FLINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Expect More. Achieve More.

Multi-Tiered

System

of Support

Pilot Guidebook

VISION

The Flint Community Schools priority schools' vision for a district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Support is a commitment to developing, implementing, and sustaining a systematic approach to teaching and learning that will ensure success for all students.

INTRODUCTION

The Flint Community Schools (FCS) mission is to develop a community of learners who are prepared to live, work and contribute to an ever-changing society. To deliver on this mission, instructional leaders from FCS priority elementary schools—Eisenhower, Neithercut, and Cummings—joined with the staff from Michigan State University's Office of K-12 Outreach to develop a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to be piloted in two elementary schools, Eisenhower and Neithercut. This collaborative team worked together for several months to 1) become familiar with the concept and components of MTSS, 2) establish goals and a theory of action for MTSS specific to the needs of FCS priority schools, 3) develop and implement a pilot MTSS program, and 4) create a guidebook template for implementing an MTSS. This guidebook is the product of this collaborative project. The goals of the project are to implement MTSS across the district.

SECTION 1: PURPOSE AND THEORY OF ACTION

Purpose

The purpose of this MTSS pilot program is grounded in a) the moral imperative that every student should have the opportunity to become a successful learner, and b) the recognition that students come to school with different levels of readiness to learn and diverse aptitudes for learning. In order to meet each student's learning needs, FCS instructional leaders developed an MTSS that is suitable to our context.

Goals

The goals of the project are **district-wide:**

- Modification of instruction and implementation of scientifically based interventions based on individual needs. The ultimate goal is student success in the form of **increased academic achievement** and **positive behavior** as early as possible;
- Assurance that student difficulties are not due to lack of appropriate instruction;
- Early identification of student needs;
- Implementation of an aligned curriculum in core instructional areas;
- Use of up-to-date data in making decisions about what resources are needed to ensure student success by closely monitoring student progress.

These goals are rooted in a theory of action that provides a solid foundation for the process of developing an MTSS.

WHAT IS MTSS?

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT IS A PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING AND PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTS TO ENSURE ALL STUDENTS SUCCEED. IT IS AN INTEGRATED, MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF **INSTRUCTION**, **ASSESSMENT**, AND **INTERVENTION** DESIGNED TO MEET THE ACHIEVEMENT AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS OF **ALL** LEARNERS.

THEORY OF ACTION

The **Theory of Action** outlined in Figure 1 defines the work of MTSS and how it fits into staff professional roles, expectations, professional learning, systems and instructional decisions, allowing us a way to evaluate the model's **impact** on student learning and adjust the work as needed.
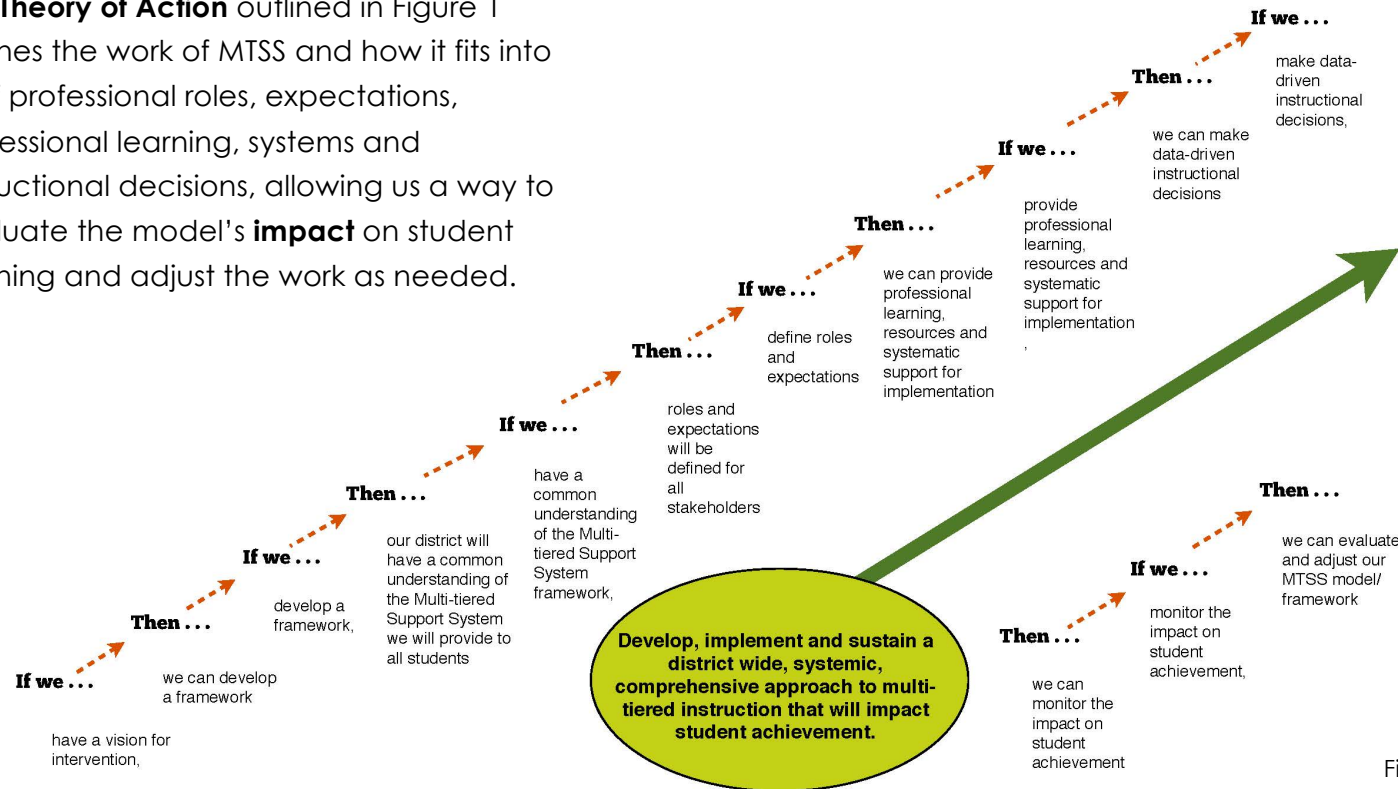
If we . . . have a vision for intervention,

Then . . . we can develop a framework

If we . . . develop a framework,

Then . . . our district will have a common understanding of the Multi-tiered Support System we will provide to all students

If we . . . have a common understanding of the Multi-tiered Support System framework,

Then . . . roles and expectations will be defined for all stakeholders

If we . . . define roles and expectations

Then . . . we can provide professional learning, resources and systematic support for implementation

If we . . . provide professional learning, resources and systematic support for implementation,

Then . . . we can make data-driven instructional decisions

If we . . . make data-driven instructional decisions,

Develop, implement and sustain a district wide, systemic, comprehensive approach to multi-tiered instruction that will impact student achievement.

