

South Dakota Multi-tiered System of Supports



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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Acknowledgement

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Introduction

This guide is made available by the South Dakota Department of Education for the purpose of providing guidance and assistance to school leaders and staff in the adoption, installation, and implementation of Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) district-wide. The goal of this guide is to share learning from research and other educators across the nation in order to support leadership teams in creating the structures necessary for system-wide change to improve instructional decision-making and practice at the classroom, building, and district levels.

While there are numerous models of MTSS in the professional literature, there are common practices across all models that are defining features and are critical for an effective MTSS. These practices include a school-wide, multi-level instructional and behavioral system for preventing school failure, screening, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making for instruction, movement within the multi-level system (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). The goal of MTSS is to create systems change by improving decision making at all levels, from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade and from the classroom through the district level. This approach leads to the view of education as a pre-K through graduation experience, where education is approached as a continuum across all schools within the district, as opposed to each school operating independently. As schools create and reinforce this type of system, attention is given to both academic and social-behavioral needs of students in order to enable them to reach their full learning potential (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005).

In addition to this manual, the South Dakota Department of Education has also provided the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which describes the core components of the model and the key activities that are associated with each core component (SISEP/NIRN, 2013). This manual and the practice profile should be viewed and used as companion documents. The practice profile provides a brief description, but this manual will address the items in the practice profile in greater detail and share the research and learning from others in relationship to those core components. The 'Expected Implementation' column of each section of the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile* is embedded throughout this document to provide a point of reference for the work that needs to be completed.

Creating a Multi-Tiered System of Supports

MTSS requires careful analysis of data, current practices, and professional learning for all staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to be successful. Winter and Szulanski described it as a process of knowledge transfer that creates a set of routines in a manner that occurs continuously (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Some of the decisions about the system can be made immediately, while others are best made as the system begins to function and provide data to guide decisions.

As the system is being created, it is important to document the decisions and work that describe the system as well as the functions of each part. This is important for sustainability and supporting staff in implementation fidelity, defined as how closely the procedures and process are followed (Mellard & Johnson, 2008). The system should have clear expectations with consistent practices system-wide. Also,

having it written out allows for easier orientation of new staff by providing both clear expectations of practices as well as a reference guide for implementing them in their classroom. To ensure sufficient guidance is given to staff to allow implementation of MTSS, the following are recommended to be clearly communicated and documented:

- Definitive descriptions of operations, techniques, and components.
- Clearly defined responsibilities of specific persons (coaches, teachers, and administrative staff).
- A data system for measuring operations, techniques, and components.
- A system for feedback and decision making.
- Accountability measures for fidelity.
- Interventions linked to improved outcomes.

(Johnson, Mellard, & McKnight, 2006)

Use of the Problem-Solving Process

At the core of the MTSS framework is problem-solving. A problem-solving process using data drives the entire MTSS, from the initial creation of the district plan to the daily implementation of MTSS within a building to guide instruction for students. There are four basic steps to an effective problem-solving process, with data at each step: (1) problem identification; (2) problem analysis; (3) improvement planning; and (4) evaluation. All staff must be supported in the use of the problem-solving process by having both initial training and ongoing professional learning opportunities. Like any other new practice, the more the practice is used the more effective and efficient teams will become.

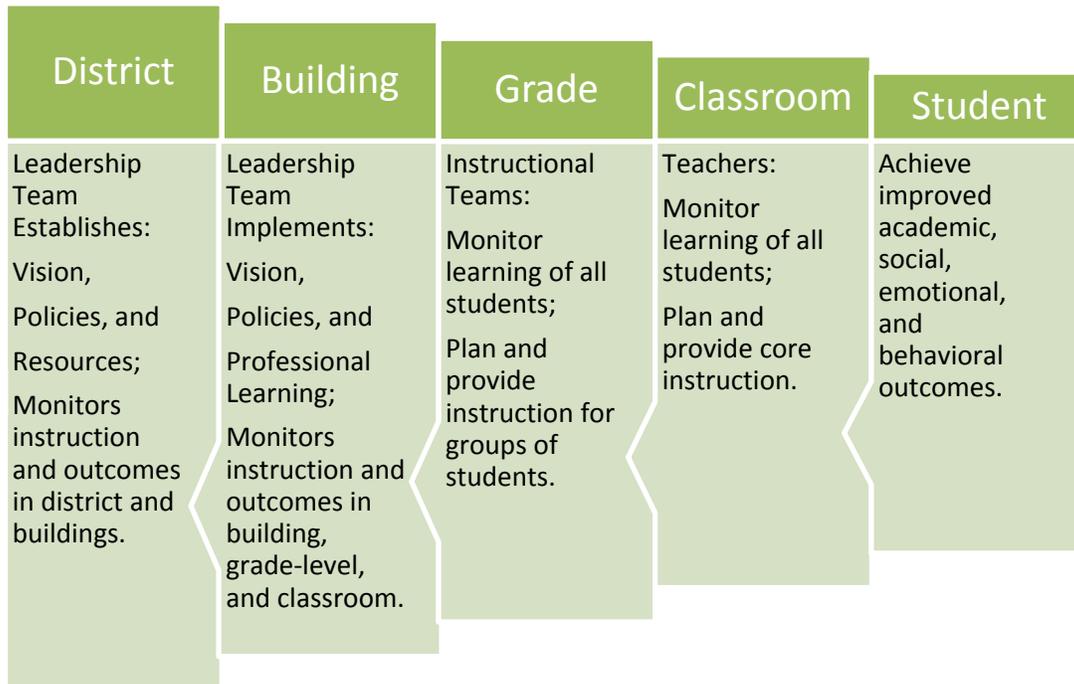
MTSS Leadership

To create an MTSS that is effective and sustainable, leadership and support must come from the top. District and building efforts must be aligned to proactively support the critical components of the MTSS framework, through an aligned and consistent message, action, and allocation of resources. The focus of all efforts should be improving the academic, social, and behavioral outcomes of all students. This means that leadership must build buy-in and proactively support essential components of the MTSS framework through their decisions and actions for instructional improvement and improved outcomes for all students.

The leadership team is responsible for the development, implementation, and ongoing monitoring of a plan that builds the capacity across the district. It is this single district-wide plan that allows the MTSS to achieve system change. Leading MTSS from the district level also ensures that the MTSS effort does not experience the common challenges identified by VanDerHeyden and Tilly III in *Keeping RTI on Track* (2010, p. 6):

- The implementation model is too loosely defined.
- Interventions are not managed well.
- The school tries to run too many Tier III interventions.

- It takes too long to reach decisions.
- The results are poor or are not known.
- The implementation has lost momentum after some period of initial enthusiasm.
- Implementers feel stuck at a phase of implementation.
- Scaling has outpaced capacity for effective implementation.



When MTSS is fully implemented in a sustainable way, a cascading effect is evident, from the district to the student. Each level has different but aligned responsibilities. In the graphic above, the cascading alignment is shown at a broad level, emphasizing how the MTSS is an interdependent system.

