return to instruction and plan to debrief later: "We can talk later, right now I need to teach, and I need you to ..."
4. Focus on what you need the student to do: Use specific directives like "take your seat", not what you want them to stop doing.
5. Monitor student and use behavior specific praise and reinforcement
6. Meet privately with student to debrief:
 - a. Show empathy
 - b. Reteach expectation
 - c. Ask student to practice appropriate response
 - d. Provide feedback
7. Follow-up with behavior-specific praise and reinforcement as appropriate.
8. Complete office discipline referral.

If danger is present, maintain room safety

Exit other students to instructional area following practiced plan

Call for assistance

Behavior Plan Decision Tree						
Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____						
Does the student have behaviors (to include significant inattention) that impede his or her learning or the learning of others?			YES		NO	
Is the class-wide behavior plan ineffective at controlling the student's behavior?			YES		NO	
<i>If the answer is YES to either of the questions above, continue below to help decide which level of behavior support might be needed.</i>						
Tier II Support Needed			Tier III Support Needed			
Does this behavior continue to occur despite classroom modifications already made? (i.e. moving desk/seat, additional redirections, given additional breaks, reduced # of items, etc.)	YES	NO		Does the child have a current Tier II plan, and has the plan been implemented consistently for at least four weeks, and does data suggest the behaviors are getting worse? Start date of the plan: _____	YES	NO
Does the student have three or fewer office referrals?	YES	NO		Is the student being considered for Outside Agency Support?	YES	NO
Has the student been suspended more than once for the same behavior?	YES	NO		Is the student being considered for Multi-Needs?	YES	NO
Is there evidence to support the classroom behavior plan is ineffective to manage his or her behavior?	YES	NO		Is the student being evaluated to rule out the need for special education?	YES	NO
				Has the student been suspended for more than five days?	YES	NO
				Does the student have four or more office referrals?	YES	NO

Tier II support needed: If answered YES to any of questions under the Tier II support section and answered NO to all the Tier III support questions, the student most likely needs a Tier II behavior plan.

Tier III support needed: If answered YES to any of the questions under the Tier III support section, the student needs Tier III behavior support which includes a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and a Behavior intervention plan (BIP).

Individualized Behavior Plan					
Student Name:				Grade:	
Classroom Teacher:				School:	
Student Preferred Staff Member:					
Date plan will start:		Date of 1 st plan review:			
(Yes/No) Copies are attached to show attendance, retentions, and testing history					
What behaviors are you currently observing?					
	Inattention		Trouble with Classwork Completion/ Turning IN		Leaving Seat Area
	Peer Relationship Difficulties		Withdrawal		Blurting Out
	Other Behavior (Explain				
What is the student currently doing behaviorally? Focus on the behavior that is most disruptive to the student's learning and the learning of others. Include numbers in your description if possible (<i>ex. Blurting out 5x during math instruction</i>)					
What is the goal the student is to achieve between now and the next Tier review? Be specific to describe what you would like the student to instead of the behavior described above.					
What is the intervention method to be implemented (who, what, where)? Include information about rewards if used and how students can earn those rewards.					
How will you monitor the student's progress? (i.e. Daily behavior report, number of office referrals, number of Dojo points, etc.)					
What is the parent'/guardians input into the problem and plan to help support the behavior intervention plan? Include school-home plan suggestions.					
The plan has been shared with and explained to ALL staff who will assist with implementation. (Yes/No)				Communication of plan with parents. (Yes/No)	

High Dosage Tutoring

Top education researchers agree that tutoring programs for students whose achievement declined over the course of the pandemic should be a top priority for federal investment. “The research on high-dosage tutoring, generally defined as one-on-one tutoring or tutoring in very small groups at least three times a week, or for about 25 hours over a quarter, is robust, and it is convincing. On average, the effect sizes are among the largest of all interventions seen in education” (High-Dosage Tutoring is Effective, 2020). The magic of tutoring is centered around the individualized ability to diagnose and support with a laser focus, while boosting students’ confidence as they experience progress throughout the sessions.