Then . . . we can monitor the impact on student achievement

If we . . . monitor the impact on student achievement,

Then . . . we can evaluate and adjust our MTSS model/framework

Figure 1

Essential Components

There are certain components that are indispensable to the success of an MTSS. They include: evidence-based curriculum and instruction aligned with State Academic Standards; ongoing assessment; data-based decision making; fidelity of Implementation; professional learning through job-embedded training; professional development and collaborative teaming; community and family Involvement; and leadership which provides support and accountability.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | COLLEGE OF EDUCATION — OFFICE OF K-12 OUTREACH

SECTION 2: TIERS OF MTSS

Overview of MTSS Tiers

Using a four-tier model, the FCS process is conceptualized in Figure 2. These tiers describe the **intensity of instruction**, NOT specific programs or curricula. Further, the tiers describe instruction, not only steps in a process; therefore, students do not leave Tier 1 to receive instruction in Tier 2 or 3. The intensity of the instruction (or tier of instruction required) is determined by the data and collaborative team decisions. Student placement within the tiers is to remain fluid, movement being based on student performance over a set amount of time compared to predetermined district benchmarks (Kansas, MTSS, 2010).
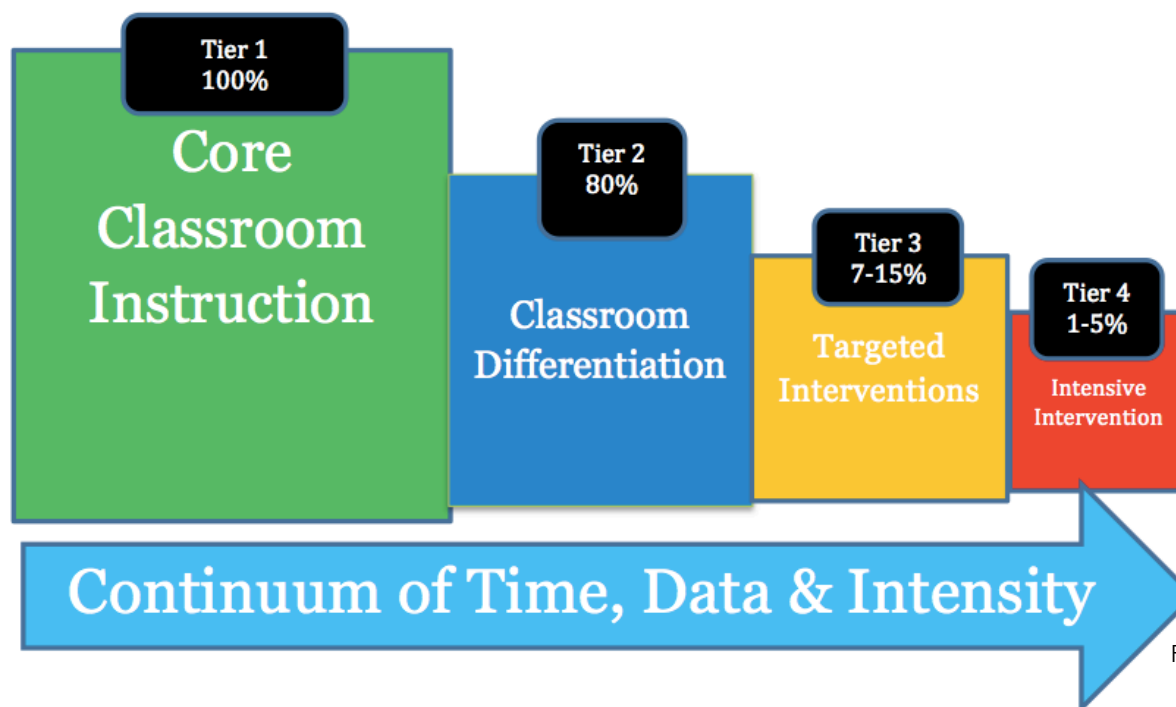
Figure 2

Description of MTSS Tiers

TIER 1: Core classroom instruction reaches 100% of the students. The classroom teacher delivers preventive and proactive academic and/or behavior best practices with consideration to various learning styles. Lessons are aligned to Michigan Academic Standards and are grounded in best practice.

TIER 2: Interventions for the portion of the student population in the strategic range (academic and/or behavior) delivered by the classroom teacher through differentiated instruction (content, process, products, or classroom environment) based on student data. This level of support may include students identified or suspected to be gifted.

TIER 3: Targeted interventions for a portion of the student population determined by data are most often provided by intervention specialists—Title 1, Learning Support Services (LSS), or English as a Second Language (ESL)— in conjunction with the classroom teacher and parent support. Interventions are even more targeted and individualized, often delivered through one on one or small group instruction.

TIER 4: Individualized high intensity academic and/or behavior support for a smaller portion of the student population. These students may require alternative or replacement curriculum and will most likely receive support from various specialists. Tier 4 level of support may include students identified as LSS, as well as gifted, or ESL.

SECTION 3: TEAM PROCESS

It is important to create a process that will lay a strong foundation for the work of developing and implementing an MTSS. This section looks at three levels: School, Intervention Team and Classroom Teachers.