District Leadership

This systems change begins at the district level, setting the vision and expectation that all students will learn. The district leadership team builds the capacity in all schools across the district. The district leadership team includes: the superintendent; building principal(s); curriculum director(s); special education and Title personnel; classroom teacher/leader. The membership of this team should provide a voice to building principals, teachers, and key professionals and staff across the district.

Below is the critical component for leadership from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the district leadership team.

Critical Component: Leadership (district) proactively supports the essential components of the MTSS framework across all schools in the district, and their decisions and actions work toward making the MTSS framework more effective, including keeping the focus on improving learning outcomes for all students.

Expected Implementation

The **district** has a leadership team that:

- meets regularly, is comprised of the superintendent and key district-level decision makers, and is representative of and provides a voice to building principals, teachers, and other key professionals across the district.
- is a conduit for two-way communication between faculty, staff, and families across the district.
- has a multi-year plan that results in district-wide implementation of MTSS, and has a plan for the current year, with specific actions and products that support movement toward district-wide implementation.
- develops and implements specific policies and procedures resulting in district coordination of curriculum protocols, assessment systems, professional learning across all schools in the district, and instructional team collaboration time.
- regularly analyzes district and school performance data and MTSS implementation data to make decisions about MTSS, school improvement, and professional learning needs.

The district leadership is responsible for creating and ensuring that both the current- and multi-year action plans are developed and followed resulting in district wide implementation of MTSS. These plans should include the development and implementation of policies and procedures that results in a district aligned curriculum protocol, assessment system and resources supporting the structures and practices necessary for effective instruction and problem-solving to occur.

Best practice recommends that the district leadership team meet on a monthly basis, with smaller workgroups meeting more frequently (as necessary) to keep momentum of the effort. The items that the district leadership team will focus on include:

- Ensuring district-level policies, procedures, and practices are supportive of MTSS practices and are aligned to other state and district initiatives.
- Establishing a multi-year plan that results in district-wide implementation of MTSS, supporting academic, social, and behavioral needs of all students.
- Establishing a current-year action plan, with specific actions and products to support the implementation of MTSS.
- Monitoring the progress on the multi-year and current-year district plans, as well as the progress of each building implementing MTSS.
- Ensuring a conduit for two-way communication between faculty, staff, and families is frequently used to support transparency and buy-in.

Building Leadership

The principal must actively support the change not only with actions, but also with the allocation of resources. This includes fully participating on the building leadership team. The building principal also ensures that the building leadership team builds and supports the school's culture (McCook, 2006). Implementation of an MTSS includes the culture, past and present practices and events. For this type of

school-wide student support model to be successful, a team-based approach is necessary in addition to buy-in, support, and implementation by all stakeholders at all levels within the building (Sadler, 2000; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000). The building principal must take an active role leading the change, including achieving buy-in from staff. As the building leadership team is established, attention needs to be given to ensure that it is reflective of all stakeholder voices and provides transparent communication throughout the effort.

Below is the critical component for leadership from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the building leadership team.

<p>Critical Component: Leadership (building) proactively supports the essential components of the MTSS framework, and their decisions and actions work toward making the MTSS framework more effective, including keeping the focus on improving learning outcomes for all students.</p>
<p>Expected Implementation</p> <p>The building has a leadership team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets at least monthly and is comprised of the principal other staff that are representative of and provide a voice to all staff and key professionals throughout the school. • is a conduit for two-way communication between faculty, staff, and families who are members of the school. • has a plan for the current year, with specific actions and products that support movement toward school-wide implementation of MTSS. • develops and implements specific policies and procedures for the implementation of a curriculum protocol, assessment system, and professional learning plan aligned with the district. • establishes a school schedule that has protected time for core instruction and intervention. • regularly analyzes school performance data and MTSS implementation data to make decisions about MTSS, school improvement, and professional learning needs.

The items that the building leadership team will focus on are similar to the district, but the focus shifts to implementation within the building:

- Ensuring commitment and participation of all faculty and staff.
- Ensuring the building leadership team meets regularly to move the work of MTSS forward, is comprised of diverse individuals, and encourages active participation.
- Ensuring a conduit for two-way communication between faculty, staff, and families is frequently used to support transparency and buy-in.
- Establishing a plan that results in the implementation of MTSS, supporting the academic, social, and behavioral needs of all students.
- Ensuring building-level policies and practices are supportive of MTSS practices and aligned with the district plan.
- Ensuring all staff have sufficient professional learning and coaching to be successful.
- Monitoring the progress in the implementation of MTSS, including monitoring fidelity of implementation.

Family Engagement

Below is the critical component for empowering culture from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the actions of the system and engagement of families.

Critical Component: An Empowering Culture of collaboration and allowing students and families to be involved in the education of their children is pervasive.
Expected Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership team, all staff, and families have a shared responsibility for the academic and behavioral achievement of all students. • Instructional decisions for students who are beyond the core or struggling to learn are made by grade-level/subject-area instructional teams. • Parents receive regular communication (absent jargon) about learning standards, their children’s progress, and the parents’ role in their children’s success at school. • Teachers are familiar with the curriculum of the home (what parents can do at home to support their children’s learning) and discuss it with them.

The empowering culture is critical in establishing staff commitment and participation as well as the level the families will engage with in the school. The support cannot come from only a small set of teachers or faculty alone, but must come from all staff who interact with students, including cafeteria, playground, and office staff, and ideally even the bus drivers. If this level of commitment can be achieved, students will have consistency throughout their instructional day, allowing both them and the staff to focus on teaching and learning.

Involving families in all phases is a key aspect of a successful MTSS. Schools must make a concerted effort to involve parents as early as possible, beginning with the monitoring of individual student performance within the core curriculum. The table below describes some ways to meaningfully engage families.

Tier	Events	How to Involve Parents
	Prior to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a campaign to inform the public regarding the MTSS processes. • Include a clear description of MTSS process in school handbook (parent and/or student).
	Start of school year for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send family-friendly notice home, reviewing processes initiated within the MTSS framework to address the needs of all students. • Include conferences, websites, newsletters, and/or open houses to facilitate families’ understanding of the process and the benefit to their student(s).
Tier I	Universal screenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data reflecting student progress within the core curriculum will be available for all parents at their request. • This data will be shared with parents at conferences.
	When individual student issues are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct parent/teacher conference, at which time student data (graphic representations) will be shared; strategies and materials for home instruction will be offered.
Tier II	Team meets to address problems of identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining parent input is critical. Invite parents to attend these meetings.

	students; progress monitoring	
	Documentation of progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to send home reports and continuous progress monitoring data reviewed by the team. • Involve parent in the intervention process. (Note: If we are teaching a targeted skill, the parent should know about it and be guided in helping the student at home, to the extent the parent is willing and able.)
Tier III	Team meetings to review progress and make instructional decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite parents to participate in meetings and/or ensure that they receive any data that is used by the team. Include a written summary of the meeting and follow up with a telephone call and/or parent/teacher conference.
	Decisions that result in a student spending more time in intensive instruction than typical peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send written notification to parents. • Conduct follow-up call to address parent questions and obtain input. • If individual evaluation is determined necessary, obtain consent from parents.