According to the Education Commission of the States (2021), research supports high dosage tutoring as a cost-effective strategy for boosting student achievement. Studies of tutoring interventions found that on average tutoring increased achievement by an additional 3 to 15 months of learning across grade levels (EdResearch, 2021). High-dosage tutoring is one of the few school-based interventions that demonstrated large positive effects on math and reading achievement, especially with students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

High-dosage tutoring is different from “regular” tutoring in the design principles including frequency, group size, personnel, focus, measurement, relationships, curriculum, scheduling, and prioritization. Tutoring is considered most impactful when delivered with three or more sessions per week with the same tutor throughout the school year to build consistency and relationships. HDT is treated like a class, happening during the normal school day, rather than after school. It should also be considered a universal strategy for all students rather than simply for struggling students. The most effective tutoring programs are a minimum of 30-minutes per day with personalized, student-to-tutor ratios of one-to-one or two-to-one. Ratios above four-to-one become small group and dramatically reduce personalized instruction. EdResearch (2021) stated, “Because the skills required for tutoring are different from the skills required for effective classroom teaching, a wide variety of tutors (including volunteers and college students) can successfully improve student outcomes, if they receive adequate training and ongoing support.” When developing instruction, the focus shifts from items that the students have failed to master previously, tutors address missed concepts and skills that are most critical in accessing the upcoming content. Remediation, or giving students simpler, previous grade-level materials, have been found to result only in students falling further behind in the grade level material.

AL-MTSS PST Referral – Parent Contact Script

Parental contacts and partnerships are critical in successfully supporting a student who is facing interferences in his/her school performance. Schools are required to contact parents when a student requires intervention at the Tier III level, however, best practices are to involve parents throughout the process of Tier I instruction and Tier II remediation as well. It is important to communicate clearly and constructively during conversations with parents. This sample document offers guiding dialogue for administrators contacting families regarding support their student will receive.

Guiding Principles for Parent Contact

- Clear – parent-friendly language
- Concise – cognizant of parents' time
- Constructive – relational and positive dialogue focusing on improving outcomes

Sample Script

Hello Mr./Ms. _____, I am Principal _____ from _____ School. How are things going for you today?

Do you have a few minutes to discuss _____ progress in school now, or would another time be better for you?

Let me begin by telling you how much _____ means to us as a school. He/she is a wonderful part of our school family. You are probably aware that _____ has shown some difficulties in _____, and we want to help support him/her in all areas. We especially want to target this area of struggle so that he/she can be even more successful in school and out of school.

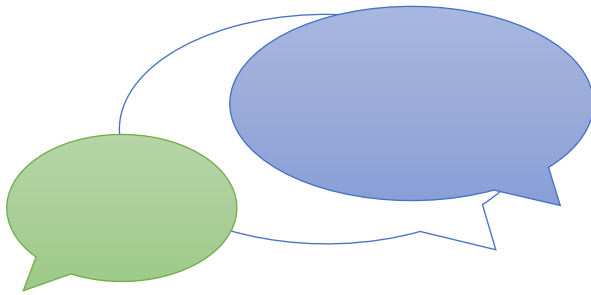
We have a team of people at the school called our Problem-Solving Team. This is group works to help _____ with his/her difficulty with _____. The team includes:

- Administrator
- Teacher
- Math or Reading Specialist
- Counselor
- Others

The team will meet to discuss _____ strengths and challenges and determine how we can support him/her. We would love to have you join us as well, either in person or virtually if that works better for you. At the first meeting we will set a goal and determine the appropriate intervention. After that we will meet every month to look at his/her progress and determine next steps. After each meeting we will send home an update of progress. You are welcome to attend each meeting, but it is not required.

I know this is a lot of information to process. What questions can I answer for you? Thank you for your time, and please call as you have questions or concerns. Goodbye.

Vignettes



Beginning of the Year PST Meeting

This vignette is designed to be illustrative of a PST meeting at the beginning of the school year.

Sept 1, 2023

Mr.
Benjamin

We will be having our first 2023-24 PST meeting today and discussing several students. Teachers will be rotating in and out based on where students are on the agenda. I will be keeping notes on our Google doc and Mr. Oscar will be our timekeeper. Also, remember that we are in here to discuss what is best for our students and everything discussed should be kept confidential, except to faculty and/or staff directly involved with that student.

Team Members:

Mrs. Isaac – PST Facilitator
Mrs. Johnson – Luciana’s teacher (ELA) (Just for Luciana’s discussion)
Mrs. Martin – EL Teacher (To assist with any other EL students)
Mr. Oscar – School Counselor/timekeeper
Mr. Benjamin – Principal/ PST Chairperson
Mrs. Burns – School social worker
Mr. Daniels – (SPED lead-teacher when needed)

Mr.
Benjamin

Now, the first student we will discuss is Luciana. She was referred to PST by her teacher, Mrs. Johnson, due to her previous year’s ACAP scores and her beginning of the year i-Ready scores. Mrs. Johnson would you please share some information about Luciana with us and tell us about her data?

Mrs.
Johnson

Luciana’s educational background has profound gaps. She has not completed a full year in any grade, nor remained in one location for a full academic year. Her first-grade year was in Mexico for approximately three months before coming to the states for three months, and then returning to Mexico. Her last known official school records are from third grade, and she was only enrolled for four months before returning to Mexico in December. She returned in April of her fourth-grade year and has been here since that time. She struggles in reading but is doing better in math, however still below grade level. She does not have any support at home with schoolwork and does not do her homework. She avoids reading assignments and activities as much as possible. She has the ability to learn when she takes the time to work with the teachers and can stay in one place for longer periods.