School Level: The goal here is to build a sense of community that will support a consistent approach to the MTSS that is aligned with across buildings. To accomplish this goal, staff could use tools such as Thinking Maps or a Consensogram to create a set of belief statements regarding MTSS that align with the district mission. The school should create a data wall using universal screeners (e.g., NWEA, DRA, Kindergarten pre-reading behaviors and other benchmark assessments). Using the student DRA data tags, school teams can identify students "most at risk" or having been previously identified, use a color-coded dot system agreed upon by all buildings to help determine which intervention would be of most beneficial to a student at that particular time, as shown in Figure 3.

LSS	Behavior	504	Speech	ESL	Attendance
🟡	🟠	🔵	🟢	🔵	🟣

Figure 3

Intervention Team. The Intervention Team will provide leadership in identifying students for Tiers 2, 3 and 4. They will do this by:

- Analyzing data looking for trends to identify gaps by grade levels (reading or math) using district benchmark assessments (NWEA, DRA);
- Creating a list of identified gaps, e.g., 1st grade needs reading, 2nd grade needs math, keeping in mind the belief statements (students will receive one intervention, at a time, etc.);
- Holding collaborative meetings with the grade-level teachers and intervention team to discuss/decide the appropriate tier and intervention.
- Determining which students would most benefit from which intervention based on data and colored dots, keeping in mind that intervention is not for every teacher, but for students;
- Creating a list of identified students for math or ELA intervention;
- Deciding the timeframe for each classroom to align schedules of classroom and intervention and begin building an intervention team schedule based on the data to ensure the most urgent identified gap is top priority—other intervention groupings and push-ins will be built around this priority.

Attendance/Behavior Issues. Students identified as needing attendance or behavior interventions should have a plan for action collaboratively developed by key stakeholders: social worker, teacher, parents, and behavior specialists.

Academic Issues. The intervention team begins to build the groups of students for reading—groups of 3 students—or math—up to six students. Teams must be sure to follow the program specifications.

Data Walls. On the data wall, the team should assign a colored dot for students identified for intervention, using green for Math and red for ELA. Teams should begin to use the data from the walls to work through the next identified need, e.g., third-grade needs both ELA and math. (See Figures 4 and 5)
Teams should make sure to:

- Add dots to student data tags;
- Align classroom and intervention team schedule;
- Continue to build the intervention team schedule;
- Decide which classrooms would benefit from push-in based on need and the timeframe left in the intervention team schedule. (See Figures 6 and 7)

Intervention teams should also create a year-at-a-glance document/calendar with the four types of PLC meetings—ELA, Math, collaboration and data—to ensure all areas are included. It is important that teams continue to meet in PLCs to collaborate and discuss progress of identified students and make additional intervention decisions (e.g., new students, exiting, attendance or behavior improvements that changes student eligibility and are now ready for academic intervention).

Neithercut Data Artifacts: DRA
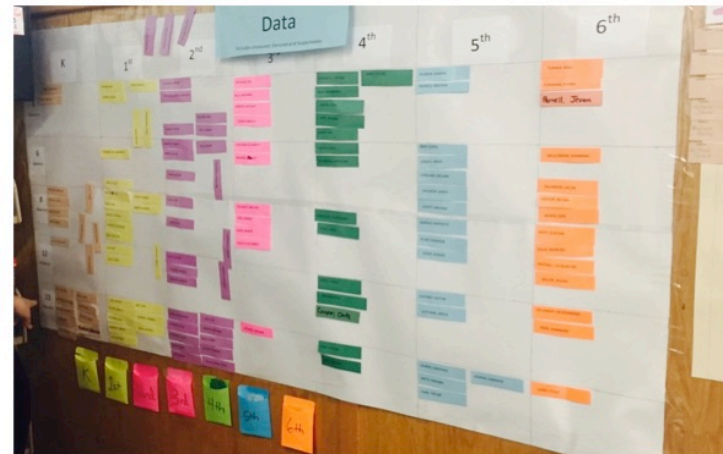

Figure 4

Neithercut Data Artifacts: Attendance

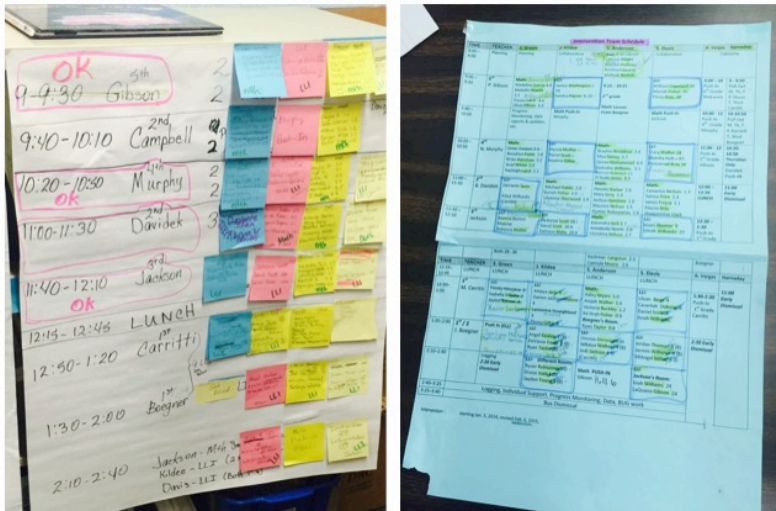

Figure 5

Sample Intervention Schedules

Figure 6

Figure 7

Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers are an integral part of the MTSS. They should continue the process of analyzing data for all students and adopt instructional strategies and resources provided to address student need based on that data. There will be an instructional learning cycle aligned to that data (pre-, post-test, progress monitoring, etc.) and adjust instruction as needed.

SECTION 4: TIER 1 INSTRUCTION & SUPPORT

Tier 1 encompasses best practices in the classroom for all learners. The following list is not exhaustive, but provides a condensed list of universal best practices. For additional resources visit Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at **ies.ed.gov** and *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*.

