MiMTSS Technical Assistance Center

From Data to Impact: Designing Effective Tier 1 Instruction

Integrated Grade Level Problem-Solving Guide

Version 2.0
September 2026

MICHIGAN Department of Education

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Integrated Grade Level Problem-Solving Guide

This resource is designed to integrate with a wide range of screening assessments and guide individual teachers or grade-level teams through the four-step problem-solving process.

General Information

Date:

Teacher Name:

Grade Level:

Getting Started: Resources Needed

- Name of your universal screening assessment, and list of measures assessed for your grade level (including specific sub-skills assessed), and target scores for fall, winter, and spring
- Universal screening report for the relevant time of year that shows the number and percent of students who met the target on the overall/composite score and individual sub-tests
- Universal screening report(s) for the relevant time of year that show a grade/class list report that shows individual student performance on the overall/composite score and individual sub-tests
- Classroom data (e.g., discipline referrals, time out of the classroom, time in an alternate classroom) that provide insights into social, emotional, and behavioral health (behavior types, time of day, activity, location, students involved, perceived motivation)
- Classroom observation data collected during reading instruction (e.g., Classroom Management Observation Tool, Explicit Instruction Fidelity Tool)
- Literacy Curriculum materials, including a scope and sequence
- Grade-level implementation plan
- School and/or district improvement plan (for reference and alignment)
- Intervention instructional materials and student plans (for reference during generalization planning).

Step 1. Problem Identification

The problem-solving process begins with determining whether a problem exists and clearly defining a problem statement.

Action Steps:

1. Review and analyze the current status of classroom-level or grade-level data
    a. Overall risk indicators
    b. Overall risk indicator comparison (completed in winter or spring)

c. Overall implementation data for Social Emotional Behavioral Health (SEBH)
2. Determine the effectiveness of Tier 1 supports

Literacy Current Status

Classroom-level student data reports that reflect overall risk provide the initial data point for interpretation.

Overall Risk Indicators

Table 1. Record overall risk indicator outcomes for all applicable screening periods.

Overall Risk Indicators	**Low Risk (number and percent)**	**Some Risk (number and percent)**	**High Risk (number and percent)**
Fall			
Winter			
Spring			

Analysis Questions:

- Do at least 80% of students have reading scores that demonstrate they are on track for future reading success?
- Across all groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status, IEP status), do at least 80% of students have reading scores that demonstrate they are on track for future reading success?
- Is reading success increasing over time (within the school year, same grade level previous year)?

Overall Risk Indicator Comparison (if data analysis is happening in the winter or spring)

Table 2. Use the data from Table 1 to record risk indicator status from one screening period to the next. Compare the change in risk indicator outcomes.

Risk Category	**Previous Status (number and percent of students)**	**Change Language**	**Current Status (number and percent of students)**
Low Risk		Of those students who were previously **low risk**, how many are now...	Low risk: Some risk: High risk:
Some Risk		Of those students who were previously **some risk**, how many are now…	Low risk: Some risk: High risk:
High Risk		Of those students who were previously **high risk**, how many are now…	Low risk: Some risk: High risk:

Analysis Questions:

- Are at least 95% of students who started on track (low risk) staying on track throughout the year?
- Are at least 80% of students across the grade level adequately responding to intervention instruction (moving from some/high risk to a lower level of risk)?

Subskill Risk Indicators

Screening tools typically include grade-level-appropriate subtests that target skills predictive of reading outcomes and align with the developmental stages of reading. Results should be used to identify where mastery has broken down.

Table 3. Record each measure's score below applicable to your grade level.

Subtest Name and Targeted Subskills	**Low Risk**	**Some Risk**	**High Risk**
Example 1: NWF Correct Letter Sounds – Letter-Sound Correspondence Accuracy	*55% (11)*	*20% (4)*	*25% (5)*

Analysis Questions:

1. What is the most foundational subskill where fewer than 80% of students are on track (low risk)?
2. When should students typically master this skill (if applicable)?
3. What prerequisite skills are required for proficiency in this skill?

Social, Emotional, Behavioral Health Current Status

Summarize impact data (e.g., behavior referrals, student outcomes).

