

MTSS Self-Reflection

This self-reflection guides district and school MTSS Leadership Teams as they reflect on current implementation of the essential components of their multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).

Teams can compare their current practices to evidence-based practices, acknowledge areas of continued success, and identify areas they would like to improve. There are four essential components of MTSS. Each of these components is integrated, creating a holistic, evidence-based approach to teaching and learning practices.

Essential components of MTSS

1. Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Instruction, Interventions, and Supports
2. Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System
3. Tiered Delivery System
4. Continuous Data-Based Decision Making

STEP 1: DEVELOP AN MTSS LEADERSHIP TEAM

An MTSS Leadership Team is essential in implementing the structures and supports of MTSS. The team is comprised of key stakeholders (grade levels, departments, specials, administrators, general and special educators) and is responsible for leading and coordinating the efforts to establish, monitor, and sustain MTSS. The MTSS Leadership Team uses fidelity of implementation data, student outcome data, and stakeholder feedback to make data-informed decisions to promote successful implementation and sustainability. The team approach to leadership supports the distribution of work and responsibility, while also ensuring multiple perspectives and expertise are represented in the system.

To begin the self-reflection, the MTSS Leadership Team should:

1. Read the overview for the MTSS Leadership Team component.
2. Orient themselves to the middle column, effective practices. Consider each bullet describing the effective practice in more depth.
3. While reviewing each practice, make notes about their implementation either in the left-hand column, as an area for improvement, or in the right-hand column, as an area of continued success. Team members may make notes in both columns for a practice as implementation varies across descriptors.

MTSS Leadership Team

The MTSS Leadership Team includes administrator and representative team members (e.g., one from each grade level, band, or department) with assigned roles/responsibilities. A team approach helps to distribute the workload among multiple individuals and facilitates collaboration and communication. Team alignment and cohesion allows for a systematic approach to data-based problem solving and keeps the focus on improved outcomes for all students. Core features of effective team-based leadership include:

- Shared accountability and responsibility for developing and maintaining the MTSS.
- Monthly meetings scheduled as part of the main calendar.
- Established meeting norms and clear roles/responsibilities for all members.
- Use of a consistent, standardized meeting agenda and corresponding action plan to guide the meeting and emphasize the ongoing use of data to inform decision making.
- Use of a formal shared decision-making process.
- Procedures for communication and work with other collaborative educator teams (e.g., Tier 2, Tier 3, grade level teams).
- Action planning and integration with the continuous school improvement planning process.
- Formalized feedback loops from learners, families, community, faculty, and staff to inform the system.



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Need to increase meetings to monthly for adequate discussion/work time.</i>	1. A representative MTSS Leadership Team is created that maintains the authority and responsibility for leading and coordinating MTSS efforts in the school. The team: - Has shared accountability and responsibility for maintaining MTSS with fidelity in the school. - Meets monthly to review the status of MTSS related activities, ensures appropriate action is taken to reduce barriers to successful implementation, and ensures fidelity. - Supports collaborative educator teams for Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, while building intervention teams for Tier 2 and Tier 3. - Ensures that implementation of MTSS is an integral part of continuous school improvement.	<i>Example: Team meets bimonthly with authority to lead MTSS. The team strongly supports educator teams and has begun aligning MTSS work with district improvement goals.</i>
<i>Example: Team doesn't currently include representation from special education.</i>	2. The MTSS Leadership Team represents key stakeholders from each grade level/band/department, including general and special educators, and data personnel. The team shares clear roles and responsibilities.	<i>Example: Clear team roles/responsibilities are established.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Existing data review protocol not detailed enough to arrive at clear action steps.</i>	3. The MTSS Leadership Team uses a consistent, standardized meeting agenda at each meeting to guide the meeting and emphasize the ongoing use of data to inform decision making. a. The team schedules meetings monthly and maintains them as part of the main calendar.	Example: Team uses a standardized meeting agenda, and all meetings include data review.
<i>Example: Family/staff feedback not used consistently to guide decision-making.</i>	4. The MTSS Leadership Team develops, supports, and ensures use of a formal shared decision-making process that includes: a. Regular fidelity reviews, program evaluation, and resource alignment. b. Alignment across levels of the system. c. Feedback loops from learners, families, and staff to inform the system.	<i>Example: Team has a shared decision-making process that includes fidelity review and system alignment.</i>



