



Facilitator's Guide for the
Washington Administrators Improving MTSS (AIMS)
Semi-structured Interview to Accompany the
AIR MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric (2025)



Suggested Citation: Ruby, S.F., Rasplica, W., Gallo, J., & King, S., (2025). *Facilitator's guide for the Washington Administrators Improving MTSS semi-structured interview to accompany the AIR MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric.*

This content was produced under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Award No. H325L200006. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this paper is intended or should be inferred.

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Facilitators' Guide for the Washington AIMS Semi-Structured Interview with the MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

This guide serves as a resource for facilitators supporting schools in examining the implementation of MTSS using the *Washington AIMS Semi-Structured MTSS Interview* aligned with the [Center on MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric \(AIR, 2025\)](#). This guide provides facilitators with:

- ✓ concepts and purpose of a needs assessment;
- ✓ recent state initiatives related to MTSS;
- ✓ the content, format, and purpose of the *Fidelity of Implementation Rubric* and the accompanying *MTSS Semi-Structured Interview*;
- ✓ how to prepare teams for an MTSS implementation interview;
- ✓ how to facilitate teams through the interview process;
- ✓ practical strategies for conducting the implementation interview;
- ✓ procedures to accurately score interview responses using the rubric; and
- ✓ how to write a meaningful and supportive report to provide to the school team.

Washington Administrators Improving MTSS (AIMS)

The Administrators Improving Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (AIMS) was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education (OSEP) from 2020 – 2025 and represented collaboration between the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the University of Washington Bothell. Because local leadership is crucial for MTSS implementation, AIMS provided five cohorts of district and building administrators with year-long professional development focused on MTSS competencies and relevant leadership capabilities. AIMS participants utilized the MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric (American Institute for Research, 2025) to prioritize their leadership activities for developmental leadership projects aimed at enhancing MTSS implementation in their districts and buildings. Feedback from AIMS participants indicates that the self assessment process can be challenging in terms of understanding terminology, accurately assessing implementation, and using results to prioritize next steps. This guide may serve as a resource for district leaders to establish an efficient and effective way to assist buildings with examining and monitoring MTSS implementation.

Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

According to the [Center on MTSS](#), implementation is a significant challenge for educators, requiring ongoing planning, continuous improvement, and sustained efforts to expand and maintain effectiveness. The center emphasizes the importance of school-based teams in assessing their current capacity and readiness, linking professional learning to areas of need and priority, conducting ongoing evaluations and progress reviews, and engaging stakeholders in meaningful partnerships to support continuous improvement efforts.

Convening a leadership team to collaboratively conduct a needs assessment is the first step in a continuous

improvement initiative. The Center on MTSS recommends using the *Fidelity of Implementation Rubric* (2025) to drive the needs assessment process and develop a collaborative vision. Throughout this document, we refer to this rubric as the “MTSS Rubric.” The MTSS Rubric is intended for use by individuals responsible for monitoring the school-level fidelity of MTSS Implementation. Results from the rubric may help buildings and districts further define their MTSS frameworks, select evidence-based practices, and develop implementation and evaluation plans.

The MTSS Rubric aligns with MTSS essential components and infrastructure that have been identified and refined since its initial publication as the *National Center for Response to Intervention Integrity Rubric* in 2007. Decades of research, national policy, and local implementation efforts have influenced the organization and definitions of components and Indicators in the current version published in 2025. The rubric provides objective definitions for three levels of implementation for 30 Indicators across five sections: Screening (3 Indicators), Progress Monitoring (2 Indicators), Data-Based Decision Making (3 Indicators), Multi-Level Prevention System (11 Indicators), and School Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms (11 Indicators). Implementation scores range from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), with higher scores indicating greater levels of implementation.