Professional Learning

In the implementation of MTSS, staff are expected to consistently use a set of instructional practices and behaviors in their classrooms. While some may already be proficient in the use of the practices, there will always be some who are new to the building or need additional support in using them effectively. To achieve full implementation, the leadership of both the district and the building must ensure sufficient professional learning opportunities, ongoing support, and coaching to staff. The role of professional learning in MTSS is more fully described in the critical component from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*.

Critical Component: Professional Learning is actively supported by both the district and the building through a system of support for teachers—including coaching, resource materials, mentoring, peer observations, and problem solving—to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills to provide high quality instruction.

Expected Implementation

- A plan for professional learning exists to provide initial training, ongoing coaching and training of new staff as hired, and includes observations and self-assessment related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
- All staff, including new staff members, are trained and included in the MTSS process.
- All staff responsible for providing or supporting Tier I, II, and III interventions have been fully trained on the MTSS framework and the evidence-based interventions used (as identified in the curriculum protocol), and ongoing support is available as needed.
- Staff responsible for the administration and use of assessment data receive ongoing professional learning on appropriate assessments and assessment procedures.
- The use of curricula and instructional strategies are monitored for fidelity in order to identify a need for additional support and professional learning.

Grade-Level/Content-Area Instructional Teams

The most effective multi-tiered systems shift from having a single student-improvement/problem-solving team that involves few staff to using grade-level or content-area instructional teams that, depending on the grade level, involve all staff. With the focus of instructional teams being improving instruction for all students, it makes sense to have all staff involved in the process, which fosters buy-in and a collective responsibility for all students.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Below is the critical component for data-driven decision making from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the functioning of the system.

Critical Component: The framework includes a well-defined mechanism for **Data-Driven Decision Making** to ensure data are analyzed, decisions are made, and students receive intervention in a timely manner and in the appropriate prevention level.

Expected Implementation

- A process that includes clear criteria and guidelines for placing students in each prevention level beyond Tier I prevention.
- Universal screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and other assessment data are used to inform instructional practices at all levels, with the goal that instruction is effective with the vast majority of students served.
- Student assessment data and individual student characteristics are used to address both the academic and behavioral needs of all students.
- The leadership team and instructional teams use student learning data across levels to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Instructional teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement and to plan instruction.
- Criteria are established for all Tier III students, and progress monitoring data is compared to the learning trajectory, in order to determine the degree to which the student is making adequate progress.
- The MTSS framework includes an implemented mechanism for keeping parents/guardians of students who are receiving both Tier II and Tier III intervention fully informed of the intervention and the progress of their child, and parents are actively engaged in supporting the MTSS framework.

During the initial year while the system is being built, collaborative teams can best spend their time in professional learning activities to improve core instruction. Some beneficial activities include deep conversations about the state standards and how those would look in specific lesson plans in the classroom, differentiation, and explicit instruction.

Once implementation begins in the building, these teams are responsible for data analysis and problem solving, improving core instruction and design intervention for all students in their grade level/content area. These teams will be looking at grade- and classroom-level data to monitor effectiveness of core instruction, as well as individual student data to determine the need for intervention, the focus of intervention, and to develop groupings for intervention.

Assessment

Having an effective and complete assessment system that provides the correct data is what allows problem solving to be effective and the entire MTSS to function and sustain. There is no single assessment that will provide all necessary data; there must be a variety of assessments to answer different types of questions. All data collected should be done using instruments and techniques that provide valid and reliable data for the purpose which it is being used. The table later in this section outlines the essential assessments and the uses within an MTSS.

Below is the critical component for assessment from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the comprehensive assessment system in an MTSS.

Critical Component: The Assessment system provides for the measurement of student learning and outcomes through the use of a variety of evaluation methods.
Expected Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A comprehensive assessment plan of valid and reliable assessments exists, including procedures for the decisions to be made, who administers the assessment, when it is to be used, and any cut points if applicable.• Procedures are in place to ensure assessments are administered in accordance with developer guidelines and data are used in manner consistent with the MTSS procedures.• Universal screening assessment such as a curriculum based measure (CBM) for academics, are administered to all students three times during the school year, and office discipline referrals, student absences, student in- and out-of-school suspensions, and time out of classroom are continually tracked for all students' behavior.• Diagnostic assessment is conducted for individual students, as needed, to design instruction and determine the instructional focus of intervention.• Progress monitoring assessments are conducted bi-weekly for those receiving strategic (Tier II) academic instruction, and weekly for those receiving intensive (Tier III) academic instruction.

Universal Screening

Universal screening is the systematic assessment for all students on academic and/or social-emotional indicators. Its purpose is to identify students who are at-risk and may require support, varying in terms of level, intensity, and duration (Michigan's Integrated Behavior & Learning Support Initiative, 2014). Universal screening identifies the intensity of support (Tier I, II, or III) a student needs, but does not necessarily indicate the appropriate instructional focus. To determine instructional focus, additional testing through diagnostic assessments may be necessary for students who are at risk, based on data from the universal screening assessment.

In the elementary setting, and potentially into middle school, universal screening in reading and mathematics is done using a CBM measure administered three times per year. As the system moves into the late-middle and secondary school setting, multiple gating procedures are utilized. For example, the multiple gating procedure for reading, begins with a broad outcome measure administered to all students in the fall followed by administration of MAZE and R-CBM for those students for whom further screening is necessary. Multiple gating procedures are explained in detail in the MTSS Reading Data Workbook.

Universal screening for behavior includes school-wide ongoing data collection of attendance, tardies, office discipline referrals (ODRs)/Behavior Incident Reports (BIPs) for young children, and a behavior screening of internalizing and externalizing behaviors that is completed three times throughout the year. The behavior screenings could be one completed by students or a rating given by a teacher. The critical element in behavior screenings is ensuring it is valid and reliable and is completed with fidelity.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring assessments are used to monitor the effectiveness of intervention—to assess student progress or performance in the identified area, with a specific measure selected based on the focus of intervention. It is the method by which teachers and others determine if a student is benefitting appropriately from the intervention (Fuchs & Stecker, 2003).

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic assessments are designed to provide more precise and detailed information about a student’s knowledge and skill. The purpose of a diagnostic assessment is to give very specific information about a student’s skills; the assessment should focus on sampling a student’s knowledge in ways that are instructionally relevant. Diagnostic assessment of behavior is typically accomplished through the use of a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) or behavioral rating scales, allowing a targeted intervention plan to be developed.

