

# A Teacher's Guide to Problem Solving Within the Multi- Tiered System of Supports Framework



**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

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## *Table of Contents*

<b>Introduction: A Teacher’s Guide to Problem Solving</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Understanding the MTSS Process</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Define – Problem Identification</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Analyze - Problem Analysis</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Implement – Intervention Design</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Evaluate – Response to Instruction/Intervention (MTSS)</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Connecting MTSS and Professional Development</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Resources: Planning Documents</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>23</b>



## *Introduction*

# **A Teacher's Guide to Problem Solving Within a Multi- Tiered System of Supports**

*A Teacher's Guide to Problem Solving Within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)* is a practical guide to understanding the MTSS framework. This was designed to assist teachers in building background knowledge of the problem solving process that occurs through MTSS in order to be a knowledgeable participant of the MTSS team. Classroom teachers are integral in this process as they are the primary providers of instruction and intervention. Positive learning outcomes for all students within the *MTSS* framework are the responsibility of all school personnel as a team facilitates the problem-solving process. The team members may include students, parents, general educators, special educators, instructional coaches, administrators, ESE personnel (school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists), counselors, etc.

State of Florida, Department of Education, Division of Public Schools and Community Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services has also created the following resources focusing on the topic of MTSS:

- Florida Response to Intervention - <http://www.florida-rti.org/>
- Florida Introductory Online Training Course – <http://www.florida-rti.org/introCourse/>
- Problem Solving and Response to Intervention Project - <http://floridarti.usf.edu/index.html>

## Chapter 1

# Chapter 1: Understanding the MTSS Process

### What is MTSS?

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process is a three-tiered approach to providing quality instruction to meet the individual needs of **all** students. This model combines a standard system of assessment with high-quality instruction. Varying levels of interventions and services are designed for those students who are struggling. These levels are called tiers of instruction. The three tiers are on a continuum that is fluid, as the student's level of need dictates the level of support. This movement relies on careful decision making that occurs through deliberate data collection and thoughtful analysis facilitated by a school team including the classroom teacher. Additionally, MTSS may also help schools identify students who are eligible for an exceptional student education program. However, it is important to note that the goal of the MTSS framework is to expand and implement instructional alternatives, settings, and support systems before exceptional education services are considered.

The state of Florida adopts the definition of MTSS as the practice of (1) providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs and (2) using learning rate over time and level of performance to (3) make important educational decisions to guide instruction (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2005). The MTSS model is a multi-tiered approach to providing high quality instruction and intervention matched to student needs, using learning rate over time and level of performance to inform instructional decisions. MTSS involves the systematic use of assessment data to most efficiently allocate resources in order to improve learning for all students.

The essential components of MTSS include:

- Multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction service delivery.
- A problem-solving method designed to inform the development of interventions.
- An integrated data collection/assessment system to inform decisions at each tier of service delivery (Florida Problem Solving & Response to Intervention, 2008).

### **The Common Ground**

The basic elements of MTSS are required by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); therefore, they are included in the broad-based initiatives for schools striving to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) such as Reading First, Florida's Continuous Improvement Model, Florida's Positive Behavior Supports, Problem Solving/MTSS State Pilot Project, and the Early Learning Success Initiative. Significant state initiatives have emerged since the enactment of the NCLB legislation.

### **The Problem**

Although these initiatives share common core elements and goals for all Florida schools, they are

each facilitated by different offices within the Department of Education that address specific content areas or stakeholder groups. Each set of efforts is built upon common elements, but with single-purpose resources and in segregated activities. Each separate effort also involves a unique set of terminology, professional development requirements, and data collection and reporting systems, which result in district and school personnel perceiving that an overwhelming number of parallel initiatives are either required or encouraged.

### **The Solution**

It is the recommendation of stakeholders that the Florida Department of Education unify its efforts and resources to maximize efficacy and elevate the common beliefs through mutual understanding of the principal foundation of MTSS and integration of that foundation throughout all statewide efforts and apply the principles of MTSS to a Multi-Tiered System of Supports for the students of Florida.