The Center on MTSS provides an optional [Summary Sheet](#) that school-based teams may use to self-assess implementation through consensus-building. The form may be helpful for teams to prioritize next steps; however, the consensus-building process requires team members to have substantial knowledge of MTSS terminology and concepts. An external facilitator can provide teams with an objective perspective and feedback to help them overcome difficulties with self-appraisal. The interview was initially developed by Ruby and Sederstrom for Washington State to align with the 2011 edition of the rubric. The AIMS project faculty revised the interview form to align with the newest version of the rubric. This semi-structured interview is designed to support AIMS completers and other Washington State district and building leaders in accurately assessing the implementation of MTSS at the building level. While each building has unique needs and should be monitored for implementation at the building level, it can be helpful at the district level to identify commonalities and differences across schools to plan for resources, professional development, and guidance or coaching.

Response to Intervention (RTI) for Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Evaluations

In 2028-29, OSPI will change the evaluation process to determine student eligibility for special education under the category of SLD. In 2019, OSPI established the SLD Cadre, which included parents, school district, university-level, and state-level stakeholders. The SLD Cadre provided a report that highlighted historical issues with the use of a severe discrepancy model in SLD evaluation and recommended phasing out the discrepancy model and implementing a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach within MTSS. Requirements for establishing eligibility for SLD using RTI are defined in [WAC 392-172A-03060](#) and [WAC 392-172A-01165](#). The process outlined in the regulations aligns with the Essential Components defined in the MTSS Rubric. OSPI has encouraged districts to begin planning for professional development for general and special education staff around implementing an MTSS framework. In 2024, AIMS and OSPI provided [technical assistance papers \(SLD TAPS\)](#) to help districts develop practices for using RTI to determine SLD eligibility. Throughout this guide, we link to the SLD TAPS to help facilitators and teams understand how the indicators of Essential Components link to the 2028 SLD evaluation requirements.

Washington AIMS Semi-Structured MTSS Interview

Preparing for the Interview

Because the interview process may be complex and lengthy, the Washington AIMS faculty created an [MTSS Interview Planning Form](#) for teams to document their assessment, curriculum, and intervention materials prior to the interview. Alternatively, schools may have existing assessment and/or intervention inventories and team audits that may be shared with the facilitator. Examples of such audits are the Oregon Response to Intervention (RTI) [Intervention Audit](#) and the [Center on MTSS Team Audit Activity](#). Facilitators should email and/or call principals to establish the date and time for the meeting. Principals need to understand the structure and requirements of the meeting and have adequate time in advance to invite team members with multiple perspectives and to gather and organize evidence. We strongly recommend that facilitators provide a Suggested Evidence document (see Appendix C) to principals and/or teams prior to the visit. When teams have time to review the interview questions, they may realize that others from their site or district need to be involved in planning and gathering evidence. In communicating with principals, facilitators should emphasize the importance of:

- ✓ full team participation (select a date/time to maximize participation)
- ✓ allocating adequate time for the interview process (approximately 3 hours); and
- ✓ bringing essential evidence/artifacts to the meeting and referring to these throughout the interview.

Facilitators may also wish to research the site prior to the visit by reviewing available documentation of school programs and performance. The school and district websites, as well as state report cards, are excellent starting points for research prior to the visit.

Conducting the Interview

Facilitators should follow the standardized format of the MTSS Interview, meaning that they should ask each team questions in a consistent manner. However, the interview is also semi-structured, and facilitators have latitude in phrasing questions, pursuing alternative lines of inquiry, and interpreting answers. The facilitator has the difficult task of capturing all the information team members tell them. We recommend note-taking on a computer/tablet while conducting the interview. To fully document responses, facilitators may also wish to use an audio recorder (with the team's permission) and/or enlist a second person for notetaking and perspective-taking (refer to Building Reliability of the Interview).

Facilitators set the tone for the meeting. Providing time for introductions and asking team members to write down their names and job titles will help to develop rapport during the interview and may assist in refining notes later. Strong facilitation skills are essential during the interview to ensure that items are addressed adequately, to keep team members focused, and to avoid “admiring the problem.” While three hours may seem like a long time for the interview process, it is easy to lose track of time and have unanswered questions at the end of the allotted time.