Assessment Types and Characteristics		
Type of Assessment	Characteristics	Uses
Universal Screening:	<p>For <u>academics</u>, the universal screening assessment for reading and math are curriculum-based measures (CBM) of critical early skills in the elementary grade levels. As the middle and secondary levels it includes a group or computer assessment that provides measures of critical knowledge and skills in the areas of reading and/or math.</p> <p>For <u>behavior</u>, student behavioral data is utilized. Student behavior data includes office discipline referral (ODR) and behavior incident report (BIR) data that includes the behavior, student, location, time, and who made the referral. A formal universal screening of internalizing and externalizing behavior may also be used after the PBIS critical elements are established at the universal level.</p>	<p>Universal screening is used to identify students who may be in need of additional support, and to inform the evaluation of core curriculum effectiveness.</p> <p>For academics, universal screening assessments are administered three times per year.</p> <p>For behavior, ODRs/ BIRs are collected continuously throughout the year. A formal screening measure may be conducted three times per year, after critical universal elements are established.</p>
Diagnostic Assessments:	For <u>academics</u> , diagnostic assessment refers to the use of formal standardized tests that	Diagnostic assessments are administered <u>when additional information is needed</u> , allowing

	<p>assess skills in-depth for the essential reading and math components.</p> <p>For <u>behavior</u>, the diagnostic process involves conducting a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) in order to customize interventions that focus on the function (e.g., attention, escape) of student behavior.</p>	<p>teachers to determine the student's instructional focus.</p> <p>For behavior, the diagnostic process is used to determine the function of behavior so that individualized, function-based interventions may be designed to meet the student's needs.</p>
Progress Monitoring:	<p>For <u>academics</u>, progress monitoring assessments must be able to show small increments of change in the skills that are the focus of the intervention. Often the appropriate progress monitoring assessment is a CBM, and occasionally is a criterion-referenced assessment.</p> <p>For <u>behavior</u>, progress monitoring assessments monitor intervention effects for individual students. Student ODR data, along with individual student monitoring data (e.g., point/goal sheets), are used to determine the extent to which targeted behaviors improve as a result of intervention.</p>	<p>Progress monitoring assessments are used to ensure the effectiveness of the intervention, and to inform instructional decisions through a problem-solving process. The frequency of progress monitoring is dependent upon the intensity of instruction and skill being taught.</p>

Adapted from (Kansas State Department of Education, 2011)

When establishing the assessment system, not only do assessments need to be chosen, but a schedule must also be established. The assessment schedule will indicate when assessments are given. Below is a simple example of an assessment schedule.

Example Assessment Schedule

Assessment	Assessment Schedule
<i>Universal Screening</i>	
<i>DIBELS Next Screening for Reading</i>	<i>First two weeks of school Two weeks prior to winter break Last two weeks of school</i>
<i>AIMSweb Screening for Reading & Math</i>	<i>First two weeks of school Two weeks prior to winter break Last two weeks of school</i>
<i>ODRs/BIRs</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Attendance/Tardies</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>SSRS</i>	<i>Seven weeks into school year December March</i>

<i>Progress Monitoring</i>	
<i>Tier II Reading</i>	<i>Twice a month</i>
<i>Tier III Reading</i>	<i>Weekly</i>
<i>Tier II/III Math</i>	<i>Monthly</i>
<i>Tier II Behavior</i>	<i>As identified in individual plan</i>
<i>Tier III Behavior</i>	<i>As identified in individual plan</i>
<i>Diagnostics</i>	
<i>Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST)</i>	<i>As indicated by Universal Screening Data</i>
<i>Quick Phonics Screener (QPS)</i>	<i>As indicated by Universal Screening Data</i>
<i>Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)</i>	<i>As indicated by Student Data</i>
<i>KeyMath</i>	<i>As indicated by Progress Monitoring Data</i>

Curriculum and Instruction

Within this guide, curriculum and instruction have been separated to facilitate discussions. It is understood that the interconnectedness of these two items can make it somewhat difficult to think about them separately, but it is important in order to ensure that both are adequately planned for within the division. Throughout this guide, the term standards refers to the South Dakota Common Core, as well as any local learning standards that have been identified; curriculum refers to the materials used to facilitate the learning of those standards, as well as other knowledge, skills, and expectations within both the core and intervention; and instruction refers to how the standards, knowledge, skills, and expectations are taught.

Curriculum

MTSS involves using both problem solving and a curricula protocol in the designing of instruction for academics and behavior. In practice, this is operationalized by having a curricula protocol that identifies the materials used to teach the knowledge, skills, and expectations at each tier for common areas of student need, as well as a problem-solving process driven by data that enables teams to match student need to appropriate curricula identified in the protocol, or to design and customize instruction when the curriculum protocol does not match or meet student need.

Below is the critical component for curriculum from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*.

Critical Component: An articulated Curriculum protocol provides evidence-based and aligned resources to support student learning across all tiers.
Expected Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A curriculum protocol is used to ensure aligned, evidence-based curricula are used for all instruction and intervention (Tiers I, II, and III).

While there is a single item in this critical component, creating the curriculum protocol is a large task and will take time for the team to develop. All curricula included in the protocol must have a strong evidence base, and be used with fidelity to optimize student learning. To ensure alignment with both state standards and interventions, schools should have a protocol indicating which curricula are to be

used for core and interventions. By developing a protocol of curricula available, the team ensures not only alignment, but also that staff have access to appropriate resources to provide interventions and a guide for what professional learning opportunities need to be provided to staff, so they are able to use the materials with fidelity. The use of the problem-solving process ensures that interventions are aligned to the hypothesis and student need.

Core Curriculum (Tier I)

The core curriculum is the foundational element of the curriculum protocol, supporting students' learning of both academic and behavioral expectations. Kathleen Lane, Jemma Kalberg, & Holly Menzies (2009) include core curricula for academics, social skills, and behavior as the base elements in the 3 tiered graphic that is commonly used in MTSS and Response to Intervention (RtI) work. The core curriculum is critical, as it is the one curriculum that every student will be receiving, and it should meet the needs of a significant proportion of the students. The core curriculum must have a strong evidence base, address all the essential elements of the content area, and be taught with fidelity. Across all grade levels, staff need to consider the core skills, knowledge, and expectations that will be required of students by state and local standards. The core curriculum needs to be identified, used consistently, and with fidelity prior to attempting to design and provide interventions. If the core is not effective, due to lack of evidence-base or inconsistent use, the system will become overwhelmed as more students appear to need Tier II and III interventions than the system can effectively support.

The core curriculum for reading and mathematics needs to address all of the knowledge and skills students are required to demonstrate in state content standards. For behavior, the core curriculum includes establishing school-wide expectations, rules, and routines for all students to support effective discipline and social skills, as well as a reward/recognition system for students and staff and lesson plans for the explicit teaching of these expectations.

Curricula for Intervention (Tiers II and III)

The curriculum protocol addresses the materials used for intervention with students who are in need of support in addition to core. When establishing the Tier II and III curriculum protocol, it may be helpful to think of Tier II and III interventions as describing a difference in intensity of intervention, as opposed to a program (e.g., Special Education, Title I, Behavior Specialist, ESOL, Reading Specialist, etc.). This approach helps keep the focus on selecting more explicit and systematic materials so intervention can be more intensive.