On the ACAP assessment last year in math, she scored a 2 (513) and in ELA she scored a 1 (374). Then on this year’s beginning of the year i-Ready assessment, Luciana scored a Level II in Math (415) and a Level I in Reading (423). A further breakdown of her i-Ready reading is Vocabulary – Level I, Reading Comprehension – Level I, and Phonological Awareness – Level I

Mrs.
Martin

I cannot find ACCESS data from last year. She was transient at her previous school and did not participate. Obviously, these scores show that Luciana is stronger in math than reading. She did get Tier II small group math interventions last year and was pulled by me three times a week to receive help with reading. However, as you can see, she transferred into our school in April, so we didn't have much time to gauge the effectiveness of the interventions. I would recommend that those interventions stay in place for at least four-five weeks, and we can progress monitor her at that point to see the effectiveness. Mrs. Johnson?

Mrs.
Johnson

I agree. I can also continue with our schoolwide evidence-based assessments within the classroom to gauge the effectiveness. Because she did show success when she took the time to work with her previous teacher, I would like to have the opportunity to work with her for a few weeks within the scope of this plan. I did have a back-to-school meeting with her mother, Mrs. Martin, and Mr. Oscar. We also had a translator available. Mr. Oscar was fortunate to get more information regarding the home situation as well. Would you share Mr. Oliver?

Mr. Oscar

Luciana is not getting work done at home because the support is extremely limited. Her mother works during the day and her 17-year-old cousin and stepfather both work at night. The stepfather is even working multiple jobs to provide consistency to Luciana. They realize that the instability is certainly contributing to her academics. They do want to help, but their English is limited as well. Therefore, I asked Mrs. Burns to see if we had any community agencies that would help this family. Mrs. Burns, could you please share?

Mrs.
Burns

I reached out to a local community organization that helps parents who are ESL. They are going to contact Lucinda's mother and set-up after school services to help both Lucinda and her mother. They will also provide any additional services that are deemed necessary. I am following up with them after their initial intake, which is next week. We are also sending all communications from the school to the parents, in Spanish as well as English.

Mrs. Isaac

So, what else can we offer to help Lucinda be successful? My concern is that if Lucinda continues being pulled out of the classroom three times a week with Mrs. Martin, is she going to be missing direct grade level, standards-based Tier I and Tier II instruction? Mrs. Johnson?

Mrs.
Johnson

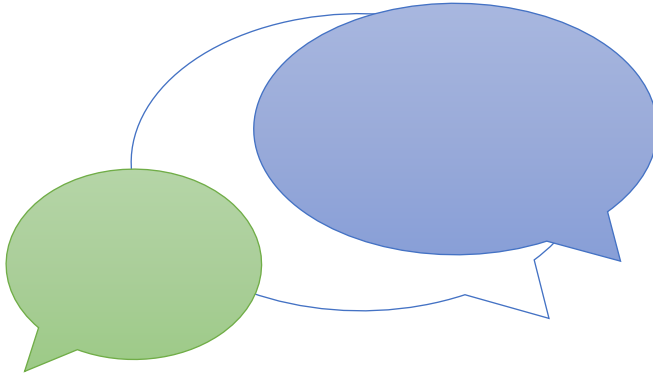
I think we definitely need to have her on a PST plan, which includes her being pulled by Mrs. Martin during non-academic times to help with her ELA issues. I will continue to have her in heavy Tier II instruction (small group and individual) within the classroom for both math and ELA. Mrs. Martin will be providing and reinforcing within the pull outs which will serve as the Tier III instruction. Then, let's see how she responds. Mrs. Isaac, any other thoughts, or ideas?

Mr.
Benjamin

I think that sounds like a great plan. However, remember that we can reconvene at any time if a need arises. Also, I would like for us to invite Lucinda's mother to our next meeting when we look over the data and let her also be a part of this discussion. Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Oscar, and Mrs. Burns, would the three of you discuss and make sure we have an interpreter here for that meeting? We can also see if there are any other needs that aren't being met which we could assist with. So now that we have a plan in place, will each of you sign on the plan team member page, by your position on this team. Please make sure to bring all data and documentation to that meeting so we can see Lucinda's progression. Thank you again!

Mrs. Isaac

Thanks Team!



AL-MTSS Vignette Tommy

This vignette is designed to be illustrative of a PST meeting discussing a student in need of academic support.

PST Chairperson

Good morning, everyone. Please make sure you sign the attendance sheet for our records. Attending the meeting today are our PST Team Members that include the recorder/timekeeper, ELA rep, Math rep, AP, and counselor. Good morning and welcome.

