



District Decisions

Behavior Intervention System

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District Decisions: Behavior Intervention System

This document defines the tiered delivery system within an MTSS framework and outlines decisions districts need to make to support schools in the installation of the intervention system. The activities the district needs to complete are in blue font.

Tiered Delivery System

Definitions of Tiers

Tier 1 is defined as “universal instruction and differentiation intended to meet the needs of all learners.” Also referred to as “core” instruction, tier 1 instruction is preventative in nature and is designed to meet the instructional needs of at least 80% of students.

Tier 2 is an “intervention platform consisting of supplemental, targeted interventions intended for some learners who require support or extension beyond tier 1.” An intervention platform is the collection of practices or programs that have been intentionally reviewed and selected as the foundation, or building blocks, for interventions. Approximately 15-20% of students may need tier 2 supports, given high-quality tier 1 instruction.

Tier 3 support provide intense, individualized interventions which build upon tier 1 instruction and tier 2 interventions for learners with highly accelerated, or severe and persistent academic and/or non-academic needs. (MDE MTSS Practice Profile, 2020, p.14)

Behavior Components of MTSS Framework

The behavior components of an MTSS framework are framed around School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS). SWPBIS is a proactive, team-based multi-tiered framework for creating and sustaining safe and effective schools. Emphasis is place on prevention of problem behavior, development of pro-social skills, and the use of data-based problem solving.

Intervention System

An intervention system is built to specifically support tiers 2 and 3 of a tiered delivery system. It ensures efficient, effective, and equitable access to intervention supports for all students within a school. A strong intervention system is made up of multiple components led by a team within the school.

Components of an Intervention System

1. Teaming Structures
2. Identifying Students
3. Intervention Grid
4. Placement and Grouping Procedures
5. Interventionist Training and Implementation Supports
6. Fidelity
7. Data Use and Analysis
8. Intensifying Interventions
9. Communication Protocols

Each district determines the level of standardization of intervention system components across all schools.

District Decisions

Selection of Interventions

Intervention programs and resources need to be carefully reviewed and selected by the district to ensure the interventions available within the intervention platform address a continuum of learner needs.

When selecting intervention resources, special attention must be paid to the following dimensions of intervention intensity, to increase confidence they will effectively accelerate student progress (Fuchs, L.S., Fuchs, D., Malone, A., 2017).

- **Strength:** Evidence that interventions have demonstrated effects with students who are at-risk
- **Dosage:** Information about the number of lessons, length of time for each lesson, groups size, and number of opportunities for response
- **Alignment:** Fit within the intervention platform and purposefully target specific social, emotional, and behavioral skills
- **Comprehensiveness:** Lessons designed to include explicit instruction elements, including modeling, guided practice with feedback, individual practice with feedback
- **Attention to transfer:** Degree to which intervention supports easily transfer to other settings (e.g., classroom, core subject area classes)
- **Behavioral support:** Degree to which strategies are incorporated to support student engagement, positive mindset, and self-regulation

To support schools in the selection and use of intervention programs and resources, districts should consider the following steps:

- Complete the district's initiative and innovation alignment process to gather key information about "district-selected" interventions and priorities requiring staff time, attention and resources AND to determine how initiatives complement, overlap or contradict one another.
- Conduct an intervention audit (Appendix A) to understand what intervention currently looks like at each grade level and/or school within the district.
- Review the alignment summary and the results of the intervention audit to make recommendations for continued use, selection or de-selection of intervention programs or resources:
 - Identify discrepancies between what has been selected by the district for use and what people are actually using
 - Determine how district-selected resources are being used and identify potential misuses of resources (e.g., not adhering to recommended dosage)
 - Identify gaps in intervention options (e.g., no interventions that teach social skills)
 - Inform professional learning needs (e.g., identifying motivation)
 - Identify interventions that are not resulting in improved student outcomes

- Complete the district's initiative and innovation review process to select or de-select intervention programs and resources.
 - Select interventions to address gaps identified from the alignment process
 - When selecting an intervention program, consider use of supplemental resources (e.g., NCII Academic Tools Chat, WWC, ESSA)
- Communicate district decisions and guidelines with all staff to ensure understanding of how interventions were selected, and which interventions are available to students within the intervention platform.