Universal Best Practice Strategies

Students

- Student self-evaluation and reflection
- Student progress monitoring with the employment of strategies to move toward mastery of the learning intention
- Student metacognition
- Student peer assessment

Teachers

- Challenging learning intentions with a clear success criterion
- Timely, actionable, criterion-based feedback in reference to the learning intention
- Formative Assessment
- Instructional Adjustments in response to student difficulty
- Continuous reflection on the impact of instruction on student learning
- Collaborative grouping that provides complex tasks (more than one correct way to solve a problem and/or multiple correct answers) and allows for student problem solving

Students-Teachers

- Strong relationships built on mutual trust and respect
- Cultural competency and responsiveness
- Strong teacher/student relationships
- Safe and secure environment
- Learning targets posted

Students-Teachers, *continued*

- Explicit links to prior knowledge
- Wait time to respond orally
- Support for different learning styles
- Engagement in learning
- Teaching students to recognize key words by content
- Use of manipulative
- Use of visual aids
- Metacognition (Students thinking about their thinking and the ability to verbalize it)
- Blooms/DOK questioning strategies
- Collaborative groupings
- Thinking maps
- Continuous feedback loop where teachers provide information to students about their progress and students provide teachers information about the impact of the teacher's instruction
- Connections To Text, To Self, To World
- Clear, timely, and specific feedback
- Positive reinforcement of behavior
- Clear procedural processes -rules and routines are established
- Rewards and consequences for behavior are fair and consistent
- Self-monitoring by students of their own progress
- Daily schedules posted
- Allow/Plan for movement

SECTION 5: TIER 2 INTERVENTIONS

Tier 2 encompasses best practices in the classroom with emphasis on differentiation of instruction and "*is focused on skills that pose a barrier to student learning. Student-centered data are used to identify groups of students who share the same academic and/or behavior need. The form of intervention will be determined by four questions: HOW much time is needed each day to accelerate learning; WHAT instruction/intervention will be provided during that time, WHO will provide the instruction/intervention, and WHERE will the instruction occur….Any Tier 2 instruction provided to students must be integrated with Tier 1 content and performance expectations.*"* Specific steps include:

1. Reviewing district data points to determine which students need differentiated instruction.

2. Creating a differentiated classroom in multiple areas:

   a. Content (content at various text levels, all learning styles considered, partnerships, etc.)
   b. Process (tiered activities w/ different levels of support, challenge, or complexity, etc.)
   c. Products (provide students with options to demonstrate their understanding of the content taught)
   d. Environment (clear routines, procedures, and classroom layout based on learner needs) (Tomlinson, 2000)

   *Quoted from the University of South Florida MTSS publication.

3. Small group instruction in addition to core curriculum provided based on students specific needs.

   a. Guided Reading Groups
   b. Strategy Groups for Reading, Writing, Word Study, and Math

4. Ongoing progress monitoring based on formative assessments to determine effectiveness of the intervention or if a change in delivery or strategy is required.

5. If progress is not made, a SAT referral will be initiated and the student will move to Tier 3 interventions with the appropriate specialist.

Section 6: Tier 3 Interventions

Tier 3 Interventions include pullout or push-in services for students and the expectations for extension for those students who remain in the classroom. "Typically, Tier 3 services are provided to very small groups and/or individual students. Tier 3 services require effective levels of collaboration and coordination among both the general and specialized teaching staff… The expected outcome of Tier 3 services, combined with Tiers 1 and 2, is that the student will achieve Tier 1 proficiency levels established by the district." Steps in the process of serving students identified as Tier 3 include:

- Identifying pull-out and push-in through the data analysis process and building intervention team schedule.

- Facilitating classroom extensions identified through data analysis process. Extensions take place during the classroom intervention pull-out or push-in.

- Evaluate students identified as making no or minimal progress SAT recommendation.

Intervention Programs Currently in Use in FCS

- FCS uses the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) as the identified reading intervention.

- FCS does not currently have a district-wide behavior program. Some schools have been using:
  - ➢ **Check in & Check out**
  - ➢ **Why Try?**
  - ➢ **Love & Logic**
  - ➢ **Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

- FCS does not currently have an identified math program or math intervention. Some schools have been using:
  - ➢ **Do the Math**
  - ➢ **Think Through Math**
  - ➢ **Teacher-generated program**- aligning hands-on manipulative activities to deepen concept understanding

Section 7: Tier 4 Interventions

Guiding Questions for Tier 4 Implementation

- Are only those students who need specially designed instruction placed in specialized programs?

- Are data collection and progress monitoring clearly defined?

- Are goals for students clearly defined and measurable?

- Are services and methodology distinctly different from those provided in the general education environment?

- Is consideration given to ensuring placement in the least restrictive environment?

- Who is responsible for the delivery, monitoring, and recording of the intervention results?

Retrieved from http://archives.gadoe.org

Tier 4 interventions and the process for supporting students with diverse abilities includes students with IEPs, English language learners, as well as gifted & talented students. The intervention team should collaborate on the referral to create a complete picture of the student's learning patterns, strengths, and areas of need. The referral will also include an overview of the interventions that have been attempted and a review of the assessment data collected at each tier.
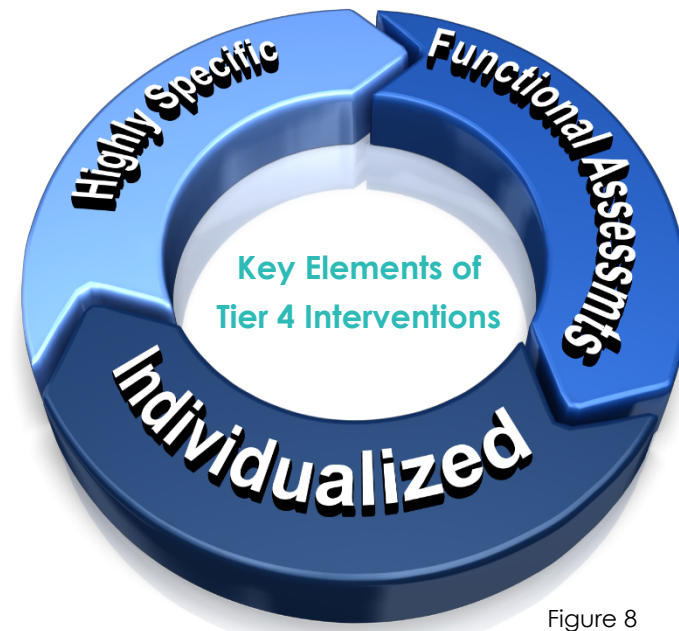
Highly Specific

Functional Assessments

Key Elements of Tier 4 Interventions

Individualized

Figure 8

SECTION 8: INTERVENTION DOCUMENTATION

The purpose of documentation is to keep a running record of what strategies have been used with each student. This documentation is crucial to making "what next" decisions for students in every tier. Documentation for interventions will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Lesson Plans
- Individualized Learning Plans, Individualized Education Plan
- Intervention Logs for Tiers 2-4
- Progress Monitoring Data
- Pre- & Post- Data

Figure 9 features two approaches to monitoring interventions.

