Center on
Multi-Tiered System of Supports
at the American Institutes for Research® ▪

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MTSS Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms Series

Evaluation

Evaluation is a critical part of initial and sustained implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Evaluation requires attention to the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of specific practices (e.g., interventions, assessment tools, teaming processes, documentation procedures) and of the systemwide implementation of the four essential components of an MTSS. Evaluation occurs throughout the planning and implementation processes and is used to guide ongoing decisions, including decisions related to instructional design and delivery, resource allocation, staffing, professional learning, tool selection, and continuous improvement.

What Does Evaluation of MTSS Look Like at the School Level?

MTSS teams design and implement systematic approaches to gather, summarize, and evaluate MTSS implementation and related outcome data. Schools have an evaluation plan in place to support teams in (a) monitoring short- and long-term implementation goals, (b) reviewing outcome data for all students and subgroups of students to evaluate effectiveness of the MTSS framework (including the core curriculum, interventions, and screening process), and (c) monitoring fidelity and efficiency across all components of the MTSS framework.

Tips for Implementation

- Prior to initial implementation and at least annually, utilize a systematic data-based decision-making process to review student, system, and implementation data.
- Complete the MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric at least annually to evaluate the extent to which the MTSS and essential components are being implemented as intended.
- Analyze evaluation data to identify the strengths and limitations of current implementation and to develop annual and multiyear implementation plans.
- At least biannually, ensure that MTSS teams use ongoing evaluation data to engage in continuous improvement activities relevant for decision making for the teams' roles (i.e., schoolwide, grade level, student level).
- Integrate improvement and implementation sciences to enhance educational outcomes to improve implementation capacity and conditions for success.
- Periodically evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of noninstructional practices used to support MTSS implementation, including assessment and data entry procedures, coaching practices, documentation procedures, and teaming practices.

Sample MTSS Evaluation Questions and Supporting Data Sources

MTSS teams should clarify important evaluation questions and the approaches to answering those questions, including the data sources needed, in the school or district MTSS evaluation plan. Best practice suggests developing the MTSS evaluation plan prior to initial implementation and updating

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the plan annually thereafter. The following table includes common evaluation questions and data sources that teams may consider.

Sample Evaluation Questions	Possible Data Sources
• Are we implementing a schoolwide MTSS and the essential components as designed? • Do we have the infrastructure and support mechanisms necessary to support a schoolwide MTSS? • Are the design and implementation of an MTSS and the essential components leading to improved outcomes? • Are short- and long-term goals being met? • How can we improve the effectiveness of schoolwide MTSS implementation and necessary infrastructure and support mechanisms?	• MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric • State Test Data • Early Warning Indicator Data • MTSS Implementation Plan
• Are we implementing MTSS tools and processes (e.g., instructional, intervention, teaming, coaching, assessment) as intended? • How can we improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of MTSS practices?	• Fidelity Checklists • Teaming Fidelity Tools • Interviews and Observations • Coaching Fidelity Tools
• Are most (> 80%) students meeting grade-level expectations, within and across subgroups of students? • Do the screening processes accurately identify students in need of supplemental supports? • Are there strong correlations between the selected screening tools and valued outcomes?	• Screening Data • State Test Data • Early Warning Indicator Data
• Are most (> 70%) students receiving supplemental supports responding to the selected interventions? • Which interventions are most effective for the target populations?	• Screening Data • Aggregated Progress-Monitoring Data

Resources to Support MTSS Evaluation

• MTSS Center's MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric
• National Center for Systemic Improvement's Implementation Evaluation Matrix
• SISEP (State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices) resources for continuous improvement

To learn more about evaluation and other tools for MTSS, visit www.MTSS4success.org.