Document district decisions to support the selection of interventions available within the intervention platform:

- [Intervention Audit \[insert link\]](#)
- [Alignment Summary for Behavior Interventions \[insert link\], with recommendations for continued use, selection, and/or deselection of interventions](#)
- [Review Process\(es\) for intervention programs and/or resources \[insert link\]](#)

Selection of Assessments

Assessments are used within an intervention system to identify students that need intervention supports and to accurately match students to the interventions that will best address their needs. Screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic, fidelity assessments are all used within an intervention system.

- **Screening:** used with all students to identify who may be at risk
- **Progress monitoring:** administered to students who have been confirmed at risk and are receiving intervention supports to determine the effectiveness of intervention and measure student growth
- **Diagnostic:** administered when additional information is needed to better define a student's strengths and needs
- **Fidelity:** used to measure if core features of an innovation or program are being implemented as intended

Assessment decisions are documented within the district's MTSS Assessment System.

To support schools in the selection and use of assessments within the intervention system, districts should consider the following steps:

- Complete the district's initiative and innovation alignment process to gather key information about assessments currently being used in the district and determine how existing assessments complement, overlap, or contradict one another
- Review the alignment summary and the results of the intervention audit to make recommendations for continued use, selection or de-selection of assessments. Consider the following questions when reviewing the results.
 - Are additional screening or progress monitoring assessments are needed?
 - Which diagnostic measures will be used for behavior, as appropriate?
- Work with your MiMTSS Behavior Data Coordinators to make decisions about:
 - Use of CICO SWIS will be used to support data collection and analysis for the behavior intervention Check-In Check-Out
 - Social, emotional, behavioral screening process
- Complete the district's initiative and innovation review process to select or de-select assessments

- Document decisions around data collection and use for all screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments in your District's MTSS Assessment System
- Communicate assessment decisions with staff, including the purpose of each assessment and expectations for the collection and use of the data for decision-making

[Document assessment decisions in your district's MTSS Assessment System \[insert link\]](#)

Intervention Access and Effectiveness

Intervention Grid

The Intervention Grid provides an “at-a-glance” view of interventions accessible to students within the school, as well as critical information for each intervention. This information includes:

- Description/Purpose of the intervention
- Entrance criteria
- Permission (parent/family)
- Progress monitoring guidelines
- Decision Rules

The Intervention Grid helps to standardize the process of intervention selection and ensures that intervention selection continues to be driven by student needs, as well as makes certain that equitable access to intervention supports exists for all students.

Each available behavior intervention will have its own intervention grid that outlines the information regarding the intervention including a description of the intervention, the entrance criteria, progress monitoring guidelines and decision rules. Appendix B provides a blank intervention grid template that can be used as a template for each intervention available in the district.

To support schools in the development of intervention grids for each intervention available within the intervention platform, districts should consider the following steps:

- Review the example intervention grids provided by the MiMTSS TA Center and determine if any could be used as a starting point for your district.
- Identify who will be asked to develop the intervention grid for each of the district-selected interventions within the intervention platform. Individuals should be recruited who have deep knowledge, expertise, and experience with the intervention.
- Develop timelines for completing intervention grids and sharing with schools.
- Determine which components will be district standardized (e.g., information dictated by program) and which could be adjusted by schools based on their context (e.g., entrance criteria based on available resources and number of students who need to access).
- Determine what the expectations will be for the collection and use for intervention fidelity data. Who should be collecting and providing feedback using fidelity data/checklists? If checklists do not exist, who should be responsible for creating them?
- Share completed intervention grids with principals and coaches, along with expectations related to standardization of the grid.

[Document the district decisions, process, and timelines that will ensure intervention grids are developed for each of the interventions within the intervention platform.](#)

Time for Intervention

Finding time to schedule interventions is a common issue and is one of the most common barriers to implementing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) noted by principals. Interventions should occur in addition to core instruction. Not all behavioral interventions require a substantial amount of time outside core instruction. For example, Check-in Check-out requires time at the beginning and end of the day to check students in/out and at the end of each period. However, for interventions that involve small group instruction, additional time needs to be allocated for intervention.