### **How MTSS Practices Integrate Into The MTSS Framework**

Some of the key points in understanding how MTSS practices integrate into the MTSS framework are:

- The MTSS framework is an educational systems change paradigm (Sansosti & Noltemeyer, Annual 2008; Shores & Chester, 2009) that provides a framework for supporting students and staff as part of school improvement.
- MTSS begins in general education by establishing a strong core for all students that provides the foundation of prevention within the entire system.
- MTSS includes PreK-12 literacy, mathematics, and behavior as a continuum of instruction.
- The MTSS framework is inclusive to school accreditation and school improvement as well as school-wide behavior programs (FL Positive Behavior Supports) and provides a common framework for schools to integrate efforts.
- Universal screening assessments used within MTSS must measure the fluency and accuracy of critical early skills that are predictive of future student skill attainment.
- Tiers within the triangle describe the intensity of instruction; not specific programs, students or staff (i.e., Title I, special education, etc.).
- The tiers describe instruction not steps in a process; therefore, students do not leave Tier 1 to receive instruction in Tier 2 or 3 nor must a student receive Tier 2 instruction prior to receiving Tier 3. The intensity of instruction (or tier of instruction required) is determined by the data.
- Students remain fluid within the tiered instruction meaning intensity of instruction students receive should be transitioned up or down within the tiers based on student performance over a set amount of time compared to predetermined decision points.
- The MTSS framework is a hybrid model using both protocol interventions and problem solving.
- Tier 3 is not special education nor does student success/failure at Tier 3 determine eligibility for special education. In no way should MTSS delay the initial evaluation of a student that is suspected of having exceptionality.

*~Adapted from the Kansas MTSS*

### **What are the goals for MTSS?**

“The intent of MTSS is to ensure that students receive rich (learning) experiences every year in every setting with every teacher, not merely in some years in some settings with some teachers” (Howard, 2009). With this said, the goal of MTSS is not to only look at the learner but also analyze and manipulate the learning environment, the curriculum being taught, and the instruction being delivered. The state of Florida identified goals of MTSS:

- Modify instruction and implement scientifically-based interventions based on individual needs. The ultimate goal is student success in the form of increased academic achievement and positive behavior as early as possible.
- Ensure that students' difficulties are not due to lack of appropriate instruction.
- Identify student needs early.
- Make informed decisions about what resources are needed to ensure student success by closely monitoring student progress based on up-to-date data.

### **What Does MTSS Look Like?**

Within the MTSS model, there are three levels of instruction and intervention called tiers. These three tiers use increasingly more intense instruction and interventions. Data is collected at each tier and is used to make instructional decisions to determine if students are responding to instruction and interventions. A problem-solving process is utilized to decide whether the instruction and interventions should be maintained and layered.

Tier 1 instruction is the general education program. This means that ALL students are receiving core instruction with flexible grouping and differentiation. Screening and progress monitoring are utilized to determine instructional needs and measure student progress. The general education teacher leads the Tier I instruction and support. Ongoing professional development is provided to teachers to enable them with the necessary tools to ensure all students receive quality instruction.

For students who are not making appropriate progress, teachers combine their core instruction with additional interventions depending on the needs of the individual students. This additional, supplemental support is called Tier 2 intervention. This level of service consists of targeted, supplemental interventions aligned with the core curriculum. Tier 2 supports can be provided by the classroom teacher or school support faculty, such as reading or mathematics interventionists. These interventions are delivered in a small group format using strategies known to be effective in addressing these learners (Problem Solving & Response to Intervention, 2009). Progress monitoring data is used to adjust instruction and intervention.

There are a small percentage of students who still may show learning difficulties with Tier 2 intervention. These students may need more support and intensity. Tier 3 interventions are designed for students who do not respond to Tier 1 and 2 interventions. This is the highest level of support and is more individualized. Tier 3 intervention is provided by a highly qualified teacher (reading or mathematics specialist) outside of the classroom. They should be considered an "expert" within the area of the intervention. "Tier 3 instruction has to be potent and effective" (Hall 2008). The instruction is intensified and the duration and frequency increases. Students who receive Tier 3 services are seen one-on-one and/or in a small group of 2-3 students and aligned with their Tier 1 instruction (core instructional program).