Analysis Questions

- What behaviors that interfere with learning are occurring most often?
- When do most of the interfering behaviors occur?
- During which activity do most of the interfering behaviors occur (e.g., large group, small group, transitions, independent work, etc.)?
- How many students are involved (e.g., many, few, one)?
- Why might students be engaged in the interfering behaviors (e.g., get/obtain or escape/avoid)?

Precise Problem Statement

Fill in the table below with at least one precise problem statement for your grade level based on the data from Tables 1 through 3.

Table 4. Problem Statement(s)

Who/When	What/Where	As Measured By	Compared to our Goal of
Example 1: At the first-grade winter 2026 benchmark,	*only 57% of students are at or above benchmark with basic decoding skills*	*As measured by the nonsense-word assessment in our universal screening measures*	*Compared to our goal of 90%.*
Example 2: From September through January, 40% of first-grade students	*were removed from classroom instruction due to disruptive behaviors*	*As measured by discipline referrals (office-managed)*	*Compared to our goal of 10% or fewer.*

Step 2. Problem Analysis

Problem analysis examines why the gap exists by reviewing possible contributing factors related to instruction, curriculum, and environment.

Possible Contributing Factors

For each of your precise problem statements, identify which of the following factors are contributing to the gap between desired and actual student outcomes. Be sure to identify the data used to validate the contributing factors.

Table 5. Contributing Factors

Possible Contributing Factors	Data to Validate
Evidence-Based Instruction	
The instruction is not intentional (explicit). ● Identifying what students need to do or say is not preplanned ● Teacher modeling is not incorporated into lessons ● Concise language is not used ● Insufficient opportunities for students to respond (demonstrate what they have been taught) ● Clear and prompt feedback is not provided, or is provided inconsistently (e.g., error correction procedures) ● Students have insufficient opportunities for independent	□ Lesson plans □ Tier 1 class wide curriculum materials □ Classroom observation (e.g., Explicit Instruction Observation Tool, CMOT) □ R-TFI items 1.9 to 1.15

practice ● Cumulative review is insufficient ● Assessment data are not consistently analyzed and applied to adjust instruction based on student performance. The instruction is not differentiated. ● Task difficulty is not considered when providing instruction ● Task difficulty is not gradually increased based on student performance ● Instruction does not consistently address gaps in background knowledge ● Instructional supports are not consistently provided to promote student success ● Strategies to maintain high levels of student engagement, responding, and performance are not consistently implemented Not all the prioritized components of the Tier 1 class wide curriculum materials are used. There is insufficient instructional time to adequately address the required content. Inconsistent implementation of instructional routines and procedures (e.g., continuous blending). Teachers do not provide daily instruction in foundational word-reading skills Teachers do not provide daily instruction in comprehension processes across subject areas Teachers do not provide daily instruction in foundational writing skills Teachers do not provide students with frequent, structured opportunities to engage in extended writing about the text they read Other:	
Curriculum	
Tier 1 class-wide curriculum materials are not evidence-based Additional supplementary materials used are not evidence-based ● Tier 1 class-wide curriculum materials do not include sufficient	□ Lesson plans □ Tier 1 class wide curriculum materials and text/ books

opportunities to practice with feedback. Tier 1 class-wide curriculum materials do not include error correction procedures. Tier 1 class-wide curriculum materials do not align with the intervention and/or the documented needs of students Limited access to high-quality, evidence-based instructional materials (e.g., students do not have access to high-quality texts) Reading curriculum resources need to be organized within a teaching schedule that considers time allocation recommendations from curriculum resource developers and minimizes disruptions Other:	□ Intervention plans
Environment	
Students miss out on instruction because they are frequently absent and/or tardy Student perception of the student-teacher relationship is not positive The physical environment is not conducive to learning Transitions into the classroom and between activities take too long Classroom routines have not been taught and practiced Lack of clear expectations and routines posted, taught, and practiced Students are not engaged during instruction Students lack regulation strategies for strong emotions More frequent acknowledgment of interfering behavior than expected behavior Inconsistent responses for interfering behavior Other:	□ Attendance reports □ Classroom matrix □ CMOT data □ Student perception survey

Hypothesis Statements

Review the factors you validated above. Then reach an agreement on the top three to five factors contributing to the problem(s) your team identified.