There are a variety of approaches to finding time for intervention in elementary and secondary schools. Appendix C provides districts and schools with different methods for approaching and developing schedules and can be used as a resource to support decisions to ensure time is allocated for interventions.

Document the district decisions and/or process that will ensure schools are able to allocate adequate time for interventions.

When making decisions, consider the following questions:

- What steps need to be taken at the district-level to prioritize time for interventions?
- What is the district-wide impact on scheduling across schools? (e.g., specials, secondary schools)
- What needs to happen to ensure interventions are available for all identified students?
- How can district leaders address barriers related to scheduling and course credits?
- Do special education teacher(s) need to be involved in scheduling so they can support students on their caseload?
- What other district-level guidance or decisions need to be made to ensure all schools have the resources necessary to allocate adequate time for intervention?

Placement and Grouping Decisions

To support implementation of an intervention system the district needs to consider the process for identifying students who would benefit from intervention supports and which aspects of the process should be standardized across schools. Each school will contextualize this guidance to support implementation.

Accurate intervention placement is predicated on the development of an intervention platform which addresses a continuum of learner needs. Ensuring students are accurately placed in intervention programs and grouped appropriately is critical to the success of interventions. Failure to appropriately place and group students will lead to minimal or no gains in remediating the skill deficits.

Prior to placing and grouping students, district standardized decisions need to be made and documented within the MTSS Assessment System for the collection and use of universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic data.

Additional decisions need to be made about the use of in-program intervention placement tests and grouping procedures. Districts will need to decide which of the following procedures will be standardized across schools and to what degree:

- Guidelines for intervention placement
 - Who will support placing students in interventions?
 - For interventions with placement tests:
 - Who will administer the test? How will they receive training in how to administer and score tests accurately?
 - Who will review the results? What are the decision rules for using this data (e.g., grouping decisions)?
 - When should placement tests be administered? Do they need to be administered in the spring to inform intervention groups in the fall?
- Guidelines for grouping students and starting interventions
 - What is the timeline for forming intervention groups for the fall? When should interventions start?
 - Is there a maximum group size for intervention groups/courses?
- Guidelines on how data will systematically move from one building to the next to maximize time for interventions (e.g., transition to middle school)
- Guidelines for screening and placing newly enrolled students into interventions during the school year
 - What is the recommended number of days from when a student enrolls to when decisions about the need for and intervention placement are made?
 - Who will be responsible for screening and making placement decisions about new students?
 - What is the placement process if a secondary student moves in mid-term and an intervention course or group that the student needs is not available until the next term?
- Guidelines for communicating with families about interventions

Document the district decisions and/or for placement and grouping procedures that will be consistent across all schools. Plan to communicate standardized placement and grouping decisions with principals and coaches in each school.

Staff Selection and Development

Staff Selection

Districts will need to work with schools to ensure adequate staff are available to provide interventions to students. A high-quality selection process should be used to ensure staff selected to fulfill interventionist positions have the time and skills necessary to fulfill the role. A professional learning plan is developed for individuals or groups of interventionists to ensure they are trained in the intervention programs they will be using.

Staff Development

All individuals providing intervention need access to high-quality professional learning in each intervention program they are using to instruct students. Training and coaching for interventionists are necessary to ensure interventions are used as intended and result in accelerated learning for students.

Initial Training

The following conditions need to be met to ensure high-quality training is provided in intervention programs:

- Highly qualified trainer who has experience in implementing the program
- Overview of the program (e.g., contents, organization, program components, placement test, program assessment, decision rules)
- Modeling each program component for the first lesson and lessons where new program components are introduced. This includes instructional routines, methods for cueing student responses, error correction procedures, strategies for intensifying the instruction during lessons, and pacing considerations.
- Practice opportunities in using the instructional routines and error correction procedures for each program component for the first lesson and lessons where new program components are introduced.
- Overview of the intervention program fidelity checklist. This includes practice opportunities in using the tool with the presenter and with a partner.

The checklist in Appendix D could be used as a part of the process for securing high-quality training for each intervention program or practice included in the district's intervention grid.

