MONTANA EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Exceptional Children, Extraordinary Potential

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MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

WHAT IS MTSS AND HOW CAN IT HELP YOUR CHILD AND YOU?

MTSS stands for Multi-Tiered System of Supports. MTSS is a multi-step framework that schools can use to provide instruction and support to promote both academic and behavioral success of all children. Individual children's progress is monitored, and results are used to make decisions about further instruction and intervention. The instruction and interventions are provided to all students, at varying levels of intensity based on student need. The goal is to prevent problems and intervene early so that students can be successful. MTSS focuses not only on academic success but also behavioral and social and emotional needs. All staff and all students are part of MTSS at school.

How does MTSS help your child?

In an MTSS system, every child is met with encouragement and a school culture that promotes a sense of safety and belonging. MTSS is a way of doing things within the school that impacts every single student enrolled and is designed to make sure no one "falls through the cracks." It is not a program. It is not a process. MTSS is a philosophy that considers all learners to make sure all students are getting the instruction needed and are making adequate growth.

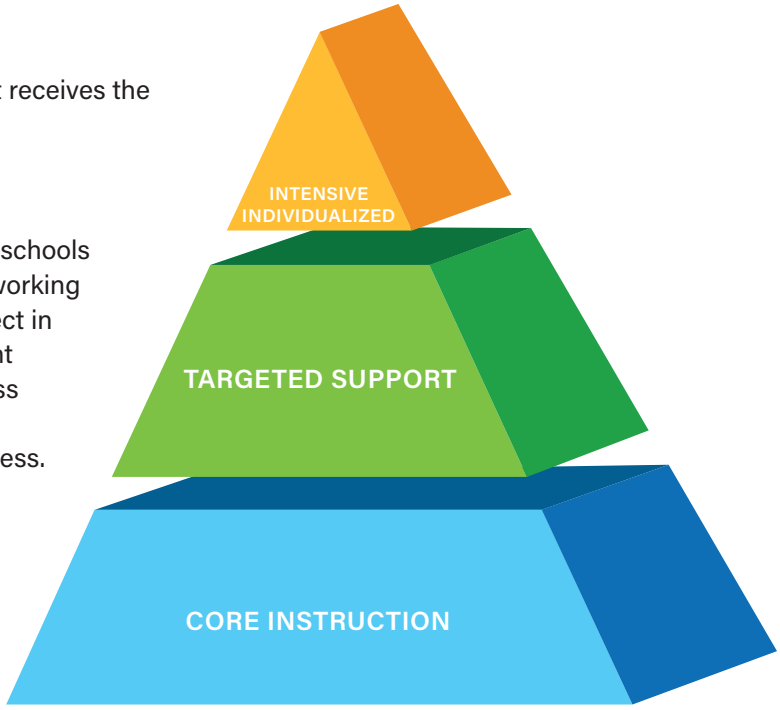
There are three tiers of instruction. In a strong and sustainable MTSS Framework, the mental well-being, academic, and behavior needs of the student are taken into consideration at each level of instruction.

Tier 1 is Core Instruction—Universal:

The whole class is covered on Tier 1. Every single student receives the core curriculum, or Tier 1.

Tier 2 is Targeted Support:

Targeted support for kids who need more support. Many schools provide Tier 2 support in groups of four or five students working with a teacher each day using a program in a given subject in addition to the core Tier 1 instruction. Other schools might provide Tier 2 with computer programs in labs. Regardless of the method, it is expected that the majority of those students getting Tier 2 support will make adequate progress.



Tier 3 is Intensive individualized support:

When students are getting the core instruction (Tier 1), frequent instruction beyond that (Tier 2), and are still not making gains, MTSS calls for an individualized, intense level of instruction (Tier 3). The students who move up to this most intensive level of support continue with Tier 1 activities. Their break-out groups are smaller than in Tier 2. And these sessions last longer and are more narrowly focused. This support, when provided appropriately, should be in a setting that is no larger than a one-to-three teacher to student ratio; one-to-one instruction is ideal when possible.

This system is fluid—meaning students can move between these levels at any time as the interventions work or are determined to be continued or increased. This involves frequent monitoring and communication.

What is your role as Family in MTSS?

Parents and guardians play a critical role in supporting what their children are learning in school. Research is clear that the more parents are involved in student learning, the higher the student achievement. Parents know their child's interests and strengths and know what interventions may have been tried in the past, those that worked and those that did not.

MTSS encourages teachers and parents to effectively communicate, collaborate, and problem solve using data to best meet the needs of your child. Parents can also have a positive effect on student achievement by promoting learning at home and reinforcing what is taught in school.

At regular intervals, families and educators should engage in discussions regarding how students respond. Parents should be actively engaged in all steps of the problem-solving process, and, particularly, engaged in all decisions regarding adjustments to interventions and related changes to a student's curriculum. Schools have a responsibility to facilitate parent understanding and engagement in problem-solving efforts.

You do not have to wait to hear from your school. You have a right to contact your child's teacher, counselor, or other staff member and ask for a team meeting. Some things to consider: review your child's MTSS data; discuss your child's strengths, work samples, peer relationships, and challenges; and collaborate on strategies you can use to support your child at home.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is providing schools with information and training to implement MTSS. Each school/district will implement their own MTSS system according to their school community.

The OPI website has information that will provide a further explanation of the details of MTSS.
opi.mt.gov/Educators/Teaching-Learning/Multi-Tiered-Systems-of-Support

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