To determine whether instruction and interventions have been successful, teachers along with the team engage in a problem-solving process. It is important to know if students are

responding to high quality instruction and interventions. At each tier of MTSS, the Problem-Solving Approach is used.

The Problem-Solving Approach focuses equal attention on the learner, the environment, and the curriculum. It is used to make decisions within each tier. The approach however is not a linear process. The movement throughout the steps is dependent on the student. The steps to this approach are as follows:

1. **Define** - Determine what the problem is.
2. **Analyze** - Analyze the problem using multiple sources of data to determine why this is happening.
3. **Implement** - Establish an achievable goal and develop a plan that should be implemented with a high degree of fidelity.
4. **Evaluate** - Evaluate the success of the intervention based on student data. There should be an increase in student performance and rate of progress, if not, what needs to be changed to better support the student?

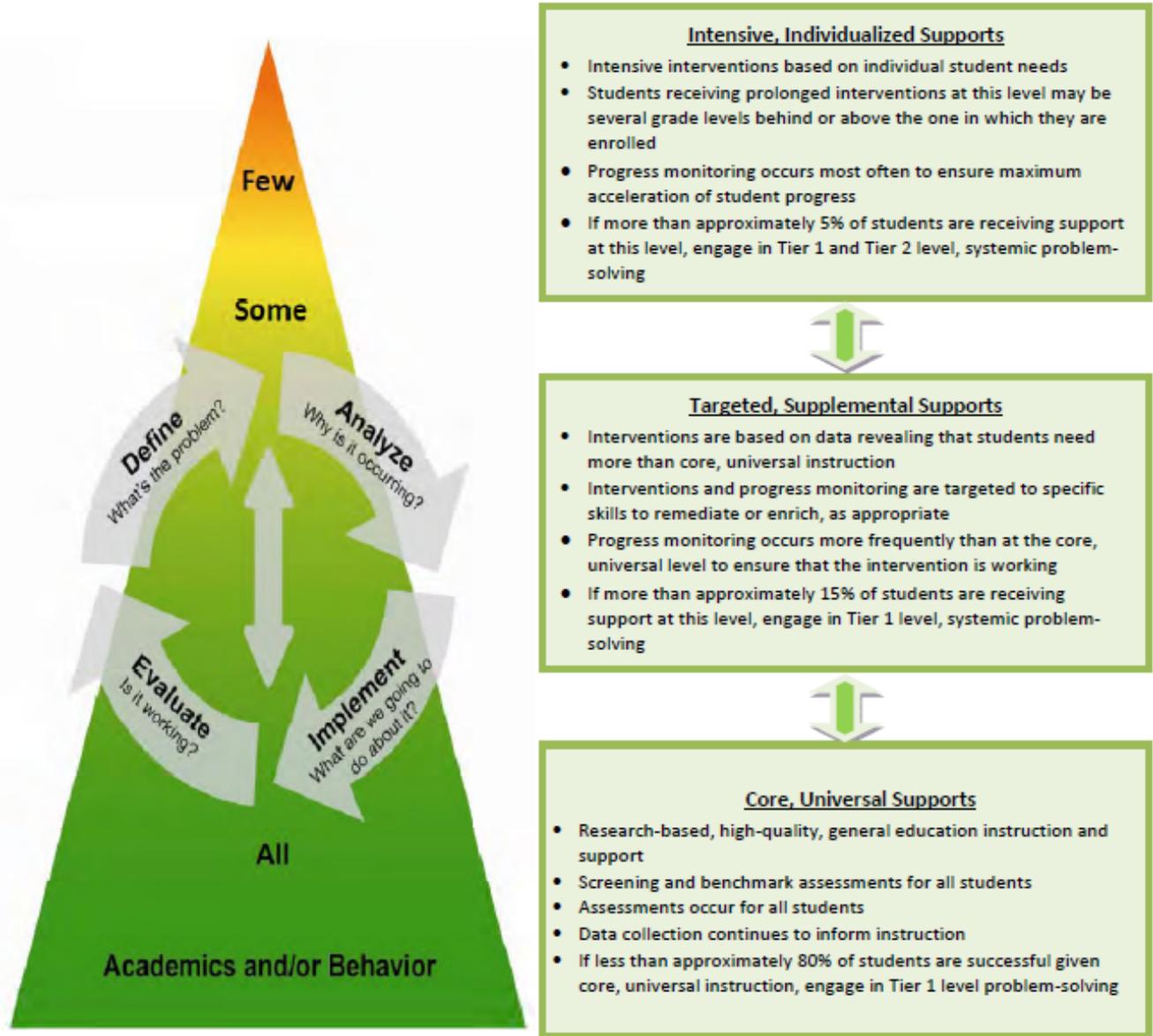
Across the tiers, the problem-solving method is used to match instructional resources to educational need. The problem-solving method is as follows:

1. **Define** the problem by determining the discrepancy between what is expected and what is occurring. Ask, “What’s the problem?”
2. **Analyze** the problem using data to determine why the discrepancy is occurring. Ask, “Why is it taking place?”
3. Establish a student performance goal, develop an intervention plan to address the goal, and delineate how the student’s progress will be monitored and **implementation** integrity will be ensured. Ask, “What are we going to do about it?”

Use progress monitoring data to **evaluate** the effectiveness of the intervention plan based on the student’s response to the intervention. Ask, “Is it working?” If not, how will the intervention plan be adjusted to better support the student’s progress?

Figure 1.1 portrays the continuous nature of the Problem-Solving Approach as it is utilized throughout the tiers in the MTSS process. Problem solving never really ends because learning is a cyclical process.

**Figure 1.1**



Florida's Response to Instruction/Intervention website: <http://www.florida-rti.org/index.htm>

In summary, Tier 1 instruction also known as core curriculum/instruction is designed for all students. “Tier 1 instruction should meet the needs of 70-80% (or more) of learners (Vaughn, Wanzek, Woodruff, & Linan-Thompson, 2007). Tier 1 instruction includes differentiation and flexible grouping. The lowest 20 – 30 % may need additional support with Tier 2 intervention, and it is anticipated that 5 – 10% will require Tier 3 instruction for intensive intervention” (Vaughn, Wanzek, Woodruff, & Linan-Thompson, 2007).

## Activity 1: MTSS Rationale

### **How do you see MTSS and Problem Solving impacting your teaching and your students' learning?**

Take a moment and reflect on your professional reactions to MTSS and Problem Solving. How do you see this framework and process impacting your practice, students, classroom, and school? What are the benefits? Do you foresee any barriers? If so, what solutions do you propose?

Use this space to record your professional reflections.



## Chapter 2

## Chapter 2: Define – Problem Identification

Meeting the learning needs of all students in a class can be a daunting task, especially given diverse learning needs. The bottom line for each teacher, however, must be, “Are all of my students learning and making adequate and appropriate progress?” In order for a teacher to accurately answer this question, it is critical to continuously observe, think about, and analyze students’ learning relative to his or her teaching and the standards and expectations of that curriculum and grade.

Think of teaching as a science. Before scientists conduct a study, they must first identify a problem to address, a question to be answered, or a phenomenon to be explained. Teachers begin defining a problem in the classroom that is an area of concern related to classroom data, (i.e., a need that is reflected in a level of student learning that does not meet the teacher’s, school’s, district’s, and/or state’s expectations). To adequately identify a classroom problem, a teacher must take the time to investigate the initial areas of concern by collecting and analyzing information specifically aligned to the students’ learning needs. “Teachers who rush to complete the problem formulation stage are more likely to flounder in their later efforts, whereas teachers who take their time to reflect on and define their problem are more likely to pursue questions yielding meaningful results” (Sagor, 1992).

Within the MTSS model, teachers can identify problems at the whole class level (tier 1), small group level (tier 2), and individual student level (tier 3). To begin identifying a problem, the teacher should utilize three pieces of key data: benchmark level of performance, student level of performance, and peer level of performance (Problem Solving and Response to Intervention, 2009).

- To define a problem, teachers identify the expected level of performance. What are the appropriate benchmarks or expectations within a certain discipline (reading and/or mathematics) and grade level? Where should students perform during a certain point in the calendar year? This is important information to identify as without it, how do we know a problem exists.
- Teachers will need to obtain and review student level of performance and compare it to the desired expectations. How are the students performing related to the expected level of performance?
- Teachers will also review peer level of performance. How are all the students performing? Is there a discrepancy in the data? Are some students performing below their peers?