Neithercut Data Artifacts: STAR and ELA Interventions

Figure 9

Section 9: IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS

Implementation and Monitoring the MTSS model

The key elements in implementing and monitoring the MTSS model include 1) how students are identified; 2) how students progress and exit through the Tiers; and 3) monitoring implementation of the curriculum.

Some questions to ask when reviewing data might include:

1. Has the instructional program been provided with fidelity? (Has this been observed directly?)
2. Has student attendance been acceptable?
3. Is core instruction also being provided in reading? Or, is student missing core instruction?
4. Does instruction address student skill deficits?
5. What other factors could be impacting student's performance?

Retrieved from St. Vrain Valley Schools website

What is Progress Monitoring?

Progress monitoring involves a frequent assessment of a student's performance in specific skill areas. Progress monitoring is used to determine whether the specific instructional support is working and to provide information to the student's teacher on how to adjust instruction to meet the student's needs.

How often does progress monitoring occur? How often a student's progress should be monitored will vary by school, the level of intervention and by the individual student's needs. Progress monitoring helps school staff know if the instructional support that is being provided needs to be changed.

Retrieved from
http://p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/parent.htm

Procedures Flow Chart/Decision Tree Student Assistance Team (SAT) consists of Principal, Coach, Classroom Teacher, Social Worker, and any other teacher that has experience with the student. SAT meeting notes need to be noted in lieu of grade level meeting notes in the flowchart – a sample flowchart can be found in Figures 10 and 11. In addition, the district should consider 1) adopting a coherent Intervention Form; b) designing a communications strategy for documenting Tier 2 activities to the parents; and 3) generating a parent letter when a student enters Tier 3.
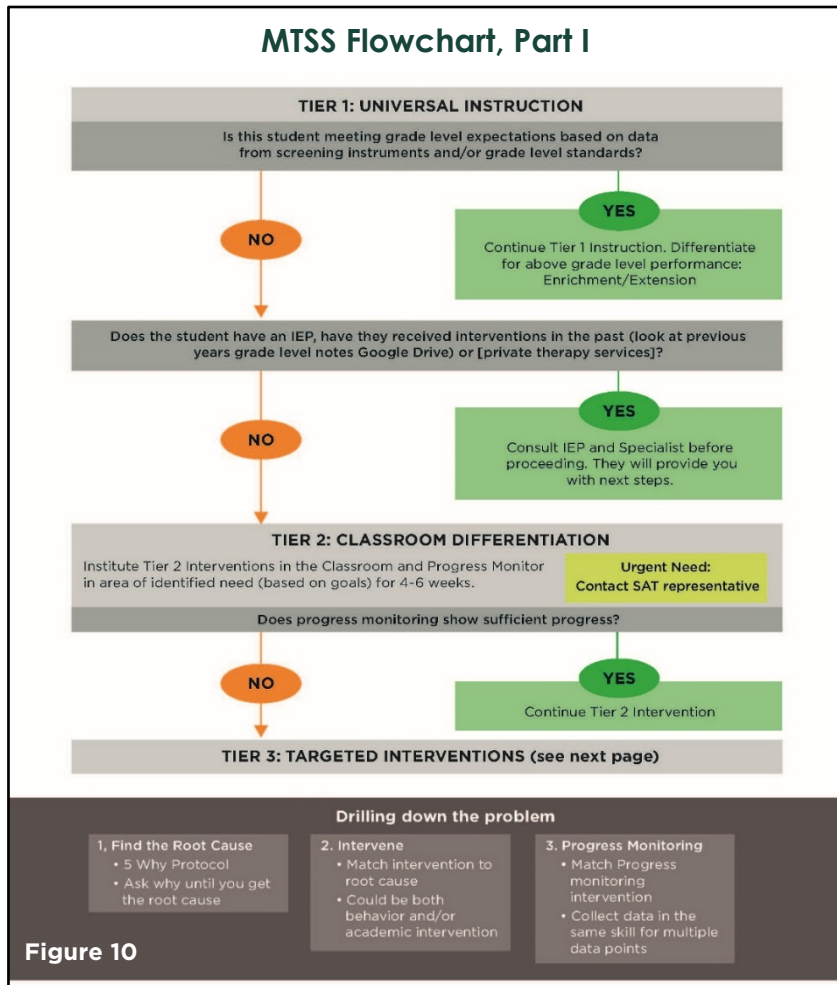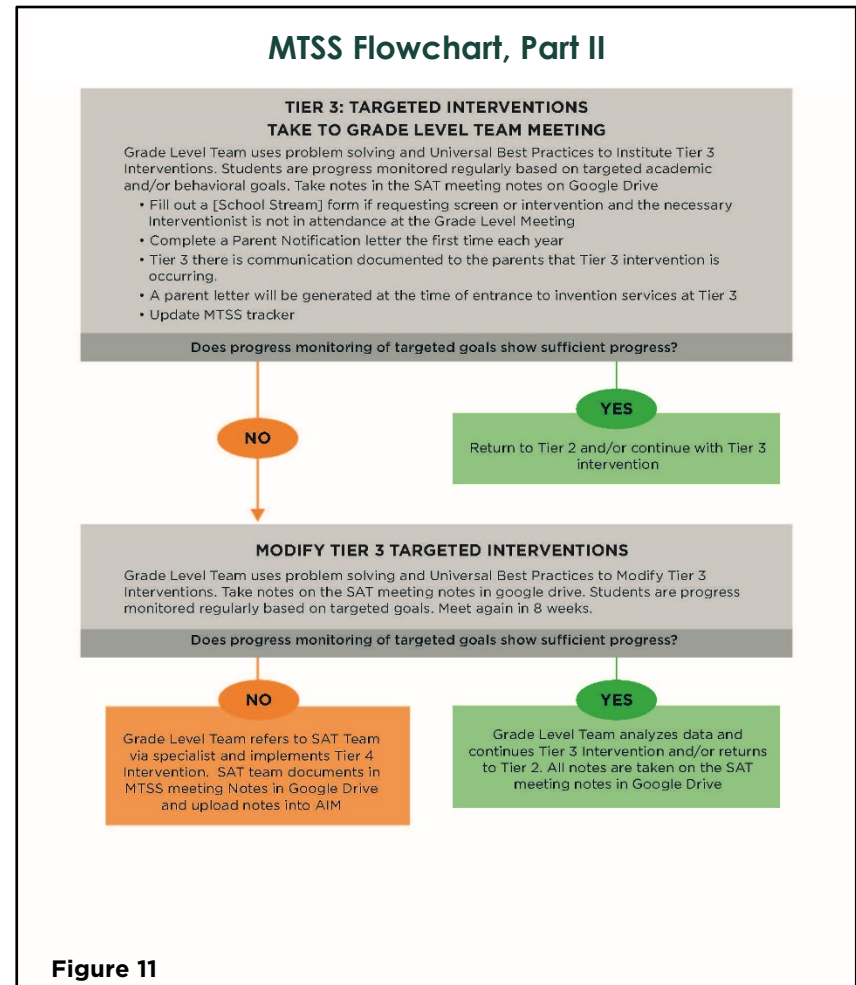

