EBITE RESOURCE GUIDE

Integrating MTSS and ESSA Frameworks:
### Introduction to MTSS Interventions Resources

Purpose

This guide seeks to provide readers with an understanding of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Levels of Evidence and how they should be viewed within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Additionally, this guide presents resources where users can access low or no-cost student and classroom-wide interventions targeting commonly encountered student academic and behavioral needs. While ESSA expects educators to implement evidence-based interventions, educators may be challenged to identify interventions that meet their needs. Please note this guide is NOT meant to be a comprehensive list of all possible interventions to address a specific need, nor will it include interventions for all needs. This resource guide WILL provide a starting point for schools, educators, and leaders making intervention choices and decisions around MTSS.

Intervention Framework of MTSS and ESSA Levels of Evidence

When utilizing the resources listed in this guide, one should always consider <u>both</u> the intervention's ESSA Level of Evidence, as well as the targeted MTSS tier.

<u>ESSA Levels of Evidence</u>

Under ESSA, <u>interventions are categorized into four levels of evidence quality</u>. These levels may also be referred to as "tiers" by other resources. The top level (Level 1) represents the rating given to the strongest research evidence available, supporting an intervention or practice that is effective at producing results when well-implemented (see link for more details on ESSA Levels of Evidence).
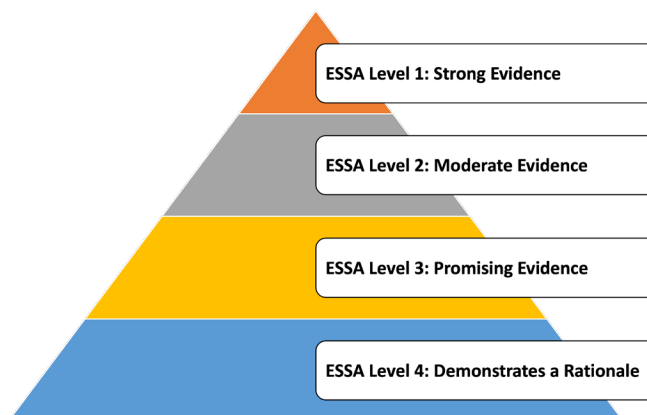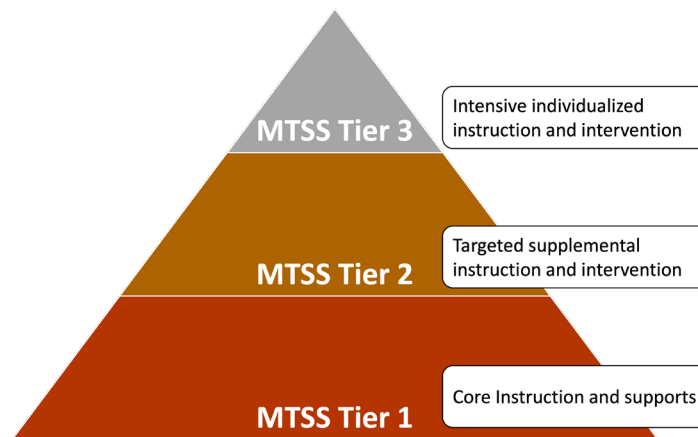

<u>MTSS Tiers</u>

ESSA also promotes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework for effectively integrating and simultaneously addressing students' academic, behavior, and social-emotional well-being.[1] This system, which can include Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), denotes interventions and practices by three tiers of support. <u>The tiers are categorized by the breadth of an intervention's reach (e.g., schoolwide vs. individual), as well as the intensity of student need</u>:

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[1]Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, https://ohioleadership.org/mtss

- <u>Tier 1 (T1)</u>: universal tier, intervention is provided to ALL students (e.g., adopted curricula, universal screening tools)
- <u>Tier 2 (T2)</u>: targeted small group instruction, particularly to students at risk, to reduce/eliminate identified student difficulties (e.g., Check-In/Check-Out for selected students)
- <u>Tier 3 (T3)</u>: intensive individualized instruction/intervention for students needing significant support (e.g., individual counseling, behavioral skills training using video modeling)
  - (Note: This level is <u>not</u> synonymous with special education! For example, English language learners may need intensive support without requiring special education services, and students with disabilities may receive intervention supports from other tiers depending on their specific needs.)

Viewed Together

The important piece to recognize is that interventions in the MTSS Tiers can have ESSA Quality Level ratings from 1-4. For example, an intervention can be categorized as a Tier 3 MTSS intervention (intensive instruction) with a Level 4 ESSA quality rating. The graph below illustrates this integration:
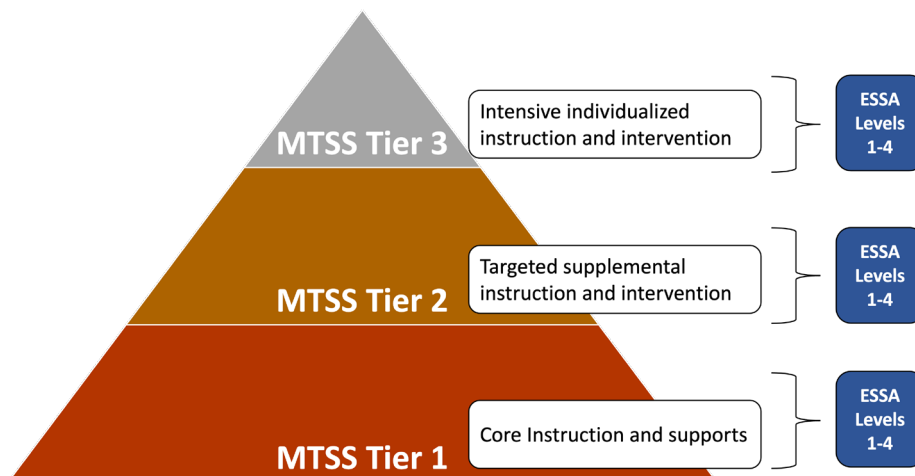
Using Resources in this Guide

Interventions suggested in this guide will mostly target MTSS Tier 2 (small group instruction) and Tier 3 (individualized tutoring). For MTSS Tier 1 supports (school-wide, universal interventions/programs), we recommend users consult additional major databases such as Ohio's Evidence-Based Clearinghouse, the Institute of Education Science's What Works Clearinghouse, and Johns Hopkins' Evidence for ESSA.