When identifying a problem, teachers will want to look at the whole picture. They should consider how their whole class is performing related to the benchmarks. This information can assist the teacher in determining if there is a universal problem (large group problem) that

needs to be addressed using Tier 1 interventions and/or a small group/individual problem that will require Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

1. **What is the expected level of performance?** When responding to this statement, think about the assessments that are administered at your grade level and determine where your students should be performing at the specific time of the school year. Explicitly describe the benchmark level of performance that you will be reviewing when considering student and peer performance data.
2. **What is the current level of student(s) performance?** When responding to this statement, you can review the data as a whole group, small group, and/or individual student depending on your focus. You may want to look at your whole class to determine how the large group is responding to the core curriculum. It is important to consider where your class should be performing and then identify the students who are not meeting the benchmarks.
3. **What is the current level of peer performance?** Peer performance data is also utilized to determine how the whole class is responding to core instruction. Additionally, it can be used to compare how some students are performing in relation to the whole class. This data may provide a global view of the severity of the problem.
4. **What are the instructional goals for the student(s) (replacement behaviors)?** Once reviewing the data, create instructional expectations for the student(s) that are observable and measurable.

It is important to note that defining a problem will more than likely occur with the assistance of MTSS team members. All members bring their strengths and knowledge to the team and it is vital that all are involved.

## Chapter 3

### *Analyze- Problem Analysis*

Once a problem is defined, it is important to continue asking and answering questions to determine why the problem is occurring. This step is very important in the process as it can provide pertinent information on why a student is not responding to instruction and/or intervention. The teacher(s) will observe, question, and reflect on the actual current situation (of the entire classroom, group of students, or individual student) in order to investigate the identified problem. Through this investigation, teachers and the team will need to gather additional specific data to discover the occurrence of the problem. Only then will the team have the right information to appropriately plan and design an intervention for the student(s). It is recommended to collaborate with a knowledgeable team throughout this process as different resources may be needed to evaluate the underlying causes.

“The purpose of assessment in program analysis is for designing an educational intervention. The focus should be on collecting information that will lead us to decisions about: what to teach (curriculum) and how to teach (instruction)” (Problem Solving & Response to Intervention, 2009). Focusing on this goal, data collection needs to be deliberate and well planned out. It is important to delve deep, but remain focused. It is not about the quantity of data, but quality. Do not administer assessments that are irrelevant to the problem being studied. If certain questions on student learning have already been answered, there is no need to administer further assessments that will provide the same information.

When the problem is being analyzed, the teacher and team find facts that are relevant. They will use known information that has already been collected. Additionally, they will gather unknown information that relates to the learning problem being studied. A common question that arises during this step is, “How do we determine what data is important to collect?” Before thinking about the assessment tools or specific data sources, it is important to pose questions. Teachers begin thinking about what information is needed to further investigate.

1. In order to investigate the (classroom, small group, or individual student) problem, we need to collection information:  
*Think about what information you want to gather based on the learning needs of the student and/or students. Why is this problem occurring? Why is there an issue that needs to be changed? In order to attempt to answer these questions, determine what kind of information you need to know. Does the team already have this information? If not, detail the information that needs to be collected.*

For information that needs to be collected, think about how this is going to be collected. What assessment or data source will provide the appropriate information that the team needs to know?

2. We will gather this information by collecting the following data:  
*Once you have considered what information you want to collect, decide how you are going to gather the information. What specific data sources or tools will you use to collect the information to analyze the identified problem? Classrooms and schools are rich with data. Below you will find a quick reference chart of some data collection sources.*

**Data Collection Sources**

Student Work Samples	Formal & Informal Observations	Specific Skill Assessment
Interviews/Surveys (Student or parent)	Grades, Report Cards, Cumulative Records	Checklists
Progress Monitoring	Performance Assessments	Anecdotal Data

Once all of the known and unknown information has been collected and reviewed, the team then generates possible causes of the problem (hypotheses) that are based on facts from the data collected (it is not a guess). The team can look at different assessment areas or domains, such as instruction, curriculum, environment, and the learner. This is a cyclical process as the team may need to gather further information to determine whether a certain hypothesis is acceptable or not.