When establishing the protocol, it is critical to not tie intervention curricula to programs and to ensure all staff members have access to and training in the use of the selected evidence-based interventions. Doing this prevents tiers from being seen as or becoming the same as entitlement programs (e.g., Tier II = Title I, Tier III = Special Education). If tiers become tied to entitlement programs, through perception of practice, the fluidity of the system and its ability to meet the needs of all learners is weakened.

Example Curriculum Protocol – Grades Pre-K–5

Core/Tier I	Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little Treasures (Pre-K) Treasures (1st – 5th Grades) 				
	Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enVisionMATH Common Core, Realize Edition 				
	Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-wide Expectations Recognition/Reward System School-Developed Lesson Plans for teaching behaviors 				
Tier 2	Reading	<i>Phonological Awareness</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road to the Code Start Up PA Blueprint: Phonological Awareness 	<i>Phonics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonics A-Z Build Up Spiral Up Rewards PA Blueprint: Multisyllabic Routines 	<i>Fluency</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six Minute Solution Read Naturally 	<i>Vocabulary</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fray Model Teaching Vocabulary Through Morphemes 	<i>Comprehension</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six Way Paragraphs Treasures Leveled Readers
	Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) 				
	Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check In Check Out (CICO) Check and Connect 				
Tier 3	Reading	<i>Phonological Awareness</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Readiness 	<i>Phonics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonic Boost Corrective Reading (decoding) 	<i>Fluency</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six Minute Solution 	<i>Vocabulary</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fray Model 	<i>Comprehension</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrective Reading (comprehension)
	Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number Worlds 				
	Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Function Based Intervention 				

Instruction

With the understanding of instruction being how the identified curricula are taught, it's important to plan how the system is going to support instruction. This includes the non-negotiable instructional practices that are to be used by all staff, as well as creating building schedules that provide sufficient time for the necessary instruction to occur.

Below is the critical component for instruction from the *South Dakota Multi-Tier System of Supports Practice Profile*, which more fully describes the role of instruction within an MTSS.

<p>Critical Component: Instruction is designed and provided in a manner that supports demonstrated student academic and behavioral learning across tiers.</p>
<p>Expected Implementation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers use effective teaching strategies—differentiated, explicit, and scaffolded instruction—which actively engages students in learning. Tier II and Tier III intervention time is additional instruction time beyond core/Tier I. Tier II interventions involve teacher-led small group instruction, where the group size is optimal for the age and needs of the students. Tier II interventions are well defined in terms of procedure, person(s) responsible, frequency, duration, and measurable outcomes. Tier III interventions are more intensive than Tier II interventions, and are continuously adjusted and individualized to address the needs of each student based upon RtI.

The non-negotiable instructional practices that need to be present in every classroom include explicit, differentiated, and systematic instruction and classroom management. Explicit instruction for school-age students means: declarative – the teacher tells the student what concept or strategy they need to learn; procedural – the teacher explains and models how to use the concept or strategy; and conditional – the teacher explains when the student will use the concept or strategy (Ellis, Worthington, & Larkin, 1994). Explicit instruction provides not only the knowledge, but also procedural understanding to use it correctly in other situations. Differentiated instruction is a way of proactively adjusting teaching and learning by teaching students at their individual skill level, using multiple approaches to content, process, product, and learning environment. To effectively differentiate instruction, teachers first determine the students' readiness based on formative assessments, and then determine students' interests. This information is then used to design instruction and monitor progress (Tolminson & Allan, 2000). Systematic instruction means to provide instruction in a step-by-step manner, sequenced to move toward increased complexity. Systematic instruction provides students with the opportunity to apply new knowledge to a range of materials promoting generalization (Jayanthi, Gersten, & Baker, 2008; Moats, 2005). Classroom management is the ability to create a functioning learning environment based on two key principles: identifying desirable student behaviors, and preventing undesirable ones. Teachers who have effective classroom management skills communicate clear rules, have established consistent routines, monitor what is taking place in the classroom, and intervene immediately if necessary (Hochweber, Hosenfeld, & Klieme, 2014).

Core (Tier I) Instruction

In addition to the general instructional practices that cross all curricular areas, additional attention must be given to the evidence describing effective instruction within each content area. It is important to keep the focus of core instruction on the knowledge and skills of the content area and the involvement of all students in the core instruction.

Instruction for reading needs to address the five big areas of reading, as described by the National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Effective mathematics programs must teach conceptual understanding, computational fluency, factual knowledge, and problem-solving skills (National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008). To support behavior core instruction, teachers must include the explicit teaching of the expectations, rules, and routines.

Strategic and Intensive Intervention (Tiers II and III)

Strategic (Tier II) and Intensive (Tier III) intervention is always provided in addition to the core. Tier II and Tier III interventions differ from Tier I, and from each other, based on intensity of instruction. Beyond being extra time outside of core instruction, ways to make instruction more intensive include:

- Increase the number of student responses in a minute by reducing group size.
- Increase the number of questions and error corrections the student receives in a minute.
- Increase the scaffolding by breaking the task down more, or providing more structure, so the student can succeed.

- Spend more time modeling the “I do” and “We Do” guided practice before the student practices independently.
- Increase the number of repetition cycles on each skill before determining whether mastery is achieved with more practice.
- Use more systemic curriculum so skills are taught in a prescribed manner, with the teacher asking questions and cueing using the same language for each routine.

(Hall, 2008)

Data from universal screening and progress monitoring are used to identify the level of intervention—Tier I, II, or III—a student needs. The tiers of instruction are not a sequential process requiring a student to move up or down through each. Students need to be matched to the appropriate intensity of instruction as quickly as possible.

Making the System Function

As discussed in the sections on curriculum and instruction, it is important to avoid tying any intervention or support to a specific program, such as Special Education or Title I. When developing the schedule, it is also important to keep in mind both the allowable use of services and supports that staff from each funding source can provide. If a seamless system is created, there will be multiple staff who are skilled and in funded positions, so it is permissible for them to support the functioning of the system as a whole. The service delivery matrix below highlights how staff who are funded by a variety of sources can work together in support of a single system.

Service Delivery Matrix

Duties & Tasks/ Intensity Level	General Education Teachers	General Education Paras	Title I School-wide Teachers	Title I School-wide Paras	Title I Targeted Assistance Teachers	Title I Targeted Assistance Paras	Special Education Teachers	Special Education Paras
Universal Screening	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Progress Monitoring	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, only Title I Students	No	No	No
Data Entry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes	Yes
Data Analysis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tier I Core	Yes	No	Yes, All teachers are Title Teachers	No	No	No	No	No
Tier II Strategic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes, only if students on IEPs are included in the group	Yes, only if students on IEPs are included in the group
Tier III Intensive	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes, only Title I Students	Yes, only if students on IEPs are included in the group	Yes, only if students on IEPs are included in the group

Section 1119(g)(3)(A) – a paraprofessional may not provide any instructional service to a student unless the paraprofessional is working under the direct supervision of a teacher consistent with section 1119.