Roles/Qualities of the Facilitator

Sources of error in an interview may come from the assessment tool itself, from interviewees, and from the facilitators. Facilitators can significantly reduce errors by developing the necessary knowledge and skills as evaluators. The [AIMS Resource Folder](#) may be helpful for facilitators to preview in advance. In the following sections, we highlight the attributes required for successful site facilitators.

Interviewing Skills. Facilitators should use multiple facilitating and interviewing skills, including:

- ✓ Establishing Rapport and Facilitating Communication
- ✓ Using Structuring Statements
- ✓ Asking Open-Ended and Direct Questions
- ✓ Analytical Listening
- ✓ Effective Probing
- ✓ Paying Attention to Nonverbal Behaviors
- ✓ Dealing with Difficult Situations
- ✓ Facilitating Pacing and Time Keeping

Just like other assessment procedures, the success of an interview depends on the rapport facilitators establish with the team. Facilitators should strive to create an atmosphere where team members feel comfortable discussing openly without fear of judgment or criticism. Throughout the interview, facilitators may use structuring statements to guide the team in discussing specific Essential Components and Infrastructure and Support items.

Before each new Essential Component element or group of questions, facilitators may wish to provide a general description of the upcoming questions. This may prevent a team member from sharing information prematurely that is best discussed in a later question. We recommend that facilitators use simple questions in the Washington MTSS Semi-Structured Interview Form to maintain standardization and to keep questions simple and direct. Having strong knowledge of the MTSS Rubric criteria is essential in determining when and how to modify questions in a flexible semi-structured interview. As noted in “Important Considerations” under “Overview of the Interview Items,” the **AIMS Semi-Structured Interview begins with Section 4, Multi-Level Prevention System**, as this is often a more familiar component to team members with less technical knowledge regarding assessment tools and practices. This section also provides context for the purpose of assessment tools and decision-making practices. Facilitators may choose to begin with questions aligned with Section 1 or break the interview into shorter sessions, focusing on each of the different sections of the rubric.

Often, it is necessary to seek clarification from answers with further questioning. Analytical listening is more than active listening. When facilitators use analytical listening skills, they are critically evaluating responses to determine whether adequate information is presented to allow for scoring an item. If answers appear unclear, further questioning or clarifying will be needed. Facilitators should ask for elaboration when they notice that interviewees need to provide additional information. Facilitators should help the team members understand that the interview needs to cover all topics in a standardized way to complete a

thorough evaluation. While Facilitators provide written recommendations in their report, they should refrain from giving opinions within the interview in most cases, as opinions expressed early in the interview may influence later statements made by team members.

Finally, questions in the interview will at times elicit frustration or negative thoughts and feelings about people, programs, or practices in the school building. Facilitators should keep team members focused on answering questions and redirect them to the question if the session veers off into “admiring the problem.” Facilitators should refrain from including derogatory remarks in their notes; instead, it is helpful to state the challenges expressed by the team respectfully in a manner that will not jeopardize relationships within the school building or district. This evaluation is meant to move teams forward and to build capacity.

Reflective Thinking. The facilitator must be able to think reflectively and compare what is being said to what is presented with evidence in the interview. Going beyond analytical listening, Facilitators use reflective thinking to make connections between different answers in the interview. Facilitators may get a broader understanding of the essential components when they:

- ✓ link information between different sections of the interview,
- ✓ point out contradictions or supporting arguments, and
- ✓ acknowledge different perspectives in team responses.

Objectivity. Facilitators must consider their relationships with the school before agreeing to administer an interview and assess whether they have any prior or current relationships that could bias their perspective when evaluating and scoring the team’s functioning. Facilitators must be aware of their own perceptions and biases to avoid leading, suggestive, or coercive questions. Maintaining objectivity requires effort, even when opinions about the school’s practices exist. As with any assessment, errors can originate from the tool itself or from the evaluator’s lack of objectivity. To reduce threats to validity, facilitators should consider potential biases and dual relationships and seek supporting evidence whenever possible. Regularly referring to the rubric helps prevent evaluator drift.