Coaching

Once interventionists have been trained in intervention programs, additional coaching will be necessary to ensure interventionists are able to successfully deliver interventions with fidelity and intensify instruction when data indicates the need.

Districts will need to ensure instructional coaching is available for the intervention programs within the intervention platform and will need to expand the coaching system to include information about the role and responsibilities of instructional coaches.

Document the district decisions and/or process for ensuring staff are available to provide interventions and they have access to high-quality professional learning (e.g., training, coaching) in intervention programs and practices.

When making decisions, consider the following questions:

- What steps need to be taken to ensure adequate staff are available to provide interventions in all schools?
- How might a high-quality selection process be used with newly hired or exist staff who will fulfill interventionist roles to determine their level of knowledge and skill related to the responsibilities of the role?
- What steps need to be taken to ensure high-quality training in intervention programs is provided to all interventionists?
- How will training needs be documented for individuals providing intervention? What about records for those who have received training? What is the process to ensure schools can communicate training needs to the district?
- What steps need to be taken to ensure coaching is provided to interventionists in the use of interventions and how to intensify interventions? Who will work to expand the district coaching system to flesh out this role?

Teaming Structures

Multiple teaming structures are necessary to support an intervention system. Teaming structures could include the School Leadership Team, grade level teams, cross-department teams, interventionist teams, and individual student problem solving teams (e.g., multidisciplinary). Each group has a specific role in supporting student access to and effectiveness of interventions.

- **School Leadership Team** maintains a focus on Tier 1 and oversees the development and use of the intervention system to ensure systems are developed, used, and effective for meeting the needs of all students.
- **Grade-level and Cross-Department Teams** use universal screening data to identify students in need of interventions and work with interventionists to support differentiated instruction for students receiving interventions.
- **Interventionist Teams** review data for students receiving interventions (e.g., progress monitoring, in-program mastery assessments) to monitor progress and to determine when and how instruction needs to be intensified.
- **Individual Student Problem Solving Teams** (e.g., multidisciplinary teams) facilitate high-quality individual student data analysis (e.g., data-based individualization) to ensure students receiving tier 3 support have an intensive individualized learning plan.

Document district decisions to support the various team structure. When making decisions, consider the following questions:

- What steps need to be taken to ensure teams have time to meet and review student data?
- What steps need to be taken to ensure there is time for interventionists to meet and review data (e.g., in program mastery tests, progress monitoring data)?
- Who might need to be involved in conversations about processes and procedures related to individual student problem solving teams when schools are preparing to attend intensifying intervention professional learning sessions (e.g., ISD, special education)?

Appendix A: Intervention Audit

An intervention audit is used at both the district and school level to understand what interventions look like across schools, which instructional resources and materials are being used, how interventions are being delivered, and how instructional time is being allocated.

Typically, the audit is developed by district leaders and results are shared with both district and school teams to inform decisions regarding scheduling and the selection and use of intervention programs and materials.

The audit is completed by grade-level team or individual teachers in every school to get a better understanding of what interventions looks like across the district. Many districts have found the use of a Google form or spreadsheet an easy way to compile results across grade-levels and schools. If using a spreadsheet, separate tabs or sheets can be created for each school with columns assigned to each grade-level to document their responses.

Example Intervention Audit Questions

Directions: Please respond to each question or prompt. Your responses will be used by the District Implementation Team and School Leadership Team to support the development of the intervention system.

School: [select your school]

Grade: [select your grade]

1. Which interventions do students within your classroom receive in the classroom and outside of the classroom?
2. Which curriculum resources are used to provide intervention? Include date of publication and specific components that are taught in accordance to author and/or publisher guidelines.
3. How many days a week do students receive interventions?
4. How many minutes are allocated per intervention session?
5. Does intervention time overlap with other core content area instruction (e.g., math, social studies, science)?
6. Which students participate in reading intervention (e.g., general education, special education, grades)?
7. What methods are used to determine student groupings?
8. In what ways are intervention supports coordinated with core instruction? How are students receiving interventions supported during tier 1 instruction?

Appendix B: Intervention Grid Template

The table below can be used as a template to support the development of an intervention grid for interventions within a district's intervention platform.