STEP 2: DIRECTIONS FOR MTSS LEADERSHIP TEAMS

While essential components are organized into distinct categories, MTSS implementation requires deliberate integration of all components. An established MTSS Leadership Team that is driving the initial implementation of the MTSS essential components may choose to examine and reflect on any of the essential components that are most relevant to their context and strategic improvement planning. To begin the self-reflection process, the MTSS Leadership Team should:

1. Prioritize an MTSS essential component.
2. Read the overview of the prioritized component.
3. Orient themselves to the middle column, effective practices. Consider each bullet describing the effective practice in more depth.

While reviewing each practice, make notes about their implementation either in the left-hand column, as an area for improvement, or in the right-hand column, as an area of continued success. Team members may make notes in both columns for a practice as implementation varies across descriptors.

Essential Component

Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Instruction, Interventions, and Supports

The MTSS Leadership Team chooses materials or programs for instruction, Tier 1 classroom interventions, targeted Tier 2 interventions, and intensive Tier 3 interventions that meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards. The MTSS Leadership Team chooses instructional practices recommended by WWC practice guides. They also include in the selection process consideration of a whole child approach, the population of learners being served, and alignment with the district's existing philosophy, programs, and initiatives. In addition, they consider resources and capacity needed to support MTSS implementation with fidelity in the selection process.



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: New Tier 2 materials not yet implemented in all departments.</i>	1. School personnel: - Select materials for core instruction, Tier 1 interventions, targeted Tier 2 interventions, and intensive Tier 3 that meet WWC standards. - Adopt instructional practices recommended by the WWC practice guides. - Ensure a rigorous and accessible curriculum. - Show evidence of cultural responsiveness to the learner demographic population.	<i>Example: Evidence-based materials and practices for core instruction, Tier 1, and Tier 3 interventions are consistently implemented.</i>
<i>Example: Typically only 1–2 data sources used for decision-making.</i>	2. The MTSS Leadership Team puts an approved review and selection process in place to select instruction, intervention, and supports based on: - Review of at least three sources of input data (demographic, achievement, process, or perception). - Consideration of a range of learning needs and assets from accelerated to severe and persistently challenged. - Consideration of fit with existing practices and innovations.	<i>Example: Team follows a structured review process.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Review process not yet fully aligned with WWC criteria.</i>	3. The MTSS Leadership Team reviews the evidence base for the materials for instruction, targeted Tier 1 interventions, and supports for intensive Tier 2 interventions being considered for selection. To substantiate selection decisions, the review considers: a. Commitment to materials that meet WWC standards. b. Commitment to materials that can be supported using instructional practices recommended in WWC practice guides. c. Consideration of the extent to which the materials will support student strengths, needs, and cultural information. d. Consideration of fit with existing district practices and innovations.	<i>Example: Review process explicitly includes consideration of student strengths/needs and alignment with existing district practices.</i>
<i>Example: Some family materials not yet available in digital format, which feedback indicates families prefer.</i>	4. The MTSS Leadership Team engages families in materials or programs for instruction, targeted Tier 1 interventions, and supports for intensive Tier 2 interventions through most of the following: a. Involvement in the selection process. b. Opportunities to give input and feedback. c. Family workshops to enhance implementation. d. Communicating the description, purpose, anticipated duration, and at-home support needed in a language and format they understand.	<i>Example: Regularly scheduled family survey includes items for giving feedback on interventions.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Grade 9 staff lack dedicated space to deliver Tier 2 and 3 interventions as designed.</i>	5. The MTSS Leadership Team allocates resources to ensure all educators have access to the materials, time, and space necessary for implementation of instruction, interventions, and supports to fidelity.	<i>Example: All educators have access to required instructional and intervention materials.</i>
<i>Example: PL includes initial training, but time allocated for follow-up coaching not adequate.</i>	6. The MTSS Leadership Team provides high-quality professional learning in the use of instruction, interventions and supports that include all of the following: a. Modeling of key program components and lessons. b. Opportunities for users to practice the use of the program components. c. Opportunities for educators to learn effective strategies for content area instruction. d. Coordination among staff through formal planning and informal communication. e. Checks to ensure fidelity of implementation. f. Coaching on the instruction or intervention.	<i>Example: Staff receive PL that includes modeling and opportunities for practice.</i>