Responsiveness. A general rule of thumb for returning reports is 2 weeks. The time frame should be discussed and agreed upon with the site. When scoring or reporting, facilitators may wish to check in with the site for clarification. Facilitators may also wish to ask sites what they specifically hope to learn from the evaluation. Are there particular recommendations/perspectives the site is hoping to receive from the interview process?

Frames of Reference (Acknowledging the Lens). No evaluator may be completely objective or all-knowing. We are all shaped by our backgrounds and training. Facilitators must consider their own frames of reference and whether they are a good fit to evaluate the school’s functioning. If a school is focusing on reading, math, writing, and/or behavior, the evaluator must be knowledgeable in these areas. Otherwise, we recommend that Facilitators include someone with expertise in that area to assist in conducting and scoring the interview.

Building Reliability of the Interview. An interview must be viewed as one source of data in reflecting the implementation practices of a school building. Every “obtained score” has error, and we must take every

effort to build reliability (or consistency) of findings within the interview. We have found that two interviewers may offer an ideal solution, particularly when Facilitators are new to this process. Both interviewers can take notes and compare scores and reasons for ratings. If a second evaluator is not practical, consider using a recording device (obviously, check with the team first). Sometimes, it may make sense to have a second evaluator who has expertise in an area the team wishes to discuss, but which might be outside the evaluator's knowledge base. Regardless of how facilitators choose to address issues of reliability, it is essential to remember that, although semi-structured, the interview is intended to be conducted in a standardized manner. Questions should not be skipped, changed, etc. without careful consideration and documentation. Having knowledge of the rubric and consistently referring to it should be routine practice when writing reports.

Teams often bring evidence and artifacts to the meeting. Facilitators should both comment on this evidence in note-taking AND ask for copies or digital access to materials before leaving. Evidence often helps in decision-making for scoring. Without evidence, facilitators must make determinations that may be less reliable. **We recommend that, without evidence, facilitators “round down” when unsure of a particular score.**

Overview of the Interview Items

Important Considerations

- The first portion of the rubric focuses on assessment practices, beginning with screening. Note that the AIMS faculty have found that beginning with Section 4, the Multi-Level Prevention System, yields a more efficient flow of information and reduces redundancy later in the interview. The interview form begins with Section 4 and is followed by Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5, respectively.
- Facilitators should ask if teams wish to focus on just one content area, reading (ELA for secondary), mathematics, and/or behavior.** Once this is determined, facilitators should prompt the team to provide answers for each area of focus throughout the interview process.
- For the area of SEB, facilitators should be familiar with the best and common practices related to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). The AIMS MTSS Resource Sheets provide links to in-depth guidance documents created by national and state technical assistance centers, enabling facilitators to develop knowledge in each area.
- For all Indicators, facilitators may provide a score of 2 or 4 if discussions suggest that implementation falls between two of the described implementation levels.

Essential Component: Multi-Level Prevention System (Section 4 of the MTSS Rubric)

As noted above, the interview form begins with questions aligned to Section 4. This section includes Indicators for Tier 1: Core Programming (high-quality, schoolwide programming and support designed to meet the needs of all students), Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention (small group, standardized interventions

that target social, emotional, and behavioral needs using validated programs for students), and Tier 3: Intensive intervention (intensified and individualized based on student need). Tier 3 interventions are provided to students who do not respond sufficiently to Tier 2 interventions and may have low achievement or ongoing intensive needs.

Tier 1: Core Programming - High-quality, school-wide academic, social, emotional, and behavioral programming and supports designed to meet the needs of all students. Tier 1 indicators include (1) Articulation of Teaching and Learning, (2) Curriculum Materials, (3) Tier 1 Instructional Characteristics, and (4) Differentiated Instruction.