Figure 10

Figure 11

SECTION 10: MTSS GLOSSARY

The following terms are frequently used within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework.

Accommodations: Accommodations are changes that can be made in the way the student accesses information and demonstrates performance (Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(a), Florida Administrative Code [F.A.C.]). Accommodations make it possible for students to work around the effect of their disabilities. An accommodation allows a student to complete the same assignment or test as other students, but with a change in the timing, formatting, setting, scheduling, response and/or presentation. The accommodation does not alter in any significant way what the test or assignment measures. Examples of accommodations include a student who is blind taking a Braille version of a test or a student taking a test alone in a quiet room. Accommodations that are appropriate for assessments do not invalidate assessment results. Accommodations are not the same as instructional interventions for academics or behavior. (See Adaptations, Interventions, and Modifications for important distinctions)

Adaptations: Adaptations reduce the length or complexity of the practice or test items and make assignments or test items more accessible. In general, teachers should only use task adaptations in the initial stages of instruction and then fade them so that the student has the opportunity to learn the concept or skill at the required level of proficiency. Task adaptations are considered accommodations because they are temporary and they do not reduce learning expecta-tions. Examples of task adaptations include: Making assign-ments or assessments less complex, such as by crossing out one of the options on a multiple-choice question so that a student only has to pick from three options instead of four, providing hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests, such as the page number in the book where the answer to the question can be found. (See Accommodations, Interventions, and Modifications for important distinctions)

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A behavior intervention plan is the process by which the Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) information is incorporated into a concrete plan of action for addressing a student's behavior. By understanding the purpose the behavior serves for the student as well as the environmental events that trigger the occurrence of the behavior, one is able to develop an informed hypothesis that drives a function-based intervention plan. An effective BIP includes intervention strategies that prevent problem behavior; teach new, appropriate replacement skills; and respond to the new behavior with a functionally equivalent reinforcement. Therefore, similar behaviors should not routinely be treated with identical interventions, as the functions of the behaviors may be very different. (See Functional Behavioral Assessment)

Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT): BYOT, also referred to in other literature as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), is an instructional technology approach that allows students to use their personal devices (example, laptops, smart phones, tablets, etc.) for learning in the classroom. BYOT allows students to use their personal devices to provide anytime, anywhere access to learning, with a focus on the pedagogy of allowing students to learn through collaboration with peers and teachers, access to resources, higher order thinking, and publishing their work.

Common Core Standards: The Common Core State Standards outline rigorous content expectations with the intent to make all students college- and career-ready (CCR) by the end of 12th grade. They have a greater emphasis on the larger end-goal (i.e., CCR Anchor Standards for English/Language Arts and the Standards for Mathematical Practice for Mathematics) and are highly supportive of educators differentiating instruction to ensure that all students are given every opportunity to meet these overarching achievement goals. Michigan has adopted these standards, which are now called the Michigan Academic Standards.

Coordinated instructional sequences: Coordinated instructional sequences take into consideration how information is selected, sequenced, organized, and practiced. Coordinated instructional sequences occur within each component of reading where a logical progression of skills would be evident: easier skills are introduced before more difficult skills, so that skills build progressively. The other way coordinated instructional sequences are evident is in the clear and meaningful relationship or linking of instruction across the five components of reading: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. If students orally segment and blend words with the letter- sound /f/ during phonemic awareness instruction, then we would expect to see it followed by practice in connecting the sound /f/ with the letter f. This would be followed by fluency practice in reading words, sentences, and/or passages with the letter-sound /f/. Spelling practice would include /f/ and other previously learned letter-sounds.

Core Curriculum: The core curriculum is the course of study deemed critical and usually made mandatory for all students of a school or school system. Core curricula are often instituted at the elementary and secondary levels by local school boards, Departments of Education, or other administrative agencies charged with overseeing education.

Core Instruction: Core instruction is provided to all students in the class, and it is usually guided by a comprehensive core curriculum. Part of the core instruction is usually provided to the class as a whole, and part is provided during the small group, differentiated instruction period. Although instruction is differentiated by student need during the small group period, materials and lesson procedures from the core program can frequently be used to provide re-teaching, or additional teaching to students according to their needs.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment

Criterion-referenced assessment measures what a student understands, knows, or can accomplish in relation to a specific performance objective. It is typically used to identify a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in relative to an age or grade-level standard. It does not compare students to other students.