Today we will discuss Tommy. He was referred to us by his ELA teacher.

ELA

Tommy is struggling in language arts, and he will not pass ELA if there is not some intervention.

PST Chairperson

Good morning, I would like to give you some background information on Tommy. Tommy is in the 8th grade. Tommy enrolled at Lakeside Middle at the beginning of this school year. He is 13 years old and is one of 7 children. His siblings are 6-21 years old. This is his first year in a public-school setting. He has been homeschooled his entire life by his mother until her death. Tommy's mother died of cancer in the summer between his 5th and 6th grade year. He attended a small church school after his mother's death. During his mother's illness, despite their best efforts, little individual attention to Tommy's educational needs was provided. He attended his local church's private school during his 6th grade year but had numerous difficulties with basic reading and math skills as well as general difficulties adjusting to a classroom setting. During Tommy's 7th grade year, he attended a specialized private school for students experiencing academic and/or behavior difficulties. Tommy made some academic gains during his 7th grade year in this small group setting, but his father chose to enroll him in public school for 8th grade because his desire was for Tommy to spend more time with his typical peers. At Lakeside, Tommy has experienced significant academic difficulties in all subject areas. He has difficulty completing classroom assignments independently and often falls behind his peers causing him to have below average grades. He has good attendance, and his father can bring him to tutoring sessions outside of the regular school day. He has minimal computer skills and needs support when working with technology. Due to his limited formal school experience, the counselor included a study hall period in his schedule where he can have extended time and adult support with assignments.

Counselor

Tommy is one of 7 children ages 6-21. Since his mother's death, his father has remarried, and he now also has two stepsisters. Tommy enjoys working on cars with his father. He feels successful when reading manuals needed to fix things. He would like to restore a 2000 Mustang one day. Tommy's parents are involved in his education and are willing to work with him outside of school. He has an older sister who is in college studying to be a special education teacher who works with him as well.

ELA Teacher

Tommy is fairly reserved in large group settings. He tends to let others take over group assignments. He works well with adults and peer tutors. Tommy is persistent and does not get frustrated easily. He works hard when he is in class, but rarely completes work outside of the school day.

PST Chairperson

Tommy's grades are ELA 40, World History 52, Physical Science 65, Prealgebra 60, PE 100, and Study Hall 100. His test scores in reading are 2346 (Below Average) 3.2 GE and Lexile 475L. His test scores in math are 2616 (Below Average) 6.3 GE.

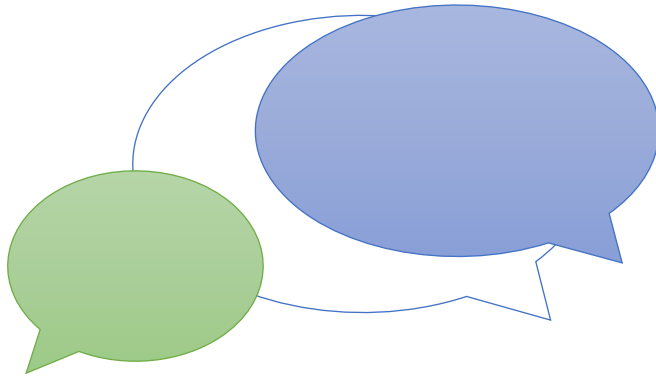
Based on the information and data provided along with classroom observations conducted by me and a counselor, our recommendations are to move Tommy to a Tier II RTI setting. Tommy will be provided with the following interventions:

- Create an assignment folder that Tommy can use to write down his assignments and tests and include due dates and a plan for completing or studying.
- Assign him a mentor that helps him create a plan and stay organized with his work.
- Since he has a deficiency in Reading, chunk his reading passages and give him guided notes to assist with his comprehension of more complex text in both ELA and World History.

PST Chairperson

For our integrity checks, a representative of the PST Team will complete weekly observations. The mentor will turn in a copy of the assignment tracker to the PST Chair weekly. Last, the ELA and World History teacher will submit a work sample of a reading passage with guided notes at the end of the month.

At the conclusion of this meeting, the recorder will complete the paperwork, moving Tommy to a Tier II status. The PST Chair will contact the parents to set up a meeting to discuss next steps. Let us meet again in one month to review data and progress.



AL-MTSS Vignette Ian

This vignette is designed to be illustrative of a PST meeting discussing a student in need of behavior support.