Teams must rule out inadequate instruction before determining a student is eligible for special education in the category of SLD. [SLD TAP 4](#), Ruling Out Inadequate Instruction, emphasizes the significance of Tier 1 within an RTI process for identifying SLD. Use of the rubric to examine Tier 1 practices can be a helpful starting point for schools in understanding their level of implementation with Tier 1 components. The objective definitions for Tier 1 indicators in the MTSS rubric can assist districts and buildings in establishing written procedures, including checklists or “look fors” in core instruction, curriculum, and environment. A score of 1 on Indicators 1–4 may provide points of discussion at team meetings; however, a score of 1 does not indicate inadequate instruction. Ruling out inadequate instruction is a complex process, and it is recommended that multidisciplinary teams discuss and reach an agreement when determining inadequate instruction.

Indicator 1: Articulation of Teaching and Learning. This Indicator assesses two criteria: how well teaching and learning objectives are articulated from (1) one grade level to another and (2) within grade levels. A score of 5 requires objectives to be well articulated both across and within grades. If teaching and learning objectives are partially articulated from one grade to another and within grades, facilitators should provide a score of 3. If teaching and learning objectives are not articulated from one grade to another or within grade levels, facilitators would provide a score of 1.

Facilitators should be aware that this indicator is often confusing for participants. The first criterion involves how well teachers communicate with one another regarding instruction from one grade to the next. That is, do teachers discuss how they are addressing the standards and how they are delivering the core curriculum between grades? When this occurs, teachers in the following grades are informed of students’ prior knowledge and experience. Teachers in the earlier grades also know what will be expected later, can prepare students for upcoming expectations, and can improve consistency of instructional delivery across time.

The second criterion assesses how effectively teachers communicate within their own grade levels regarding the delivery of the core curriculum. These types of communication require time for collaboration with grade-level and content-area teams. Time is necessary but not sufficient. Teams that meet the criteria for Indicator 1 discuss data within their classrooms and are willing to consider their own vulnerabilities in delivering the core curriculum. They routinely document strengths and challenges, as well as student responsiveness to changes in instructional delivery. Schools that have prioritized training for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and those that use peer-to-peer observations and documentation of “lessons learned” greatly strengthen this area. Questions for Indicator 1 include:

- Do teachers have the same expectations, routines, and teaching plans across the same grade?

What helps them have consistency?

- Do teachers have a good understanding of expectations in prior and following grades? How do they learn about these expectations?
- Do teachers across different grades use similar strategies, routines, or teaching practices? What helps them have consistency?

Indicator 2: Curriculum Materials. This indicator considers both the evidence base of curriculum materials for the student populations and subgroups within a school, as well as the alignment of curriculum with state standards. For a score of 5, teams must indicate that materials are evidence-based for most of their students and aligned to state standards. A score of 3 would indicate that one of these criteria is met or both criteria are partially met, and a score of 1 would indicate that limited evidence is available for the curriculum's effectiveness and that the curriculum is not aligned with state standards.

Facilitators need to understand the meaning of terms related to evidence-based programs and practices. According to the [Vanderbilt IRIS Center](#), the terms "evidence-based practices" and "evidence-based programs" have been used interchangeably. However, experts in the field, as well as practitioners, are beginning to differentiate between them.

This indicator examines the evidence base of curriculum materials (programs), while Indicator 3 examines the evidence base of practices. An evidence-based program "comprises a collection of practices that, when used together, have been proven effective through experimental research studies or large-scale field studies. Evidence-based practices encompass skills, techniques, and strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective through experimental research studies or large-scale field studies" (IRIS EBP Module Part 1). For a score of 5, research involving the Tier 1 program(s) must show that:

- have a positive effect on student outcomes with a research design that allows one to infer that the practice led to child or student improvement.
- Study participants should be similar to the school's population of learners (e.g., age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, demographic location). If the study participants are not similar, subgroups representing the school's students should be included in the research study.
- Multiple high-quality studies have been conducted.
- Reviewed by a reputable organization (e.g., What Works Clearinghouse)

Team members may not be knowledgeable regarding the evidence base of district-selected curriculum. We encourage facilitators to first ask the team if they are familiar with the considerations that led to the adoption of the curriculum materials and not to belabor this portion of the interview. Facilitators will most likely need to conduct independent research on the curriculum materials. This process can also be frustrating, as not all websites are regularly maintained, and not all publishers submit studies of their materials for review. Research review websites may be helpful, including:

- [Evidence for ESSA](#) – identifies the level of evidence under ESSA that is associated with a given program (both academic and SEB), provides a snapshot of what the program looks like and costs, identifies the grades, communities, and children included in the program's evaluations, and provides more information about the program, its evaluations, and implementation.
- [What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Reports](#) - summaries of findings of the highest-quality

research on a given intervention or practice in education. Many Tier 1 curriculum may not have existing intervention reports.

