



Multi-tiered Systems of Support to prepare all Nebraskans for **learning, earning, and living.**

IN THIS ISSUE: MTSS WINTER UPDATE

The purpose of this MTSS Newsletter is to keep all Nebraska Stakeholders informed of the work and progress of identified development teams and systems alignment efforts that occur during the 2017-2018 school year and beyond. Further communication occurs through identified Stakeholder Groups as follows:

- Builders’ Team (**FEW**): Will create MTSS Systems
- MTSS Stakeholders (**SOME**): Will provide Feedback to Builders
- RDA Stakeholders (**ALL**): Will be provided with key information for implementation

MTSS V. RtI: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

In Nebraska, stakeholders have made a distinction between a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) and Response to Intervention (RtI).

MTSS is defined as a service delivery system based on the concept that ALL students require early and powerful academic and behavioral core instruction with potential high-quality interventions of increasing intensity.

RtI is defined as practices used to determine eligibility for special education.

A deeply implemented MTSS must be in place prior to disability determination. MTSS is identified throughout the **Every Student Succeeds Act** (ESSA) of 2016. According to the ESSA, the Essential Elements of MTSS make RtI, PBIS, and MTSS inextricably-aligned within the same framework.

Since the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004, there has been confusion with RtI language. Many believe that since RtI showed up in IDEA, it must be special education. Also, since RTI is related to SLD verification, others believe it must

be academic only, and still, most likely a special education effort. From these perceptions often came common issues with the implementation of RtI including less emphasis at the core and more focus on intervention; and an emphasis on student data for special education identification instead of instructional data and systems analysis.

In Nebraska, mixed outcomes were seen with RtI Implementation. Some schools saw improved results for all students, including students with disabilities. Some schools saw improved results for general education students, but not for students with disabilities. Some schools saw decreased percentages of students identified for SLD, but not necessarily improvement in results for students with disabilities.

Despite a belief by many that RtI was a Special Education initiative, very little changed for special education as very few schools systematically examined what was happening with students receiving special education supports.

"We need to stop asking if a student is responding and start asking if our current system and what we, as adults, are doing is working for ALL of our students." – T. Ihlo, February 2018



MTSS Builders working hard! NAES 2/2/18

The term MTSS refers to a system that is broader in scope than what many interpreted with RtI. There is greater emphasis placed upon:

- **Integrated academic, behavioral, and social-emotional core instruction and supports**
- **Early prevention and intervention**
- **Capacity building for ALL educators**
- **Examining systems-level data to identify systems variables that are producing current results**

When conceptualizing the difference between MTSS and RtI, MTSS might be considered the environment, and RtI the flower.



Alexander Den Heijer

PRIORITIES OF THE MTSS BUILDERS:

- Build, Study, and Implement MTSS Self-Assessment Tool
- Develop and Build Web-based Communication and Storage System
- Recognize/Inventory/Align Current Models and Trainings in Use Across Nebraska
- Complete Crosswalk between AQuESTT and MTSS Essential Elements; Reduce Redundancy in Efforts
- Design a MTSS Coaching Model
- Plan for the 2nd Annual, Nebraska MTSS Conference

PRIORITIES PROGRESS UPDATES:

The **MTSS Self-Assessment** tool has been piloted in 6 different school districts and is scheduled to be administered in schools in ESUs 10, 16, 2, 6, 11, 4 and 13 by Spring of 2018. Valued and explicit feedback is being provided by the Beta schools, and will be used for final self-assessment revisions to occur in the summer of 2018.

The **MTSS Website** for resource storage and communication has been mapped according to input provided by the MTSS Builders' group. Arrangements have been made with UNL to create the site hosted on "ne.gov." Timeline for completion is June 15.

Current Models and Trainings are being collected through collaboration with the statewide **ESU MTSS Workgroup**. A Google interview is being developed and will be used to collect promising practices throughout Nebraska. School districts should expect to hear from an ESU representative sometime after the middle of May, 2018.

A **crosswalk between AQuESTT and MTSS** in Nebraska is underway and will be found in the MTSS Technical Assistance (TA) Document upon its completion projected to be in summer of 2018. In addition to the crosswalk, the TA document will describe the essential elements of MTSS in depth and provide guidance in special education eligibility through MTSS.

Although several **MTSS Coaching Models** may already exist, an optional prototype is being developed with **Springfield Platteview Community Schools, and North Platte Public Schools**. Most likely, the model will consist of 4 days/sessions with time for individual districts to build and develop their unique system. Coaching will tie closely to priorities outlined in the school's self-assessment and will focus on the essential element of MTSS identified by the District team. Special thanks to both Springfield Platteview and North Platte for their initiative and leadership.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Feb. 20: MTSS TA writing groups meet to develop decision making guidelines

Feb. 26: ESU 11 Holdredge, MTSS Awareness Discussion

Mar. 5: ESU 16 Ogallala, Day I Coaching Session and Self-Assessment

Mar. 15: ESU 13 Scottsbluff, Day I Coaching Session and Self-Assessment

March 22: MTSS Builders' Group Meeting at ESU #3 in Omaha. Continued work on identified priorities

March 28-31: 15th International APBS Conference in San Diego

April 9 and 18: ESU 2 Fremont, Day I Coaching Session and Self-Assessment

April 12: ESU 10 Northwest Public Schools, Grand Island, Day I Coaching Session and Self-Assessment

April 27: ESU 6 Milford, Day I Coaching Session and Self-Assessment

May 8-9: Collaborative work with Statewide ESU MTSS workgroup

TBD: MTSS Conference 2018

RESOURCES:

Refer to the National Center for Intensive Intervention:

<https://intensiveintervention.org/resources/tools-charts>

Here you will find user-friendly research and charts of academic and behavioral progress monitoring tools, as well as academic and behavioral interventions.

MTSS

Nebraska

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