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM): CBM is an approach to measurement that is used to screen students or to monitor student progress in mathematics, reading, writing, and spelling. With CBM, teachers and schools can assess individual responsiveness to instruction. When a student proves unresponsive to the instructional program, CBM signals the teacher/school to revise that program. CBM is form of Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA) and meets the three requirements of CBA: 1) measurement materials are aligned with the school's curriculum; (2) measurement occurs frequently; and (3) assessment information is used to formulate instructional decisions. CBM differs from CBA because of two additional properties: (1) Each CBM test is an alternate form of equivalent difficulty; and (2) CBM is standardized, with its reliability and validity well documented.

Data Point: A data point is one score on a graph or chart, which represents a student's performance at one point in time.

Diagnostic: Diagnostics are tests that can be used to measure a variety of reading, language, or cognitive skills. Although they can be given as soon as a screening test indicates a child is behind in reading growth, they will usually be given only if a child fails to make adequate progress after being given extra help in learning to read. They are designed to provide a more precise and detailed picture of the full range of a child's knowledge and skill so that instruction can be more precisely planned.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiated instruction refers to educators tailoring the curriculum, teaching environments, and practices to create appropriately different learning experiences for students in order to meet each student's needs. To differentiate instruction is to recognize students' varying interests, readiness levels, and levels of responsiveness to the standard core curriculum and to plan responsively to address these individual differences. There are four elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated: content, process, products, and learning environment. In its simplest form, different instruction is matching instruction to meet the different needs of learners in a given classroom.

Direct Instruction: The teacher defines and teaches a concept, guides students through its application, and arranges for extended guided practice until mastery is achieved.

Empirical Research: Refers to scientifically based research that applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge. This includes research that: employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment; has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review; involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn; relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and can be generalized.

Evidence-Based Interventions: Evidence-based interventions (EBI) are treatments that have been proven effective (to some degree) through outcome evaluations. As such, EBI are treatments that are likely to be effective in changing target behavior if implemented with integrity.

Explicit Instruction: Involves direct explanation. The teacher's language is concise, specific, and related to the objective. Another characteristic of explicit instruction is a visible instructional approach that includes a high level of teacher/student interaction. Explicit instruction means that the actions of the teacher are clear, unambiguous, direct, and visible. This makes it clear what the students are to do and learn. Nothing is left to guess work.

Fidelity of Implementation: The degree to which instruction follows the intent and design of the program. Fidelity refers to the accurate and consistent provision or delivery of instruction in the manner in which it was designed or prescribed according to research findings and/or developers' specifications. Five common aspects of fidelity include: adherence, exposure, program differentiation, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery.

Flexible Grouping: Grouping students according to shared instructional needs and abilities, and regrouping as their instructional needs change. Group size and allocated instructional time may vary among groups.

Formal Assessment: Formal assessment follows a prescribed format for administration and scoring. Scores obtained from formal tests are standardized, meaning that interpretation is based on norms from a comparative sample of children.

Formative Assessment: Formative assessment is a form of evaluation used to plan instruction in a recursive way. With formative assessment, student progress is systematically assessed to provide continuous feedback to both the student and the teacher concerning learning successes and failures. With formative assessment, teachers diagnose skill, ability, and knowledge gaps, measure progress, and evaluate instruction. Formative assessments are not necessarily used for grading purposes. Examples include (but are not limited to): CBM, CBA, pre/post tests, portfolios, benchmark assessments, quizzes, teacher observations, and teacher/student conferencing.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA): Functional behavioral assessment is a process that helps understand the relation between problem behavior and environmental context and contingent consequences leading to an effective and empirically validated behavior intervention plan. (See Behavior Intervention Plan)

General Outcome Measures (GOM): General outcome measurement (GOM) is a simple set of procedures that teachers can use to plan, adapt, individualize, and evaluate instructional programs for their students. GOM involves the use of direct, repeated measurement of student progress toward long-range instructional goals. Progress is measured by developing standard tasks that are used as indicators of student proficiency in a content or skill area. For example, in reading, the number of words a student reads in 1 min is often used as a measure of generalized proficiency. Teachers administer the standard tasks on a frequent basis (one to two times per week) and record the scores on individual student graphs. The database of scores that is produced provides the teachers with an objective record of the student's growth in a skill area. Using this database, the teacher can make decisions regarding the student's rate of improvement in the area, the effectiveness of the instructional program, and the effectiveness of various modifications to that instructional program.

Goal Line (sometimes referred to as an aim line): The goal line on a graph connects the intersection of the student's initial performance level and date of that initial performance level to the intersection of the student's year-end goal and the date of that year-end goal. It represents the expected rate of student progress over time.

Implicit Instruction: The opposite of explicit instruction. Students discover skills and concepts instead of being explicitly taught. For example, the teacher writes a list of words on the board that begin with the letter "m" (mud, milk, meal, and mattress) and asks the students how the words are similar. The teacher elicits from the students that the letter "m" stands for the sound you hear at the beginning of the words.

Instructional Reading Level: The level at which a reader can read text with 90% accuracy (i.e., no more than one error per 10 words read). Instructional reading level engages the student in challenging, but manageable text.

Instructional Routines: Instructional routines include the following sequence of steps: Explicit instruction; Modeling; Guided Practice; Student practice, application and feedback; and generalization.

Interventions: Interventions supplements primary instruction (i.e., the universal core program) such that students receive additional research-based preventative treatment.

Secondary level interventions (i.e., Tier 2) are often short- term, implemented in small group settings, and may be individualized. Intensive academic and/or behavioral interventions are characterized by their increased focus for students who fail to respond to less intensive forms of instruction. Intensity can be increased through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation. Within RTI, intensive is sometimes referred to as tertiary intervention or Tier 3 supports. Interventions should be utilized based on an analysis of the data and interventions are to be targeted to the area of concern. This level of analysis occurs with the Problem-Solving framework. (See Accommodations, Adaptations and Modification for important distinctions).