34 CFR Part 200.59

- (2) A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if –
- (i) The teacher plans the instructional activities that the paraprofessional carries out;
 - (ii) The teacher evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working; and
 - (iii) The paraprofessional works in close and frequent physical proximity to the teacher.

34 CFR 300.208

(a) Uses. Notwithstanding § 300.202, 300.203(a), and 300.162(b), funds provided to an LEA under Part B of the Act may be used for the following activities:

- (1) Services and aids that also benefit nondisabled children. For the costs of special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services, provided in a regular class or other education-related setting to a child with a disability in accordance with the IEP of the child, even if one or more nondisabled children benefit from these services.

Except when functioning in a school-wide program, special education teachers paid with IDEA Part B (CEIS and non-CEIS) funds, cannot perform duties, such as universal screening, that are conducted on a regular basis in Tier I as a means of identifying students who are struggling and may need instructional supports and interventions through Tier II and III.

Administrative Considerations for funding MTSS

Special Education – Districts may spend up to 15% of their Part B funds for implementing coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) in their elementary and secondary schools.

Title I Part A – Title I services can be used to support the implementation of the MTSS model. There are two kinds of Title I Part A programs: **School-wide** and **Targeted Assistance**. Both programs can support the MTSS model, but there are slight differences in the way each might contribute. Both programs are eligible to be provided in elementary and secondary schools. The district identifies the schools within the district that are Title I eligible, and which ones receive those funds.

School-wide – In schools operating a school-wide program, the entire school operates as a Title I program and bases the operations of the school on its school-wide plan. All students are considered Title I students and all teachers are considered Title I teachers. MTSS would have to be part of the school's school-wide plan. The school would not be required to specifically identify a student as Title I. Students must be taught to the same challenging content standards required for all children. Paraprofessionals must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

Targeted Assistance – In a school operating a targeted assistance Title I Part A program, Title I funds can only be used to provide assistance to well-identified Title I students. Staff paid with Title I funds can only work with well-identified students. Paraprofessionals must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified Title I teacher. Title I services could provide services to some students in the MTSS model. Students would have to be identified as a Title I student and all program requirements must be met. Students must be taught to the same challenging content standards required for all children.

General Considerations – Title I funds must supplement, not supplant, local and state funds. Comparability must be maintained across schools within the district.

Title II A – These funds are for professional learning and can be used for all teachers and paraprofessionals in the district. Professional learning for scientifically based research (SBR) instructional classroom strategies, specific academic interventions, and behavior interventions could be provided to all staff.

Title III – Funds could be used to support interventions for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students and for professional learning for those interventions.

Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) – The REAP funding source is currently only available in Title II A; however, all extra program activities are still available under REAP. Districts that meet the eligibility requirements can use Title II Part A funds to support allowable activities under Title I A, IIA, IID, III, IVA, and V. All but about 40 districts in the state use the flexibility provisions provided through REAP.

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)

There is nothing in federal regulations (IDEA) that prohibits children with disabilities—who are receiving special education and related services under IDEA—from receiving instruction using MTSS strategies, unless the use of such strategies is inconsistent with their individualized education programs (IEPs).

However, children with disabilities who are currently identified as needing services may not receive MTSS services that are funded with IDEA funds used for CEIS because CEIS is for students who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment.

How may the money be used?

In implementing CEIS, a Local Education Agency (LEA) may carry out activities that include:

- **Professional Learning** for teachers and other school staff to enable personnel to deliver scientifically research based academic and behavioral interventions.
- **Providing** educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports.

CEIS activities may include professional learning to enable district staff to deliver scientific, research based academic instruction and behavioral interventions, including scientifically research-based literacy instruction and, where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional software. CEIS activities may also provide educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports. School districts that use CEIS funds must report to the South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE) the number of students served through these funds and the number of these students that become eligible for special education services.

Is the use of funds for CEIS required or permitted?

Generally, the use of funds an LEA receives under Part B of the Act for CEIS is discretionary on the part of the LEA, except when an LEA has significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity. Under 34 CFR §300.226, an LEA may not use more than 15% of the amount the LEA receives under Part B of the Act for any fiscal year, less any amount reduced by the LEA pursuant to 34 CFR §300.205, if any, in combination with other amounts (which may include amounts other than education funds), to develop and implement CEIS. If a State identifies an LEA as having significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity with respect to the identification of children with disabilities, the placement of children with disabilities in particular educational settings, or the incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions taken against children with disabilities, including suspensions and expulsions, the SEA must require the LEA to reserve the maximum amount of funds available to the LEA to provide CEIS to children in the LEA, particularly, but not exclusively, to children in those groups that were significantly over identified.

Question & Answer

1. Is MTSS mandated?

No. However, IDEA 2004 urges states and school districts toward adopting an MTSS approach.

2. Can MTSS work in a Title I school-wide program?

Yes. In a Title I **school-wide program**, school funds can be used for almost any program believed to raise the achievement of low performing, at-risk students. MTSS interventions are designed to raise the achievement of low performing, at-risk students and can be supported through these funds.

3. Can MTSS work in a Title I targeted assistance program?

Yes. In a Title I **targeted assistance program**, school funds can be used for Tier II or Tier III strategies in an MTSS model, when used to supplement the core curriculum. Staff in a **targeted assistance program** are encouraged to collaborate whenever possible in the MTSS process; however, certain regulations must be adhered to. The following outlines effective ways for Title I staff in a **targeted assistance program** to collaborate and participate in the MTSS process:

- All staff can work together to collaboratively screen students, and by means of assessment, to pinpoint those who are struggling and are in need of additional services;
- Classroom, Title I, and special education resources can be shared to maximize the amount of materials, supplies, books, etc. available to assist students.
- An effective MTSS model is dependent on a strong instructional leader (i.e., building principal) who will facilitate and stress the importance in ongoing communication and joint planning opportunities.

Funds in a Title I **targeted assistance program** cannot be used to provide the core instructional program of the MTSS model, Tier I. All services for Tier I would be the responsibility of the classroom instructor or other staff provided with general or other funds. Title I cannot pay for universal screening or for progress monitoring that is part of Tier I. Once a student is identified for Title I, Title teachers may conduct additional progress monitoring relative to the Title I services being provided.

4. Would School Improvement Funds be appropriate for use in an MTSS model?

Yes. School improvement funds are to be used to address the root causes of students performing below grade level. The use of these funds should be supported by the analysis of data, which points to the need for specific strategies to address the cause. Funds may be used for professional learning to build a school's capacity to provide appropriate instruction and interventions for students based on their achievement level. When this is done within an MTSS framework, then the use of School Improvement Funds is appropriate and acceptable.

5. Can Title I funds pay for MTSS professional learning?

Yes. There are several funding sources that could be utilized by a school district to help fund needed professional learning and other components necessary for implementing an effective MTSS model. Title I funds can be utilized under certain conditions. For example the cost of professional learning expenses can be cost-shared among several federal programs including Title I. Since Title I paid staff can assist with students who are participating in the MTSS process the cost of Title I materials could be shared among programs.