Table B1. Blank Intervention Grid

Grid Component	Intervention Specific Information
Intervention Support	
Description/Purpose (critical skill(s) and/or function of behavior addressed by intervention)	
Entrance Criteria (decisions based on screening data, individual student data, referrals or program placement test results)	
Permission	
Progress Monitoring Guidelines (what will be used to collect fidelity data and student data and who will be responsible for collecting the data)	Fidelity Data: Student Data:
Decision Rules	Maintain: Alter: Fade:

Appendix C: Scheduling Time for Intervention

This appendix is adapted from Intervention Central (www.interventioncentral.org). It is intended to provide district and school teams with ideas for addressing schedules at the elementary and secondary level in order to allocate time for intervention.

Elementary

All Hands-on Deck/Walk to Intervention

Reading classes are parallel scheduled across same grade classes or across grades (depending on a cross-class or cross-grade model). In some schools, Tier 1 reading instruction includes an extended amount of time for reading. At the end of the Tier 1 instruction, students then “walk to read” and literally move to designated classrooms that provide instruction based on student need. In this model, students are homogeneously grouped with reduced class/group size for Tier 2 intervention. During this time, some students receive enrichment and reinforcement, while other students receive specific Tier 2 skill instruction in small groups based on assessed student needs.

- General education teachers, instructional aides, interventionists, special education teachers, reading coaches, and other available trained personnel join the Tier 2 intervention classes to assist with small group instruction.
- Small group instruction means one teacher or provider with one small group for the duration of the Tier 2 intervention. Students requiring Tier 2 intervention need more, not less instructional time.
- Tier 2 intervention classes are configured to be as small as possible and students receive instruction carefully designed to meet their assessed needs
- All students return to their classroom after the targeted intervention/enrichment time

Intervention Blocks

Students remain in their own classrooms for core reading instruction, without intervention time added on. At a designated time during the school day, all students receive additional reading support (intervention or enrichment). Support classes are parallel scheduled to allow for flexible grouping within a grade level. The parallel scheduling frees personnel from other instructional responsibilities so that they are available to teach these classes.

- Students participating in Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions receive targeted or intensive skill instruction
- Students who are successful with the Tier 1 core reading instruction receive enrichment and reinforcement
- Some schools find that it is easier to manage schedules for interventionists when there is a set schedule across grade level
- Having a specific time for an intervention block ensures that students are not missing core instruction

Homogeneous Grouping

Additional time is built into the extended reading block and classes are parallel scheduled as much as possible across the grade level. All students are divided into three fairly homogeneously groups for reading instruction based upon their support needs (e.g., above grade level, on grade level, below grade level). Instruction is specifically designed to meet the needs of the students enrolled.

- A portion of the extended reading block is devoted to teaching the Tier 1 core curriculum, with increased intensity of instruction and more opportunities for practice for students in the below grade level group
- The remainder of the block is dedicated to interventions or enrichment, depending on group
- For struggling readers in the below grade level group, a skill reinforcement block within the reading block would include teacher-directed intervention lessons focused on skill needs identified by benchmark, placement test, and progress monitoring data
- Those few students with intensive reading support needs would receive a third reading lesson individualized to their specific needs during the block and delivered by a teacher, reading interventionist, or other staff
- At the completion of the reading block, student return to their original classroom for the remainder of the day

Secondary

In all instances, the school and district should have established group size for intervention courses so that the group is not too large to benefit from the intervention.

In Place of an Elective

Students identified with reading needs are enrolled in an intervention course in place of one of their elective options. If this option is chosen, the need to communicate with families and students about the decision is important.

Zero Period

The school creates an optional period before the start of the school day. During this “zero period,” students can elect to take core or elective courses. Those students needing intervention support can take a core course during zero period, freeing up a time slot within the school day to receive their intervention assistance.

This option requires that staff teaching zero-period classes receive extra compensation or adjustment of their school-day teaching schedule. Also, parents and students must make a firm commitment to attend zero-period classes, as these courses entail additional work and potential inconvenience – including an earlier wake-up time and home responsibility for transportation.

Credit Recovery

A school that has access to online “credit recovery” courses offer a struggling student with the option to take a course online (via credit recovery) on his or her own time. This option frees up a time-slot during the school day for that student to get intervention assistance.