Job-embedded professional development (JEPD): Job-embedded professional development refers to teacher learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and is designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning. It is primarily school or classroom based and is integrated into the workday, consisting of teachers assessing and finding solutions for authentic and immediate problems of practice as part of a cycle of continuous improvement. JEPD is a shared, ongoing process that is locally rooted and makes a direct connection between learning and application in daily practice, thereby requiring active teacher involvement in cooperative, inquiry-based work.

Modifications: A modification is an adjustment to as assignment of a test that changes the standard or what the test or assignment is supposed to measure. Examples of possible modifications include a student completing work on part of a standard or a student completing an alternate assignment that is more easily achievable than the standard assignment. Other examples include requiring less content, such as fewer objectives, shorter assignments, limiting assignments or assessments to the easiest problems. Modifications are alterations that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. (See Accommodations, Adaptations and Interventions for important distinctions).

Multi-Tiered System of Supports: A system where resources and services are organized efficiently on a continuum of intensity based on students' academic and behavioral needs, whatever those needs might be.

Norm-Referenced Assessment: Norm-referenced assessment compares a student's performance to that of an appropriate peer group.

Positive Behavioral Support (PBS): Positive Behavioral Support is an empirically validated, function-based approach to eliminate challenging behaviors and replace them with prosocial skills. Use of PBS decreases the need for more intrusive or aversive interventions (i.e., punishment or suspension) and can lead to both systemic and individualized change.

Problem-Solving: A problem-solving approach encompasses the following four steps: Problem Identification, Analysis of Problem, Intervention Implementation and Response to Instruction/Intervention. Problem solving is used at both the individual, class, school-wide and district level. It is to be used for ALL students and educational problems (i.e., general education, exceptional student education, ELL, etc.).

Problem-Solving Teams: Problem-Solving Teams (PST) are intervention-driven/progress-monitoring teams at each school which assists students, families and teachers in seeking

positive solutions for all students. The primary goal of the PST is to support teachers and parents by generating effective research-based academic and behavioral strategies for individual targeted students. In addition, Problem-Solving Teams can use school-wide and class-wide data to monitor the success and difficulties of groups of students and can offer academic and behavioral interventions to be applied to class or school- wide issues.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC): A group in which educators commit to ongoing learning experiences with a deliberate intent to transform teaching and learning at their school or within their district.

Progress Monitoring: Progress monitoring is used to assess students' academic performance, to quantify a student rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

Response to Interventions (RtI): RtI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs, using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions. These three components of RtI are essential.

Scaffolding: Scaffolding is an instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn the task, and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. In this manner, a teacher enables students to accomplish as much of a task as possible without assistance.

Screening: An informal inventory that provides the teacher and others a beginning indication of the student's preparation for academic and behavioral expectations. It is

a "first alert" that a child may need extra help to make adequate progress in a specific academic area or in behavior.

Specially designed instruction: Specially designed instruction refers to adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of an eligible exceptional student, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the student that result from the student's disability or giftedness and to ensure access of the student to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the school district that apply to all students.

Standards-Based Grading: Standards-based grading is predicated on student mastery of core academic content on a continuum of knowledge or skill. Standards-based grading is a refined way of reporting what students know and how they demonstrate their learning of state content standards. Standards-based grading provides clear and consistent targets, judges performance against a standard, communicates progress toward meeting standards, reports non-academic factors separately, and engages students in their own learning. In pure standards-based grading, students do not move on to a new level of content until they have mastered the current level; grades are not summarized at the subject level but reported by individual benchmarks.

Standards-Referenced Grading and Reporting: Standards-referenced grading is a refined way of reporting what students know and how they demonstrate their learning of grade-level state content standards. Standards-referenced grading provides clear and consistent targets, judges performance against a standard, communicates progress toward meeting standards, reports nonacademic factors separately, and engages students in their own learning. In standards-referenced grading, students may move on to the

next content area without demonstrating mastery of every benchmark; grades are summarized and reported at the subject level.

Standard Protocol Intervention: Standard protocol intervention relies on the same, empirically validated intervention for all students with similar academic or behavioral needs. Standard protocol interventions facilitate quality control.

Student Engagement: Student engagement is a term that is frequently used in reference to perceptions of student commitment to schoolwork, connection to school, and investment in learning. Many contextual factors have been deemed antecedents of engagement (i.e., teacher support, peers, classroom structure, autonomy support, task characteristics, and needs for related autonomy and competence).

Summative Assessment: Summative assessment is a form of evaluation used to describe the effectiveness of an instruction program or intervention, that is, whether the intervention had the desired effect. With summative assessment, student learning is typically assessed at the end of a course of study or annually (at the end of a grade).

Supplemental instruction: Supplemental instruction is instruction that goes beyond that provided by the comprehensive core program because the core program does not provide enough instruction or practice in a key area to meet the needs of the students in a particular classroom or school. For example, teachers in a school may observe that their comprehensive core program does not provide enough instruction in vocabulary, or in phonics, to adequately meet the needs of the majority of their students. They could then select a supplemental program in these areas to strengthen the initial instruction and practice provided to all students.

Systematic Instruction: A carefully planned sequence for instruction, similar to a builder's blueprint for a house. A blueprint is carefully thought out and designed before building materials are gathered and construction begins. The plan for instruction that is systematic is carefully thought out, strategic, and designed before activities and lessons are planned. For systematic instruction, lessons build on previously taught information, from simple to complex.

Tiered Instruction: Tiered instruction describes levels of instructional intensity within a multi-tiered prevention system.

Trend Line: A trend line is a line on a graph that represents a line of best fit through a student's data points. The trend line can be compared against the aim line to help inform responsiveness to intervention and to tailor a student's instructional program.

Universal Screening: Universal screening is conducted, usually as a first stage within a screening process, to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening tests are typically brief; conducted with all students at a grade level; and followed by additional testing or short-term progress monitoring to corroborate students' risk status. Universal screening can address both academic and behavioral domains.

Adopted from definitions developed by Volusia County Schools