Essential Component

Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System

A comprehensive screening and assessment system is a coordinated system of multiple valid and reliable assessments designed to inform instructional and programmatic decisions. A comprehensive system includes:

- A balanced assessment system (including assessments used for screening, diagnostic purposes, and progress monitoring).
- Universal screening measures and decision rules for using screening data.
- Progress monitoring assessments and decision rules for using progress monitoring data.
- A diagnostic assessment process for identifying specific skill needs and administration of the diagnostic assessments.

Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: No clear process in place for verifying screenings are given and entered consistently.</i>	1. School personnel use universal screening tools and activities that: a. Address student skill development across academic and behavioral domains. b. Are efficient, valid, reliable, and predictive of student outcomes. c. Are appropriate for the learners in the setting. d. Are monitored for the fidelity of administration and data entry. e. Are designed for screening rather than assessment. f. Are administered three times annually, with the first occurring within the first four months of the school year.	<i>Example: School uses appropriate academic and behavior screeners given 3x/year to all students.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Timelines and criteria for when to administer diagnostic assessments are not clearly defined across grade levels.</i>	2. School personnel use diagnostic assessments that: - Address student skill development across academic and behavioral domains. - Are valid, reliable, normed for the population, and age appropriate. - Are designed for the intended purpose of diagnosing need for intervention or differentiation of Tier 1 instruction. - Include a process for the identification of specific need and administration of the assessments. - Are monitored for fidelity of administration and data entry. - Produce data used systematically to evaluate quality, equity, and efficiency of instruction, interventions, and supports to create a responsive system that enhances individual learner outcomes.	<i>Example: Staff use age-appropriate diagnostic assessments to identify specific academic and behavioral skill needs.</i>
<i>Example: Behavior progress monitoring needs update to align with new attendance policy.</i>	3. School personnel use progress monitoring tools that: - Address student skill development across academic and behavioral domains. - Are valid and reliable. - Are monitored for fidelity of administration and data entry. - Produce data used systematically to evaluate the quality, consistency, and efficiency of instruction, interventions, and supports to create a responsive system that enhances individual learner outcomes. - Are designed for the intended purpose of progress monitoring.	<i>Example: Academic and behavioral progress monitoring is in place and data are used regularly.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Additional training needed on interpreting screeners to ensure staff use results accurately.</i>	4. The MTSS Leadership Team ensures resources are allocated to support ongoing, effective professional learning for all selected assessments. a. The team evaluates professional learning needs at least annually to determine effectiveness and identify future learning needs.	<i>Example: Yearly teacher feedback survey item about PL needs is used to help plan offerings.</i>
<i>Example: Need to establish fidelity monitoring at regular intervals.</i>	5. The MTSS Leadership Team establishes an assessment calendar that includes: a. Universal screening windows three times per year that includes all students. b. Progress monitoring and diagnostic assessment windows. c. Regular monitoring for fidelity of administration and data entry. d. Time for regular and systematic use of assessment data.	<i>Example: Assessment calendar includes universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment windows.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Family communications focus on scores more than explaining what results mean and how families can support learning.</i>	6. The MTSS Leadership Team puts processes in place to support notifying learners and families of the assessment information, including: a. Protocols to support communication of assessment dates, frequency, and results to learners and families that use audience-friendly language and formats.	<i>Example: Team has processes for notifying families about assessment schedules and scores using clear, accessible language.</i>



Essential Component

Tiered Delivery System

A responsive MTSS plan provides instruction, interventions, and supports intended to meet the needs and assets of the whole child. An aligned curriculum organizes the instruction, interventions, and supports along a continuum to meet the needs of each and every learner. Tiers layer and intensify supports to match learner needs.