Administrator/PST Chair:

Good morning, everyone. Please make sure you sign the attendance sheet for our records. Attending the meeting today are our PST Team Members that include the recorder/timekeeper, ELA rep, Math rep, Social Studies rep, SPED department rep, and counselor. Good morning and welcome. Today we will discuss Ian. He was referred to us by his ELA and Social Studies teachers six weeks ago. He has been on Tier II interventions for the last 6 weeks. His grades are improving but not to the degree we would like. This meeting is to consider moving him to a Tier III status possibly adding a BIP.

Let's review Ian's background and the strategies and accommodations that have been in place for the last 6 weeks.

PST Chair:

Good morning, Ian continues to have issues with attending to academic tasks in his classes. During class, Ian frequently exhibits off-task behaviors, such as daydreaming, fidgeting, and talking to his peers instead of completing his assignments. When asked to repeat the directions of an assignment to the teacher, Ian is frequently unable to do so. He also continues to have issues with his classes that focus on writing and comprehension.

Counselor:

Ian expresses interest in mathematics, science and electives but has issues with subjects with lots of literacy. Ian comes from a single parent household and at the present time, they are living out of a car.

PST Chair:

Currently his grades are as follows: ELA 48, Social Studies 54, Science 80, Math 84, Technology, 88 and Beginning Band 92. Ian has been on Tier II PST for 6 weeks and showing progress in some classes but still struggling in ELA and Social Studies.

ELA Teacher:

Currently Ian has a 48 in Language Arts. For the last six weeks, Ian has been receiving Tier II accommodations in ELA. His accommodations have included repeated directions, the use of guided notes, and chunking of reading assignments. He is receiving small group and individualized help for a total of 60

minutes a week with the ELA teacher. His grade has seen a 2-point improvement, but he continues to fall behind. I would like to see some additional accommodations added and a possible move to Tier III so he may receive some intensive interventions.

Social Studies Teacher:

I am in complete agreement with ELA. We have seen some improvement with the current accommodations, but Ian continues to struggle. Among the three accommodations mentioned by ELA, I have also added giving Ian a copy of lecture notes and a copy of power points if applicable. He receives guided notes for every lesson, and I have also added my lessons to a Google Classroom so he may work on them during Technology class. He sits in a small group of students close to my desk so I can be available to instruct and accommodate when necessary.

Counselor:

It is my recommendation that Ian be allowed scheduled to see the counselor once a week for homelife check ins. Also, I would like to reach out to family services to see if there is any help they can offer Ian and his mother.

Administrator/PST Chair:

His grades in math and science are holding steady and he seems to be fine in those classes. Based on the information provided by his ELA and Social studies teacher, data provided by all of his teachers, along with classroom observations conducted by me and a counselor, our recommendations are to move Ian to a Tier III RTI setting. Continuing with Ian's current Tier II accommodations in the gen ed classroom, Ian will also be provided with the following interventions in Tier III:

- Ian will be pulled from an elective class twice a week for 30 to 45 minutes each time for a total of 60 to 90 minutes each week of Tier III interventions.
- Ian will be provided a notebook in which he will be instructed to write assignment directions in his own words, simplifying them if needed. The teacher will monitor this notebook and Ian's understanding of directions.
- Ian will be provided a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- Ian will be seen by the counselor once a week for check ins concerning his home environment.

Administrator/PST Chair:

For our integrity checks, a representative of the PST Team will complete weekly observations. The BIP will be scored on a weekly basis after each observation. The intervention teacher will turn in a copy of the assignment tracker to the PST Chair weekly. Last, the ELA and World History teacher will submit a work sample of a reading passage with guided notes at the end of the month. If everyone agrees with the next step of interventions, please check YES on the sign in sheet and we will move Ian to the next level.

At the conclusion of this meeting, the recorder will complete the paperwork, moving Ian to a Tier 3 status. The PST Chair will contact the parent to set up a meeting to discuss next steps. Let us meet again in one month to review data and progress.

If Ian has not shown significant improvement over the next 4 weeks, a SPED referral may be in order.

April 2023

Anywhere Public Schools

205 Main Street

Anywhere, AL 30111

Behavior Intervention Plan for Ian Jones

Student Name:	Ian Jones	Student School:	Anywhere Middle School
Student Age:	13	Supervisor:	Mrs. Chalkdust
Needs Safety Plan:	No	Behavior Screener:	9/9/2022
Plan Created:	9/9/2022	Last Revised:	9/9/2022

Challenging Behavior: Off-Task

Behavior

Off-task behavior

Ian struggles to pay attention in class. He exhibits behaviors such as daydreaming, fidgeting, and interrupting.

Frequency

During baseline assessment, this behavior occurred continuously throughout the day with an average of 5 time(s) per class.

Intensity

This behavior was determined to be of minor severity, meaning that it can be distracting or frustrating to others in the environment but does not risk escalating or creating a dangerous environment.