6. Which staff should be involved in implementing MTSS?

Both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and IDEA 2004 address the importance of providing high quality, scientifically-based instruction and interventions, and hold schools accountable for the progress of all students. MTSS is the process that allows all educators to work together to identify at-risk students early on and provide evidence-based interventions to meet student needs. Having support and buy in from all staff (Title I, Special Education, and General Education) is critical to success in an MTSS model. Opportunities for professional learning, in the areas of reading and math instruction and interventions, must be available for both general and special education staff. Staff may also be required to come back and share the information they received at the MTSS trainings. Time must be built into the schedule to accommodate time for collaboration among all staff to develop shared language and common understanding since they all work with at-risk students. This time will also allow all staff to come together and focus on individual student needs. As part of the shared responsibilities of all staff, data-based decision making will be used following benchmarking and progress monitoring.

7. When is it appropriate for Title I staff to be involved in universal screening?

It is permissible for Title I staff in a **school-wide program** to administer universal screening and progress monitoring. Please see the Service Delivery Matrix earlier in this guide for more guidance with this question.

8. Is it allowable for a Title I teacher in a **targeted assistance** school to work with students other than those who have been identified as Title I students?

No. According to Title I **targeted assistance** regulations, Title I teachers may only provide instruction and interventions (at Tier II and Tier III) to students identified for Title I assistance.

9. How long do you continue to provide intervention prior to making a referral for a special education evaluation if a student is not making progress?

As a reminder, a referral for special education can be initiated at any time throughout the MTSS process. A continual analysis of data for students that have been identified as at-risk should indicate progress or the lack of progress. Through this data analysis, the time in which the student is referred for special education eligibility should occur when it is determined that the student has not made sufficient progress during the implementation of high quality instruction and skill-specific intervention. Each student should be examined on an individual basis.

10. What is fidelity and why is it important in an MTSS model?

An MTSS model implemented with fidelity involves using the curriculum and instructional practices consistently and accurately, as they were intended to be used. A lack of student progress may be due to student characteristics, but it is important to realize that it may also be due to how the instruction was implemented. Without implementation fidelity, the effectiveness of instruction will be diminished. If a student is not responding, before adjusting the frequency or duration of the intervention, one must first consider if the instruction was implemented with fidelity. Fidelity is a part of each of the essential components of MTSS, not a separate component. Consistency and accuracy of screening, progress monitoring, instruction, and data-based decision making are a must.

11. When should a school take a closer look at fidelity?

Fidelity should always be on the radar in a school implementing an MTSS model, more specifically when students are not progressing in what is considered high quality, scientific-based instruction. Also, when there are consistently low success rates with universal screening and progress monitoring—whether for a classroom, grade level, or school-wide—remember that the verification of fidelity is what links student results with instruction. Some questions that could be asked when there are concerns with fidelity of instruction may include:

- How well do you adhere to the curriculum, instruction, and/or intervention?
- How often does a student receive an intervention, and for how long each time?
- Was the instructor engaged during the delivery of the content? Were the students engaged?
- Was the instruction explicit? Systematic?
- How have the students responded?

12. Can the special education teacher work with students without an IEP in an MTSS approach?

Yes. Special education staff may work with students in Tiers II and III, as long as they are also serving students receiving special education at the same skill/instruction level. Federal and state rules address permissive use of funds, such as the fact that IDEA Part B funds may be used for the costs of special education and supplementary aids and services provided in a regular classroom or other education-related setting to a student with a disability, in accordance with the individual education program of the student, even if one or more students without disabilities benefit from these services.

13. Is it possible that some learners may always be in and out of Tier II and Tier III?

Yes. Any placement for at-risk students is based on data collected through universal screening, diagnostic assessments, and progress monitoring. When the team considers all results, decisions are made to provide high quality instruction and skill-specific interventions according to the individual student's needs.

14. Do students who qualify for special education services in a state other than South Dakota have to be reevaluated when they move to South Dakota?

Students who transfer in from another state must meet South Dakota's eligibility criteria in order to be placed on South Dakota's child count. If a student with a disability—who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous school district in another state—transfers to a school district in South Dakota and enrolls in a new school within the same school year, the new school district, in consultation with the parents, shall provide the child with Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), including services comparable to those described in the student's IEP from the previous school district, until the new school district:

- 1) Conducts an evaluation pursuant to chapter 24:05:25, if determined to be necessary by the new school district; and
- 2) Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP, if appropriate, that meets the applicable requirements in this chapter.

Districts need to review the evaluation data received by other districts due to student transfers and ensure the evaluation data supports South Dakota eligibility criteria. This applies to the state's MTSS or discrepancy criteria.

15. If a district chooses to use MTSS for special education eligibility, does the district need an approved MTSS plan?

Yes. School districts that elect to use an MTSS model as part of the evaluation process for specific learning disabilities shall submit to the state for approval a formal proposal that, at a minimum, addresses the required documentation for eligibility for specific learning disabilities.

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Appendix A

MTSS State Trainers

The trainers listed below are state contracted trainers who have been trained in the elements of MTSS.

Name	Area of expertise	Email
Becky Cain	PBIS	rebecca.cain@state.sd.us
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Appendix B
Draft South Dakota MTSS Practice Profile
Updated November 4, 2013

Critical Component: Leadership (district) proactively supports the essential components of the MTSS framework across all schools in the district and their decisions and actions work toward making the MTSS framework more effective, including keeping the focus on instructional improvement to improve learning outcomes for all students. (MTSS1.01/IE06)		
Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<p>The district has a leadership team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets regularly and is comprised of the superintendent, key district level decision makers, and is representative of and provides voice to building principals, teachers, and other key professionals across the district. (ID07) • is a conduit for two way communication with faculty, staff, and families across the district. (ID08/IE13) • has a multi-year plan that results in district wide implementation of MTSS and a plan for the current year with specific actions and products that support movement toward district wide implementation. (ID03) • develops and implements specific policies and procedures resulting district coordination of curriculum protocols, assessment systems, and professional learning across all schools in the district, and instructional team collaboration time. • regularly analyzes district and school performance data and MTSS implementation data to make decisions about MTSS, school improvement, and professional development needs. (ID10) 	<p>The district has a leadership team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets regularly. • has a plan to support all schools in the full implementation of MTSS. • focus of data analysis is on completion of tasks opposed to performance data and MTSS implementation data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district supports the implementation of MTSS but no formal leadership team exists nor a plan to support all schools with the full implementation of MTSS.