After the teacher and team have identified the needed information to identify possible causes of the problem they should then narrow these possible causes to “one that is most likely true”. Analyzing a problem adequately will help lead to an appropriate intervention plan with the goal of accelerating learning. At this stage of the problem-solving process, the teacher and team should be able identify why a problem is occurring and what could help assist the student in order to accelerate their learning.

## Chapter 4

### ***Implement- Intervention Design***

The third phase of the problem-solving process is to design and implement an intervention. Once the problem has been identified and analyzed, the teacher and team decide how to intervene. An intervention is designed and/or selected that directly links to the student(s) problem. At this stage of the process, the team is looking for a right match between the learner and the intervention. The students should receive explicit evidence-based instruction focusing on targeted skills within a supported learning environment.

It is important when developing an intervention for a student and/or students, that the planning is directly linked to the problem solving that occurred in the last two phases of the problem-solving process. This planning should be directly linked to the data that was collected when identifying and analyzing the problem.

When designing interventions for students, teachers and the team should follow specific criteria for choosing appropriate interventions. The criteria include the following:

- The intervention and instruction should be evidence-based (programs, strategies, techniques, etc.);
- The intervention and instruction should be delivered with integrity and fidelity;
- The intervention should allow for intensified instruction;
- The intervention should be implemented for a sufficient time;
- The intervention should be evaluated frequently; and
- The intervention should be integrated across the tiers.

When planning for intervention, it is important to consider the “what” and “how”. What is being taught and adjusted? How is the intervention being taught and adjusted? The “what” and “how” are flexible and should be adjusted according to how the students are responding to the instruction and intervention. The content of the intervention focuses on the goal for improvement. How the intervention is being taught relates to the frequency, duration, and group size. These factors play a significant role in the success or failure of instruction and intervention. As the learning needs become more severe, these factors may become more intensified. For example, the frequency of the intervention may occur five times a week instead of three times.

Deborah Simmons (2003) details alterable components that can be adjusted based on the student’s level of need. Refer to Figure 4.1. Notice how intensity increases from a level 1 (low) to a level five within each of the five components: time and response opportunities, core program efficacy, program implementation, group size, and coordination of program

and instruction. Each one of these components can be adjusted or intensified if the desired results are not achieved.

### Alterable Components & Specific Adjustments To Intensify Intervention (Figure 4.1)

Intensity of Interventions (Adapted from Simmons, 2003)					
Component	Level 1 (low)	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (high)
<b>Time and Response Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase attendance</li> <li>Ensure daily instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase individual response opportunities within group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase individual response opportunities out of group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add 1:1 tutoring for 15 minutes on same daily lesson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add another instructional period for group.</li> </ul>
<b>Core Program Efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research-based core program</li> <li>Staff trained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-teach prerequisite skills and components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplement with appropriate materials and enhancements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace with another core program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement specially designed program in addition to core program</li> </ul>
<b>Program Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core lesson taught each day to high level of fidelity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct fidelity check on lesson implementation weekly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide additional staff development in target areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide coaching and ongoing support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change lesson teacher</li> </ul>
<b>Group Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placement is appropriate within group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce to 4-5 students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce to 2-3 students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide 1:1 instruction 1-2 times per week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide 1:1 instruction only, daily</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination of Program and Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify and establish instructional priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish clear communication across instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide complementary reading instruction across periods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish concurrent reading periods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet weekly to examine progress</li> </ul>

The framework for the intervention is built by developing an intervention plan. Before implementing the intervention, it is helpful to outline actions by answering the “what?” the “how” and the “when?” This plan is a blueprint or framework for change. Before creating the plan, take time to consider different instructional programs, approaches and conditions geared towards meeting students’ instructional goals. Also, specifically identify the individuals who will be responsible for implementing the plan. The intervention plan includes the following topics:

- **Persons responsible:** Specifically name teachers who will be implementing the intervention, supporting and assessing the integrity of the intervention (coach), and monitoring the effectiveness of the intervention.
- **Skills and instructional strategies targeted:** Identify specific skills that will be targeted in the intervention. What teaching strategies and techniques will be used to teach the skills?
- **Implementation arrangements:** These arrangements are similar to an implementation schedule. Where and when will the intervention be taught? How many times a week? How long will the intervention sessions last? What materials will be utilized?
- **Measurement Strategy:** The purpose of the measurement strategy is to assess whether the intervention is working or not. It is important to identify assessments that will provide the right information on determining the effectiveness of the intervention.