Environment(s)

During class time

Setting Event(s)

Poor sleep, hungry, personal issues outside of school

Antecedent(s)

Presentation of academic tasks/demand, working independently, working in a group

Consequence(s)

Given a break, proximity, other

Goals

With movement breaks and the use of self-regulation strategies, Ian will demonstrate the ability to attend to a task for an average 75% of intervals in a 20-minute class period, as measured by teacher-charted observations.

Proactive Strategies: Off-Task

Breaks Are Better

Breaks Are Better (BrB) is an intervention designed for students who engage in problem behaviors maintained by escape or avoidance from academic activities, tasks, or assignments. Components of BrB include earning points and/or incentives for engaging in school-wide expectations, meeting with an intervention facilitator before and after school, receiving feedback on in-class behavior, and having explicit opportunities to take breaks in an appropriate way.

Guidelines

- Identify which staff members will serve as the morning and afternoon facilitator(s) for the student.
- During morning check-ins, students receive brief positive feedback focused on instruction of desired behaviors.
- Students' home notes are checked. If necessary, morning check-ins include teaching/review of when and how to request a break.
- During the school day, students receive feedback on appropriate in-class behaviors and requests for breaks.
- During the afternoon check-outs, students receive feedback guided by their daily point card, review the points they earned, and complete their home note.
- Point sheets correspond to the school-wide expectations. The student is allowed to request 3 2-minute breaks during each class period (or designated amount of time). To earn points, the student must follow the break procedure appropriately.

Regular adult support from school counselor or another designated adult

This intervention is intended to support students dealing with frequent personal challenges. Regularly scheduled meetings with either a school counselor or other trusted adult can help them to process and manage such personal issues. Not only can this help support them emotionally, but it can help reduce associated challenging behaviors.

Replacement Behaviors: Off-Task

On-task behavior involves attending to the instructional material appropriately. Usually this is what the student is expected to do during class time when they are instead demonstrating challenging behavior. Being on-task is a desired other behavior, meaning the reinforcement a student earns for being on-task may not be similar to the type of reinforcement they are getting for misbehavior.

Guidelines

- You can select the specific type of on-task behaviors you wish to focus on and edit the title of this intervention to reflect this focus.
- If you are struggling to effectively teach on-task behaviors it could be important to increase the level of reinforcement being earned for such behaviors, in order to effectively compete with the reinforcement, the student is getting for misbehavior.
- There are a number of different strategies in the database for teaching on-task behaviors. This could include the use of social narratives, video or peer modeling, textual or other prompting strategies, and pivoting attention.
- Various reinforcement systems can also be used to increase the acquisition of on-task behaviors, such as token economies and class rewards. Review these various strategies to select the ones that will work best for the student and the instructional environment.

Teach the student to read out loud or perform another academic task they struggle with

This intervention can be used with students who struggle with reading and engage in challenging behavior specifically to avoid reading assignments. You can modify this strategy for other types of academic activities the student struggles with. In this example you are holding structured sessions in which the student is reinforced for successfully reading out loud. By building this skill in a structured manner that provides direct reinforcement of success, the student should gain increased confidence, proficiency, and hopefully a willingness to read out loud in general without engaging in challenging behavior.

Guidelines

- Materials needed include: 15 standardized reading passages of at least 80 words. Passages should ideally be at grade level, though if the student is significantly below grade level adjust accordingly. You will also need several small reinforcers for the student (e.g., items such as stickers or pencils, or activities they can enjoy for a few minutes). If needed, complete a reinforcer assessment to determine effective reinforcers.
- At the beginning of the first session tell the student, “Here is a story that I would like you to read. When I say, ‘Begin’, start reading aloud at the top of the page and read across the page. Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don’t know, I’ll tell it to you. Be sure to do your best to read all the words.” When the student reads the first word begin a stopwatch to record length of time it takes the student to read the passage. (The time will function as your baseline.) Also record the number of words missed. If the student does not read the word within 3 seconds, assist in reading of the word.
- Hold sessions at regular times and of consistent duration. For example, you might have 15-minute sessions once a day, twice a week, or whatever schedule seems most appropriate and feasible.
- Following each session, you will graph the amount of time it takes to read passages and also graph the number of mistakes made during the reading (two separate graphs). If the student is capable of helping to graph the results have them do so.
- Prior to each session, go over the graphed results of the last session with the student and decide together on an appropriate goal. It is recommended that you set a goal that represents approximately 5% decrease in reading time, as well as one fewer mistake, though you can adjust this as needed for the student.
- Before starting the session place the possible reinforcers in front of the student and ask them which one, they would like to try for. Tell the student that if they are able to meet the agreed upon goal they will get the reinforcer. Then read the passage aloud to the student while the student follows along. Then have the student practice reading the same passage aloud for three successive trials. On the last trial you will time and keep track of errors to determine if they met the goal and to graph.
- After reading a passage inform the student of his/her performance. If possible, allow them to fill in the graph data points for each session. If they met the goal deliver the reinforcer they selected. Regardless, if they attempted the exercise without challenging behavior praise them and remind them that they’ll get to try again the next session, and you can lower the goal.