Critical Component: Leadership (building) proactively supports the essential components of the MTSS framework across all schools in the district and their decisions and actions work toward making the MTSS framework more effective, including keeping the focus on instructional improvement to improve learning outcomes for all students. (MTSS1.01/IE06)

Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<p>The building has a leadership team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets at least monthly and is comprised of the principal other staff that are representative of and provides voice to all staff and key professionals throughout the school. (ID07) • is a conduit for two way communication with faculty, staff, and families who are members of the school. (ID08/IE13) • has a plan for the current year with specific actions and products that support movement toward school wide implementation of MTSS. (ID03) • develops and implements specific policies and procedures for implementation of a curriculum protocol, assessment system, and professional learning plan aligned with the district. • establishes a school schedule that has protected time for core instruction and intervention. • regularly analyzes school performance data and MTSS implementation data to make decisions about MTSS, school improvement, and professional development needs. (ID10) 	<p>The building has a leadership team that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets inconsistently. • establishes a school schedule that has protected time for core instruction and intervention. • focuses on designing instruction for individual or groups of students opposed to the impact of the system at the classroom, grade, and school level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building leadership team exists but members take all cues and direction from principal.

<p>Critical Component: Professional Learning is actively support by both the district and buildings through a system of support for teachers including coaching, resource materials, mentoring, peer observations, and problem solving to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills to provide high quality instruction. (MTSS1.02)</p>		
<p>Expected Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for professional learning exists to provide initial training, ongoing coaching, and training of new staff as hired, and includes observations and self-assessment related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management. (IF03/IF04/IF05) • All staff, including new staff members, are trained and included in the MTSS process. (MTSS1.04) • All staff responsible for providing or supporting Tier I, II, and III interventions have been fully trained on the MTSS framework and on the evidence-based interventions used (as identified in the curriculum protocol), and ongoing support is available as needed. (MTSS1.03) • Staff responsible for the administration and use of assessment data receive ongoing professional development on appropriate assessments and assessment procedures. (MTSS1.05) • The use of curricula and instructional strategies are monitored for fidelity and to identify need for additional support and professional learning. (MTSS4.03/MTSS4.06) 	<p>Developmental Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations for the use of effective teaching strategies are set by the building leadership. • Initial professional learning opportunities for the MTSS process and the use of effective teaching strategies are provided by the district and building leadership teams. • Ongoing professional learning opportunities are planned as follow-up for staff. 	<p>Unacceptable Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional learning needs are the responsibility of individual staff members.
<p>Critical Component: An articulated Curriculum protocol provides evidence-based and aligned resources to support the student learning across all tiers.</p>		
<p>Expected Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum protocol is used to ensure aligned evidence-based curricula are used for all instruction and intervention (Tier I, II, III). (IIIA01/MTSS3.01/MTSS3.03/MTSS4.01/MTSS4.03/MTSS4.05/MTSS4.06) 	<p>Developmental Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum protocol is being developed but does not address all areas at all tiers of instruction. 	<p>Unacceptable Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricula decisions beyond core are the decision of individual teachers.

Critical Component: An Empowering Culture of collaboration and allowing students and families to be involved in the education of their children is pervasive.		
Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leadership team, all staff, and families have a shared responsibility for the academic and behavioral achievement of all students. Instructional decisions for students who are beyond the core or struggling to learn are made by grade-level/subject-area instructional teams. Parents receive regular communication (absent jargon) about learning standards, their children’s progress, and the parents’ role in their children’s success at school. (IG01) Teachers are familiar with the curriculum of the home (what parents can do at home to support their children’s learning) and discuss it with them. (CM2.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A leadership team is meeting and information, questions, and support is flowing between the leadership team and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTSS is being implemented by a small group of staff.
Critical Component: Instruction is designed and provided in a manner to support demonstrated student academic and behavioral learning across tiers.		
Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers use effective teaching strategies; differentiated, explicit, and scaffolded instruction, which actively engages students in learning. (IIIA07-IIIA28/IIIC10) Tier II and Tier III intervention time is additional instruction time beyond core/Tier I. (MTSS4.04/MTSS4.08) Tier II interventions involve teacher-led small group instruction where the group is size is optimal for the age and needs of the students. (MTSS3.04) Tier II interventions are well defined in terms of procedure, person(s) responsible, frequency, duration, and measurable outcomes. (MTSS4.02) Tier III interventions are more intensive than Tier II interventions and are continuously adjusted and individualized to address the needs of each student based upon response to intervention. (MTSS4.07) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teaching strategies such as differentiated, explicit, and scaffolded instruction can be observed in some classrooms. Differences in intensity of instruction, such as frequency, duration, and group size are observable across Tier I, II, and III. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective teaching is determined solely by individual classroom teachers.

Critical Component: The Assessment system provides for the measurement of student learning and outcomes through the use of a variety of evaluation methods. (IIIA06)		
Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive assessment plan of valid and reliable assessments exists including procedures for the decisions to be made, who administers, when to be used, and any cut points if applicable. (MTSS2.03/MTSS5.02) • Procedures are in place to ensure assessments are administered in accordance with developer guidelines and data are used in manner consistent with the MTSS procedures. (MTSS2.01/MTSS2.04) • Universal screening assessment such as a CBM for academics are administered to all students three times during the school year and office discipline referrals are ongoing tracked for all students behavior. (MTSS2.02/MTSS2.03) • Diagnostic assessment is conducted for individual students as needed to design instruction and determine instructional focus of intervention. (MTSS2.05) • Progress monitoring assessments are conducted bi-weekly for those receiving strategic (Tier II) academic instruction and weekly for those receiving intensive (Tier III) intensive academic instruction. (MTSS2.06) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive assessment plan is in development but not all types of assessments have been identified. • Numerous assessments with the same purpose are in use. • Assessments are available but are used inconsistently or not always for the purpose for which the assessment was designed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary assessments used to guide instruction are pre-post and summative assessments. • Assessments are given but the data is not used for instructional decisions.

Critical Component: The framework includes a well-defined mechanism for Data-Driven Decision Making to ensure data are analyzed, decisions are made, and students receive intervention in a timely manner in the appropriate prevention level. (MTSS5.03/MTSS5.05)		
Expected Implementation	Developmental Variation	Unacceptable Variation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process that includes clear criteria and guidelines for placing students in each prevention level beyond Tier I prevention. (MTSS5.03) • Universal screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and other assessment data are used to inform instructional practices at all levels with the goal that instruction is effective with the vast majority of students served. (MTSS5.04) • Student assessment data and individual student characteristics are used to address both the academic and behavioral needs of all students. (MTSS3.02) • The leadership team and instructional teams use student learning data across levels to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies. (IID07/IID08) • Instructional teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement and to plan instruction. (IID09/IID10) • Criteria are established for all Tier III students and progress monitoring data is compared to the learning trajectory to determine the degree to which the student is making adequate progress. (MTSS5.01) • The MTSS framework includes an implemented mechanism for keeping parents/guardians of students receiving both Tier II and Tier III intervention fully informed of the intervention and the progress of their child, and parents are actively engaged in supporting the MTSS framework. (MTSS6.01) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team(s) review student data from universal screening and use it group students based on instructional focus. • Teams who work on designing instruction for students are frequently tied to eligibility for entitlement programs (e.g., special education, Title, ESOL, etc.). • Primary measure of effectiveness of curriculum and instruction are summative assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single team acts as the problem-solving team for all instructional staff in the building brainstorming and designing individual student intervention plans. • Students receive help based on teacher nomination/selection.