Table 6. Hypothesis Statements

If we develop a plan to address (this contributing factor)	Then we should expect to see (this improvement in student outcomes)

Example 1: If we consistently use the continuous blending instructional routine with more opportunities to respond,	*then, more students will demonstrate basic decoding skills, as measured by the nonsense-word fluency assessment.*
Example 2: If we develop a teaching schedule using our Tier 1 classwide curriculum and supplemental materials	*then, we will be able to focus more intentionally on instructional time across all literacy skills, including basic decoding skills that students need to develop.*
Example 3: If first-grade instructors consistently re-teach behavior expectations	*then, fewer students will demonstrate disruptive behaviors during instruction.*

Step 3. Plan Development

Step 3 moves the problem-solving process from analysis to action. Use assessment data from Steps 1 and 2, along with evidence-based practices, to develop a plan that addresses the most common instructional need.

Action Steps

1. Create a literacy goal statement for student outcomes for each identified problem statement
2. Create a SEBH goal statement for student outcomes for each identified problem statement
3. Build out a detailed action plan to address each hypothesis statement related to instruction, curriculum, and environment.
    a. Whole group
    b. Small group
4. Determine how you will communicate, as well as monitor the plan

Create a Literacy Goal Statement

By _____ [month, year], ___ [percent] of students in ____ [grade] will be on track (low risk) in ____ [skill area] as measured by _____ [assessment name], with no differences in percentages based on students' social economic status, language proficiency, or ethnicity.

Create a SEBH Goal Statement

By _____ [month, year], less than ___ [percent] of ____ [grade] students will leave the classroom for disruptive behavior as measured by _____, with no differences in percentages based on students' social economic status, language proficiency, or ethnicity. As a result, students will spend more time actively engaged in classroom literacy instruction.

Table 7. Guidelines for Tier 1 Planning.

% of Students Proficient	**Guidelines for Tier 1 Planning**
More than 80%	● Tier 1 is sufficient for *most* students.

% of Students Proficient	Guidelines for Tier 1 Planning
	● Consider additional small-group instruction for students who need more support.
60%-80%	● Tier 1 support should be enhanced. ● Consider modifications to whole-group and small-group instruction.
Less than 60%	● Tier 1 support in this area is *insufficient*. ● Focus on improving whole-group instruction. ● Provide additional small-group instruction to students who need it.

Grade Level Implementation Plan

A well-developed instructional plan considers how you teach (instruction), what you teach (curriculum), and where you teach (environment).

Guiding Questions:

1. What skills do you need to target, teach, reteach, or strengthen?
2. What specific change(s) or modifications will you implement to support the learning of that skill and target your goal?
3. What supports will you need for your teaching (i.e., training, coaching, time, materials)?

Table 8. Grade level implementation plan.

Focus	What	How	By When/Who	Status
Instruction, Whole group				
Instruction, Small group				
Curriculum, Whole group				
Curriculum, Small group				
Environment, Whole group				
Environment, Small group				

Monitoring and Support Plan

Table 9. Develop your monitoring and support plan using the questions below.

Guiding Questions	Decision	Who is Responsible?
How do you make sure the plan is working? ● Determine check-in dates		
What data will you use to monitor the plan? ● Progress of the targeted skill(s) ● Implementation of the plan?		
How will you communicate the plan?		

Step 4. Plan Implementation and Evaluation

During step 4, we put the plan into action and monitor its progress. The plan's success is evaluated using data to determine whether the problem still exists and how effective the core instruction has been.

Action Steps

1. Evaluate progress on the goals and activities outlined in the implementation plan
    a. Student outcomes data
    b. Implementation data
    c. Perception data
2. Summarize and document progress towards the goals and activities outlined in Step 3
3. Update the implementation plan to strengthen progress and address any new opportunities for growth.

Summary of Effectiveness

Table 10. Evaluate the effectiveness of your Tier 1 plan using the questions in the table below.

Guiding Questions	Decision
Was the plan implemented as intended? How do you know?	
Did the plan have impact? ● What data can you provide? ● Was the goal met?	
Does student data indicate that the plan needs to be modified? If yes, how?	
What are some factors that could have contributed to the results?	

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URLs Used in Document

Literacy Resources: Summary Findings and Practice Recommendations from High-Quality Research

(https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/6fd3wz0a9az9jogeaxt73/Literacy_Resources_Practice_Recommendations.pdf?rlkey=kdabvzdppl4sh6509eawlnmw6&st=tom4yf3p&dl=0)

Michigan's MTSS Technical Assistance Center is funded by the Michigan Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.