Detail the person who will be monitoring student progress, the method of data collection, and the schedule of progress monitoring.

- **Decision Making Rule:** Detail how to decide if the intervention plan is effective. The team will consider the students’ progress in acquiring the newly learned skills as well as the rate of progress. In MTSS, there are also decision rules to consider. Is the data showing a positive, questionable, or poor response to the intervention?

When designing Tier I instruction/intervention, the teacher may consider adjusting the curriculum and/or instruction for all of the students and/or some of the students. Whole group or small group instruction may be altered depending on the need. The time allocated does not change; the curriculum and/or the instruction changes. Remember, the classroom teacher is the sole provider of Tier 1 instruction and intervention.

Tier 2 intervention is in addition to Tier 1 support. This may occur in the general education setting. The team will determine the amount of extra time that is needed, what curriculum will be taught, and who/where will it be provided.

It is important to remember the **I** in MTSS. In order to evaluate whether an intervention is working successfully, the teacher and/or interventionist must ensure the following:

- MTSS is based on the actuality of interventions delivered as intended;
- MTSS cannot be assessed if the intervention was not implemented as designed;
- Intervention integrity must be ensured and documented; and
- Integrity and documentation will become part and parcel of procedural safeguards.

Additionally, when designing, planning, and implementing the interventions, the teachers and/or interventionists should also consider the characteristics of effective instruction (Foorman et al., 2003; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Arrasmith, 2003; & Rosenshine, 1986).

Figure 4.2 details characteristics of effective instruction. Guiding questions are listed to assist the teacher in analyzing whether the characteristics are present within the instruction/intervention. This tool can be used as a form of self-evaluation.

**Figure 4.2**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Guiding Questions</b> Foorman et al., 2003; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Arrasmith, 2003; & Rosenshine, 1986
Goals and Objectives	Are the purpose and outcomes of instruction clearly evident in the lesson plans? Does the student understand the purpose for learning the skills and strategies taught?
Systematic	Are skills introduced in a specific and logical order, easier to more complex? Do the lesson activities support the sequence of instruction? Is there frequent and cumulative review?

Explicit	Are directions clear, straightforward, unequivocal without vagueness, need for implication, or ambiguity?
Scaffolding	Is there explicit use of prompts, cues, examples and encouragements to support the student? Are skills broken down into manageable steps when necessary?
Corrective Feedback	Does the teacher provide students with corrective instruction offered during instruction and practice as necessary?
Modeling	Are the skills and strategies included in instruction clearly demonstrated for the student?
Guided Practice	Do students have sufficient opportunities to practice new skills and strategies with teacher present to provide support?
Pacing	Is the teacher familiar enough with the lesson to present it in an engaging manner? Does the pace allow for frequent student response? Does the pace maximize instructional time, leaving no down-time?
Instructional Routine	Are the instructional formats consistent from lesson to lesson?

## Chapter 5

### *Evaluate – Response to Instruction/Intervention*

After planning, intervening, and monitoring progress, it is very important to follow through by analyzing the results and making instructional decisions based on the findings. Analyzed data will guide this critical question, “Was the intervention effective? There are many decisions to make based on the data. The team will reflect on their decisions rules listed on the intervention plan to decide next steps. *Do we continue with the intervention? Do we re-analyze the problem? Do we make further instructional adjustments?*

#### **Positive Response**

The data is showing that the students are responding to instruction and intervention. They are making progress towards their learning expectations. Based on the findings of the data, the team will make decisions on next steps:

1. Continue with the intervention as designed focusing on the current goal
2. Continue with the intervention as designed, but increase the learning expectations.
3. Fade the intervention and monitor student

#### **Questionable Response**

The students’ response to the intervention is questionable. The student is either making some progress, but at a very slow rate which is not allowing for the gap to close, or the student’s gap is widening, but not a fast rate. It is important to analyze whether the intervention was implemented as intended. If there are gaps, short-cuts, or absences in implementation then the plan should be revisited and implemented as designed. Instructional coaching may be needed to determine how to get the implementation back on track.