April 2023

Student Name: Ian Jones **Student School:** Anywhere Middle School

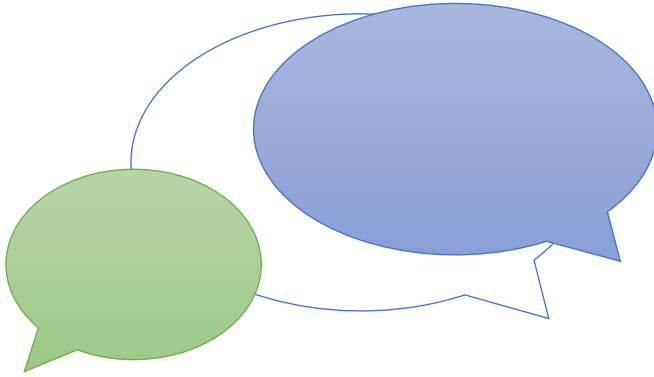
Student Age: 13 **Supervisor:** Mrs. Chalkdust

Needs Safety Plan: No **Behavior Screener:** 9/9/2022

Plan Created: 9/9/2022 **Last Revised:** 9/9/2022

Challenging Behavior: Off-Task

_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
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_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature
_____ Name, Title	_____ Signature



PST Referral Parent Contact Vignette Akilah

This vignette is designed to be illustrative of a conversation with a parent regarding a referral to PST.

Administrator	Good morning, Ms. Weathers. I am Principal Butler from Anywhere High School. How are you this morning?
Parent	I'm doing fine; just trying to get to work on time.
Administrator	Glad to hear you are okay. I hope things are going well at the plant. I know you are in a hurry, so I'll be brief. Let me begin by saying that Akilah is a very impressive young lady. She works so hard here at school and after school also. She has a remarkable talent in writing, and she always shows great effort.
Parent	Thank you. She does her best to help out around the house. I just don't know what to do for her with that Algebra. I really don't know how to help. And I just don't want her to get down and give up.
Administrator	Yes ma'am. I understand that, and we would love to help her and you. As you know, she comes to tutoring before and after school. She seems to have difficulty in showing what she knows down on paper on her Algebra II tests. We have a team of people here at the school called our Problem-Solving Team that is going to figure out the best way to help her. We have a meeting scheduled next Wednesday at 10:00 with her teacher, Mrs. Chalkdust, a math interventionist, the school counselor, and me to discuss Akilah's performance in Algebra II and strategies to help her. If you are available, it would be great if you could attend also.
Parent	Well, I'm glad to hear it, but I don't know if I can get off work. I'll do anything I can for her but getting time off of work is hard. Did you say counselor? Is there a problem?

April 2023

Administrator

Our counselor is a part of the team, and she is very good at helping us determine the best strategies to help students who are struggling. And she also has some ideas for helping students build resilience and keep a positive outlook.

I understand that getting off work might be difficult for you. If you aren't able to come to the school, we can set up a virtual meeting, or we could call you if that works better. You know her better than anyone, and your thoughts are so important to us.

Parent

I just don't know for sure about it yet. I'll have to ask my boss.

Administrator

I know coming up here is a big request, but we would love to have you join us. I will send you an email about the meeting day and time. Once you find out about whether you can come to the school or if the call works better, please let me know. We'll arrange it from there.

Whether you are able to come or join us or not, we will send you a report of the meeting: including the goal and intervention to help her in Algebra II. Do you think that Akilah would like to be a part of this meeting?

Parent

Well, I don't know. She might like that. She knows she is struggling.

Administrator

Think about it, and I'll ask you that again when I email you. Mrs. Chalkdust is going to send her some additional resources that Akilah to show you. If you have some time, maybe you can let her explain what she is learning in class. It is often helpful for students to tell others what they have learned.

Thank you so much for taking a few minutes to talk with me about Akilah this morning. You have a lot to be proud of with her.

Parent

Thank you.

Administrator

Thank you for entrusting us with Akilah's education and for doing all that you do for her. It's easy to see how much you love and care for her. It's clear that she got her work ethic from you. Have a great day!

Parent

Thank you for calling. Bye.

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations: Accommodations help a student overcome or work around deficits affecting their ability to master the curriculum. Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations; they provide access. Accommodations change the way a student accesses learning without changing the actual standards a student is working toward.