- **Tier 1** is the research-based instruction and classroom interventions that are available to all learners and effectively meet the needs of most
- **Tier 2** is evidence-based supplemental, targeted interventions intended for some learners who require support beyond Tier 1.
- **Tier 3** supports provide intense individual interventions for a few learners with highly accelerated, or intensive needs.

Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Percentage of student needs met by Tier 1 is under 80% (72%).</i>	1. The MTSS Leadership Team ensures access to quality Tier 1 instruction that meets the needs of most learners (e.g., 80% or more).	<i>Example: Percentage of student needs met by Tier 1 rose by 3% last year.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: No documented protocol for how teams should respond when fidelity falls below expected levels.</i>	2. The MTSS Leadership Team has a written process for monitoring the fidelity of instruction at all tiers that: b. Includes names of fidelity measures. c. Identifies what the measure is assessing to determine fidelity. d. Outlines a schedule for when fidelity data will be collected and analyzed to inform next steps. e. Includes names of individuals responsible for assessing fidelity. f. Describes how the fidelity data will be stored, visually displayed, and aggregated at the school level. g. Provides a protocol for improvement to meet fidelity thresholds.	<i>Example: Team has a written fidelity monitoring process that identifies measures, responsibilities, and schedules for reviewing instruction across tiers.</i>
<i>Example: Teacher feedback signals need for more PL time dedicated to Tier 2 interventions.</i>	3. The MTSS Leadership Team provides time and resources to ensure high-quality professional learning for instruction to support all learning levels, with additional implementation supports accessible to staff using interventions.	<i>Example: PL is regularly offered on all tiers.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Community partners not formally integrated into communication protocols.</i>	4. The MTSS Leadership Team has a process in place they consistently apply to provide learners with access to interventions and supports that: a. Include a process for how learners will be identified as needing intervention (what data will be collected, by when, by whom). b. Describe the continuum of progressions. c. Include steps to identify learners for interventions and ensure accurate placement using a whole child approach. d. Include protocols for communication and collaboration with stakeholders. e. Engage community partners with the school and families to provide access to preventative and support services to improve learners' achievement.	<i>Example: Supports include identification process and continuum of progressions, and meets whole child approach criteria.</i>
<i>Example: Existing PL does not provide clear guidance on adjusting routines/materials for accelerated learners.</i>	5. The MTSS Leadership Team provides professional learning to staff on how to best differentiate instruction to meet the achievement needs of learners that: a. Prioritizes concepts/skills that need to be taught to proficiency. b. Establishes expectations for instructional routines to be used. c. Outlines curriculum materials needed to teach concepts/skills. d. Addresses multiple modes of instruction. e. Pays attention to a range of learning levels from universal instruction to intensive intervention to accelerated instruction.	<i>Example: PL prioritizes skills, establishes expectations for instructional routines, outlines curriculum materials needed, and addresses multiple modes of instruction.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Limited direction available on how to involve families as intervention intensity increases.</i>	6. The MTSS Leadership Team provides guidance to staff on the continuum of strategies used to intensify the intervention based on learner needs that: a. Provides additional educator modeling. b. Increases practice opportunities. c. Provides precise feedback on performance. d. Re-teaches content based on learner response errors. e. Includes opportunities for assessment of skills that need re-teaching. f. Changes the intervention. g. Engages families with opportunities to support learners. h. Collaborates with families to address unmet achievement needs that may be contributing to intensive academic challenges.	<i>Example: Team provides guidance on using a range of strategies to intensify interventions, including increased practice, targeted feedback, and re-teaching.</i>



Essential Component

Continuous Data-Based Decision Making

Use all relevant data to analyze, evaluate, and plan strategies that support sustainable systematic improvement and learner outcomes. Data-based decision making is inclusive of efficient data collection practices for multiple data sets, and a formal improvement process to determine needs. The MTSS Leadership Team uses data that are timely, valid, reliable, accurate, and reviewed in ongoing cycles. The team also clearly defines and executes the roles and responsibilities for data-based decision making.

Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Team analyzes data and identifies action steps, but resource adjustments based on findings are rarely finalized.</i>	1. The MTSS Leadership Team uses a collaborative inquiry focused problem-solving process that includes all of the following: - Collecting and using multiple measures and levels of data that have been translated into user-friendly visuals. - Asking well-defined, consequential questions to create a focus. - Addressing individual or group needs. - Allocating time to collaboratively analyze and interpret data to take action in grade-level or department-specific teams. - Identifying student learning goals and action steps to support implementation. - Carrying out the instructional changes identified to help improve teaching practices and raise student achievement. - Evaluating effectiveness of practices. - Mapping, aligning, and reallocating resources in response to outcomes (fiscal, personnel, time, facilities, etc.). - Reviewing that occurs three times per year.	<i>Example: Team uses multiple data sources, sets focused questions, and supports grade-level teams in identifying goals and instructional actions during scheduled review cycles.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Team decision making relies heavily on outcome and attendance data with limited use of perception or fidelity data to help explain why results occur.</i>	2. The MTSS Leadership Team utilizes multiple measures of data to inform decision making and determine the impact implementation is having on learner outcomes, including: a. Demographic and administrative data (e.g., attendance, ethnicity, gender, grade level). b. School process data (e.g., quality of instruction, programmatic). c. Outcome data (e.g., standardized tests, norm/criterion-referenced tests, teacher observations). d. Perception data (e.g., perception of learning environment, values and beliefs, attitudes, observations, surveys). e. Fidelity data, used to improve supports to ensure implementation as intended (e.g., staff selection, training, coaching supports).	<i>Example: Team regularly uses demographic, process, and outcome data to examine learner performance and system impact.</i>
<i>Example: During regular reviews, team does not routinely break results out for multilingual learners and students with IEPs to check whether Tier 2 supports are working as intended.</i>	3. The MTSS Leadership Team analyzes data at least three times a year to determine: a. The effectiveness of schoolwide MTSS systems. b. The needs and progress of all learners, with explicit considerations for special populations.	<i>Example: Team reviews schoolwide MTSS data 3x/year to evaluate system effectiveness and monitor learner progress.</i>

Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: School shares aggregate data with families through reports and presentations, but students not routinely taught how to understand their own data or use it to set learning goals.</i>	4. The MTSS Leadership Team establishes a strong culture of data use to ensure they: a. Share with and explain specific learner data to learners and families in an understandable way so they can regularly monitor and establish their own goals for learning. b. Have a clear vision and plan for schoolwide data use that ensures data-based decisions are made frequently, consistently, and appropriately. c. Communicate outcomes of aggregate learner data and data analysis to all stakeholders.	<i>Example: School has a clear vision for data use and regularly communicates schoolwide MTSS outcomes to staff and families using accessible formats.</i>
<i>Example: Need to offer more frequent PL on data-driven decision making.</i>	5. Provide ongoing data leadership: a. The MTSS Leadership Team, and other collaborative teams, are provided targeted professional learning in the use of data for decision making a minimum of twice per year. b. Staff are provided continuous coaching and guidance on using data to support the school's vision.	<i>Example: Team provides PL on data-driven decision making yearly.</i>



Areas for Improvement	Effective Practices	Areas of Continued Success
<i>Example: Collaborative teams don't meet on a regular schedule.</i>	6. Collaborative teams meet at least once a month to monitor progress and plan instruction and tiered interventions.	<i>Example: Collaborative teams meet most months during the school year.</i>
<i>Example: PLCs need training on accessing new attendance data dashboard.</i>	7. Relevant team members use student data to assess, adapt, and improve academic and behavior support practices at all tiers.	<i>Example: All teams use student data to monitor and evaluate academic and behavior supports.</i>



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Here to Support Your Goals

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