If the intervention was implemented as intended, then the team may decide to increase the intensity of instruction and monitor student progress closely.

#### **Poor Response**

The students are not responding to the intervention and the gap is increasing. Again, the first thing to review is implementation of the intervention. Was it delivered with integrity and fidelity? Was the timeline followed (frequency, duration)? The instructional coach is a great resource at the school site to assist with integrity and fidelity concerns. If the poor responses are due to implementation concerns, then the plan needs to be revisited to determine how to get on track. It may be a simple solution such as communicating with the grade level team in protecting intervention time.

If the intervention was implemented as intended, the team has three choices to make:

- Determine whether the intervention was aligned with the intervention design. Did the intervention teach the skills that were noted as the instructional focus on the intervention design?
- Re-analyze the problem. Look for another underlying cause. Collect more data if necessary to determine other learning needs.
- Re-define the problem. Review the steps in the problem identification stage to determine if the problem can be re-identified.

## Chapter 6

# *Connecting MTSS and Professional Development*

### **Professional Development Needs**

As the MTSS framework becomes integrated in all of our schools, many professional development needs will continue to rise. Not only will teachers need to understand the framework itself, but more in-depth professional learning will occur to meet the learning needs of all students in the areas of curriculum and instruction.

The Florida Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol is currently being revised in order for the standards to be infused within the Response to Intervention Model. The teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan will be driven by classroom-level disaggregated student achievement data. Professional learning goals will be developed and evaluated based on the learning needs and progress of the students. Professional learning content will be directly aligned to student data. Implementation of instruction and intervention will be observed by highly-skilled instructional coaches to ensure high-fidelity of professional learning. Furthermore, professional development will follow a team approach through learning communities.

The professional development standards and components of the MTSS model are linked to ensure that the learning needs of both students and educators are aligned.

### Problem-Solving Plan

<b>School:</b>	<b>Classroom Teacher's Name:</b>	<b>Grade Level/Subject Area:</b>
<b>Defining a Problem</b>		
<b>What is the expected level of performance?</b>		
<b>What is the current level of student(s) performance? What assessment was used?</b>		
<b>What is the current level of peer performance?</b>		
<b>What are the areas of need? Is this a whole group, small group, or individual student problem?</b>		
<b>What are the instructional expectations/goals for the student(s) related to the identified problem?</b>		
<b>What is the gap between expected level of performance and the actual current level of student(s) performance?</b>		

**Analyzing a Problem**

**What information is needed to analyze the defined problem? What known information is available related to the problem? What information is still needed?**

**What sources of data will provide the needed information related to the defined problem?**

**How are the teacher and team going to collect the needed information? Who will collect the identified data sources?**

**Hypothesis and Prediction Statement:**

### Intervention Plan

**Person(s) Responsible:** List the individuals who will be responsible for implementing and supporting the intervention, collecting the data and making decisions about the effectiveness of the intervention.

**Targeted Skills & Instructional Strategies:** Detail the content and the teaching approach (what and how?) along with how the intervention will be taught (frequency, duration, group size, etc.).

**Implementation Arrangements:** Detail the specifics of how the intervention is going to be taught, such as the frequency, duration, group size, location, materials, time of day, etc.

**Measurement Strategy:** Specify the data that will be collected. What measures will be used? Who will collect the data? How often will the data be collected and analyzed to make instructional decisions?

**Decision-making Plan:** What are the plans to determine if the intervention is working?

**Evaluation Plan**

**After implementing the measurement strategy as listed on the intervention plan, determine the student's response to the intervention. Utilize the Decision-making Plan. Was the student's response to the intervention positive, questionable, or poor?**

**Intervention Implementation: Was the implementation reviewed by an instructional coach to determine if the intervention was implemented as intended? Sources of data that may be used are: observations, implementation logs (date/time), self-evaluations, etc.**

**Team's decision on next steps regarding intervention:**

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