ACEs: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) refers to events that occur in childhood and include mental and or physical abuse, violence, and trauma due to mental health or substance abuse in the immediate family. The more ACEs a child has experienced, the more likely he or she will experience mental or physical health problems and or substance abuse as an adult.

ACAP: Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program

ACCESS: Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners

Alabama Literacy Act: Alabama Literacy Act became law on June 10, 2019. This legislation extends comprehensive information and other guidance for educators to focus concentrated and systematic efforts to improve the reading skills of all public-school students in early literacy so that every student is reading at or above grade-level by the end of third grade.

Alabama Numeracy Act: Alabama Numeracy Act became law in April 2022. This legislation creates the Office of Mathematics Improvement to oversee Alabama's math curriculum and testing to ensure that by the time children reach the 5th grade, they are at or above grade-level proficiency in math.

BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a plan developed by teachers and or special education staff to address problem behavior. This plan includes steps for positive behavior interventions, support, and strategies.

Child Find: Child Find is the ongoing process to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having disabilities who need special education and related services as a result of those disabilities.

CNP: Child Nutrition Program

Diagnostic Assessment: Diagnostic Assessment is used to diagnose strengths and areas of need in students. Diagnostic assessment involves gathering and carefully evaluating detailed data involving students' knowledge and skills in a given learning area.

ESSA: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a federal law for K-12 education put in effect in 2015. ESSA added flexibility for states but put in place expectations for transparency to all stakeholders and an implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).

Evidence-based: Evidence-based refers to scientific, research-based methods that exhibit substantial evidence of effectiveness through multiple outcome evaluations. In other words, programs, strategies, and assessments shown to have had positive outcomes with a given population.

Fidelity: Fidelity refers to the application of an intervention, program, or curriculum according to research findings and / or to a developer's specifications.

Formative Assessment: Formative Assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievements of intended instructional outcomes.

FBA: Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is the process used to identify problem behavior, determine the function or purpose of the behavior, and develop interventions to teach acceptable alternatives to the behavior.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): IDEA is the primary federal law that applies to public education of students with disabilities. The IDEA requires the creation of special education programs for eligible students and the provision of free appropriate public education (FAPE) to them through the development of an IEP.

IEP: Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with IDEA 2004 that outlines the special education and related services specifically designed to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability.

MTSS: Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) is a framework for effective team-based problem solving that is data informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students.

ODR: Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is a formal, written documentation of an infraction that includes communication related to the details of the incident, strategies implemented prior to the incident, and the consequences for the incident.

PBS: Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) refers to the layers of support put in place to help students learn to work and communicate with others, show respect, and have a positive outlook. The use of PBS is a recognition that all behavior is a form of communication, and understanding behaviors helps us better meet individual needs.

PLC: Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a collaborative group of educators who work together for the united purpose of continuous improvement to support all learners.

Progress Monitoring: Progress Monitoring (PM) is the scientifically based practice used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class. Also, the process used to monitor the implementation of specific interventions.

PST: Problem-Solving Team (PST) refers to the PLC established to review, discuss, and provide interventions for students who are not successful in Tier I or Tier II instruction. Specific, targeted interventions are put in place with clear goals to measure progress.

RTI: Response to Intervention (RTI) is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions.

Section 504: Section 504 guarantees that a child with a disability (substantially limited) has equal access to an education and that it is comparable to an education provided to those who do not have a disability.

SLP: Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) work to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults.

SRIP: Student Reading Improvement Plan (SRIP) is a requirement of the Alabama Literacy Act for any student in K-3 who demonstrates a consistent reading deficiency in letter naming fluency, letter sound fluency, nonsense word fluency, sight words, oral reading accuracy and fluency, vocabulary, or comprehension.

Standardized Assessment: Standardized Assessment refers to a test that utilizes the same questions for all students who are to be assessed on a specific concept. This allows for data analysis and disaggregation of the performance by all students.

Summative Assessment: Summative Assessment is a test administered after the conclusion of instruction to provide information regarding the level of a student, school, or program's success.

Tier I: Tier I is the core instruction and universal support for all students and consists of high-quality, standards-based instruction in the classroom setting by highly qualified and effective personnel using evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies differentiated to meet student needs.

Tier II: Tier II is targeted support and intervention that consists of supplemental academic and behavioral supports provided in addition to the high-quality core instruction students receive with their peers.

Tier III: Tier III is the most intensive level of support and consists of targeted, explicit instruction and intervention specifically designed to meet the individual academic and behavioral needs of students.

Universal Screener: Universal Screener is a systematic process for assessment of all students within a given grade, school building or district. When related to academics, this screener typically focuses on target skills that are highly predictive of future outcomes. When related to behavior or foundational wellness, refers to the informal inventories designed to screen for the need of additional support in specific behavior skills.