The credit-recovery option requires that a student be self-motivated and willing to take on extra work in order to access intervention support. While this option may be a good fit for some students, many may lack the motivation and skill set necessary for success in an online course taken outside of the school day.

Core Course with Extended Time

The school creates two-period sections of selected core area courses (e.g., English). Students are recruited for these extended-time sections because they were found through academic screening and/or archival records to need additional time to master course concepts and/or complete assigned work. The two-period course affords sufficient time for the teacher to provide core instruction and to provide supplemental interventions such as in the area of reading. Students placed in an extended-time core course that occupies two class periods may have to give up or postpone the opportunity to take another course.

The extended-time course can be made more effective if the school can assign additional staff (e.g., co-teacher, trained paraprofessional) to push into the setting for at least a part of the class to provide additional support to struggling students.

Lunch

Utilize lunch periods to offer small group social skill interventions or other small group intervention to address social emotional/behavioral needs. These groups typically do not meet more than 1 or 2 times per week. Aligning students' lunch schedules to form groups can be complex work and it will be important to provide a rationale as to why the student is giving up lunch periods.

Study Hall (advisory, homeroom)

Students in need of interventions are scheduled as a block in a common study hall. The school then schedules intervention services at the same time as the study hall. Reading teachers and other trained interventionists and/or tutors run short-term (5-10 week) small group interventions.

Students are recruited from the study hall and matched to the appropriate intervention based on shared need. They are discharged from the intervention service and rejoin study hall if they show sufficient improvement in the intervention. This model is fluid. After each 5-10-week period, new intervention groups can be created, with students again being matched to these services based on need. A school that puts students with shared intervention need in the same study hall should take care that these students do not feel stigmatized or singled out because of their academic needs.

Intervention Period

The school sets aside one class period per day (e.g., 45-60 minutes) during which all students have the opportunity to receive appropriate academic support. Students in need of intervention are matched to the appropriate intervention option available and receive the intervention during this period. Students not in need of intervention use this time as a study hall or for other academic activities. It is important to note that deliberate planning for these other activities needs to occur and to not assume that teachers will come up with these on their own.

Schools are often inventive in finding time to schedule an intervention period.

1. One idea is to trim a brief amount of time (e.g., five minutes) from each class period in the daily schedule to free up sufficient time for a stand-alone period.
2. In schools where staff by contract must report before students or remain for a period after student dismissal each day, the school might lengthen the student day to overlap with the morning or afternoon additional staff time, potentially freeing up at least some of the minutes needed to put together an intervention period.

Appendix D: Intervention Training High-Quality Checklist

This appendix provides a template that can be used by districts when selecting or developing professional learning (e.g., training) for intervention programs.

Table D1. Check Yes or No for each condition and record any relevant rationale or notes when considering professional learning for initial training for intervention programs.

Professional Learning Conditions	Yes	No	Rationale/Notes
Professional Learning includes an overview of the intervention program			
Overview addresses the components of the program			
Overview includes the content and materials used in the intervention			
Overview addresses the organization of the program components and materials			
Overview includes placement tests that are part of the intervention			
Overview covers any program assessments			
Overview provides decision rules for progress monitoring and exit criteria			
Professional Learning includes modeling of each program component for the first lesson and lessons where new program components are introduced			
Instructional routines are modeled			
Methods for cueing student response are modeled			
Error correction procedures are modeled			
Strategies for intensifying the instruction during lessons are modeled			
Pacing considerations are discussed and modeled			
Practice opportunities are provided in the professional learning for each program component for the first lesson and lessons where new program components are introduced			
Use of instructional routines are practiced			
Error correction procedures are practiced			
Cueing student responses are practiced			
Strategies for intensifying the instruction during lessons are practiced			
Pacing is practiced			
The professional learning includes an overview of the intervention program fidelity checklist			
Use of the fidelity checklist is practiced with the presenter			
Use of the fidelity checklist if practiced with a partner			

- Michigan Department of Education, (2020). Michigan Department of Education Multi-Tiered System of Supports Practice Profile vs 5.0, Lansing, Michigan.
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