Ultimately, it is the educator's responsibility to examine the low- or no-cost interventions found in the suggested resources to help guide decisions on feasibility and use. We suggest exploring the degree of evidence regarding the selected intervention's ESSA level of evidence; reflecting and discussing with colleagues about the intervention's fit specific to the context of your school and goals; and planning for implementation in a way that meets both student-specific needs and existing legal regulations.

General Resources for Interventions

Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support (I-MTSS)

I-MTSS, funded by the Institute of Education Services, U.S. Department of Education, is a collaborative research network of projects to examine MTSS that integrates both academic and behavioral support systems within elementary schools. I-MTSS has rich resources including materials on PBIS and building three-tiered system of school supports. The research network includes the following projects:
- I-MTSS UConn, Neag School of Education
- The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk
- Ci3T +ENHANCE
- Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER)

MCPER is a collaborative research initiative developed in 2008 by The University of Texas and is a part of the larger research network Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support (I-MTSS). MCPER, specifically, is a free Resources database of various education guides and booklets. Users can search for specific evidence-based interventions by:
- Topic (e.g., Mathematics Instruction, Behavior)
- Audience (e.g., Special Education Teacher, Administrator)
- Grade Levels (i.e., K-12, Higher Education)

Evidence Based Intervention (EBI) Network

The EBI Network, created by the University of Missouri, provides user-friendly information about EBIs (e.g., what they are, how to select them), evidence-based assessments, and the response to intervention (RTI) framework. Interventions are categorized by:
- Reading
- Math
- Behavior

Each section is divided by student skill level (e.g., acquisition, proficiency, generalization, motivation). Listed intervention briefs (e.g., Phrase Drill for Reading Acquisition) are practitioner guides with information about intervention setting, function, brief step-by-step implementation instruction, research references, etc.

IRIS Center

Vanderbilt University's IRIS Center is a rich compendium of various free, online resources about evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices to support all students. Designed to bridge research to practice, the IRIS Center Resources include modules, case studies, professional development activities, etc. A specific tool to note is the IRIS Resource Locator where interventions and related information can be found by:

- Topic (e.g., Accommodations, Evidence-Based Practices, Transition)
- Age Groups/Grades (age 0-21, Elementary, Middle, High)
- Resource Types (e.g., Modules, Case Studies, Information Briefs)
- Module Elements (e.g., Video, Activity)
- Available Spanish Translations

Filtering by "Resource Type" and "Information Briefs" will list various websites with free intervention descriptions and instructions targeting specific content (e.g., Phonics Blending: An Evidence-Based Literacy Strategy).

Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR)

FCRR, based at Florida State University, investigates all aspects of reading and reading skills across the life span, including practices that can be integrated in MTSS frameworks. Various reading-related interventions can be found in the FCRR's Resource Database. Users can search by:

- Keywords (e.g., reading comprehension)
- Resource Type (e.g., Research study, infographic)
- Project Source (e.g., FCRR, National Center for Improving Literacy)
- Audience (e.g., families, practitioners)
- Age Level (i.e., pre-K to doctoral education levels)
- Date of posting

Intervention Central

Intervention Central, created by school psychologist and school administrator Jim Wright, is a practitioner-friendly source of evidence-based Academic and Behavior Interventions. Specific interventions are listed according to target skill/behavior. From the website, topic areas include:

- Academic Interventions
- Behavioral Interventions
- Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) resources
- Videos and other resources

Information for specific interventions typically includes detailed instructions (e.g., materials, preparation, directions), downloadable attachments (e.g., material forms, progress monitoring sheets), and references. Most interventions target Pre-K to Middle School audiences or are general instructions for all age groups (e.g., classroom management, group response techniques).

National Center on Intensive Interventions (NCII)

Housed at the American Institutes of Research, NCII seeks to support implementation of intensive interventions for students with severe and persistent learning, social, emotional, and/or behavior needs using data-based individualization. This research-focused site contains several intervention tools charts where users can find additional information about intervention-specific studies, quality of studies/interventions, and other intervention related information. Please note the databases list both cost and cost-free interventions. The range of interventions is broad and includes:

- Behavioral
  - Target Behaviors: Internalizing, Externalizing
  - Grade: Pre-K-12
- Academic
  - Subject: Reading, Mathematics
  - Grade: Pre-K-12

Additional Resources

Handout with accompanying video explaining ESSA Levels of Evidence:
- REL Midwest, ESSA Tiers of Evidence: What You Need to Know (2019)

In-depth website on MTSS, from essential components, to implementation, to relevant tools/materials:
- American Institutes for Research (AIR), Center on Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Reader-friendly overview of the MTSS process for school professionals, parents, and caregivers:
- Rosen, Peg, What is MTSS?, Understood for All

Brief to help schools implement MTSS with an academic focus; covers MTSS structure and challenges and solutions for early MTSS implementation:
- Durrance (2023), Comprehensive Center Network, Implementing MTSS in Secondary Schools: Challenges and Strategies