- [IRIS Evidence-Based Practice Summaries](#) – includes summaries of both practices (Indicator 3) and programs (Indicator 2).
- [What Works Clearinghouse IES Practice Guides](#). Synthesizes evidence-based recommendations for educators to improve student outcomes. These may be helpful in determining research-based strategies in the general area (e.g., reading) to compare with those included in a particular program.
- In the SEB area, reviews of evidence for SEL programs are available at the [CASEL Program Guide](#) and through Harvard’s [Navigating SEL from the Inside Out](#).
- Publisher websites often include links to independent research.
- When implemented as intended, [PBIS is considered an evidence-based framework](#)

In examining the second criterion (standards alignment), facilitators may wish to review the Washington State links to [ELA](#), [Mathematics](#), and [SEL](#) state standards. Additionally:

- [EdReports](#) reviews the usability features and standards alignment and usability of Tier 1 Reading and Math Programs. Note that EdReports does not provide evidence that a program has evidence for effectiveness.
- [Navigating SEL from the Inside Out](#) reviews the content of many published elementary and secondary SEL curricula.
- Most publishers provide information regarding the alignment of their materials with the Common Core standards and CASEL framework.
- If schools have a PBIS framework but do not offer a Tier 1 SEL program, they may have difficulties showing alignment with the Washington State SEL standards. However, they may have evidence indicating teaching content that aligns with the standards.

Questions for Indicator 2 include:

- List and describe the Tier 1 materials (for each area).
 - What research was considered in selecting these materials?
 - To what extent are materials aligned to state standards?
- Does your school offer a PBIS framework? If so, please describe (this may also be used for scoring with Indicator 3).

Indicator 3: Tier 1 Instructional Characteristics. This Indicator examines the delivery of Tier 1 instruction and curriculum materials. A score of 5 requires four criteria to be met: (1) instruction is delivered using agreed-upon evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by staff trained in curriculum materials, (3) includes adequate time to teach the content and provide sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback, and (4) has procedures in place to ensure consistent use. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the criteria are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

For Indicator 3, facilitators should encourage team members to reflect on the evidence base of their instructional practices. The term “agreed upon” indicates that practices should be consistently used within Tier 1 content areas and/or grade levels. The [Vanderbilt IRIS Center](#) defines EBP and provides thoughtful

perspectives for facilitators. The [IES Practice Guides](#) from the What Works Clearinghouse and the CEEDAR Center on [High Leverage Practices \(HLPs\) and Evidence-Based Practices](#) provide helpful resources for the first criterion. Criterion 2 (training) is rather straightforward, but should include perspectives of teaching staff in terms of their perceptions of training. Criterion 3 may elicit somewhat subjective responses. Facilitators should encourage reflection on teacher perspectives related to time for teaching, student response, practice, and opportunities for feedback. Additionally, the team should reflect on the publisher's recommendations in relation to the actual time allotted for implementing the program(s). Finally, criterion 4 addresses a concept that can often be difficult to implement in schools: whether procedures are in place to document the fidelity of program implementation. To receive credit for this criterion, teams must indicate that walk-throughs and direct observations are conducted to assess standard expectations for practice. Using PLCs is often noted for discussion regarding Indicator 3 (as well as Indicator 1 and 4). PLCs provide excellent opportunities for grade-level or department-level teachers to develop and reflect on the use of common evidence-based practices. These practices partially meet criterion 4 but do not guarantee fidelity of implementation. Peer observations and/or self-assessment would provide greater evidence for criterion 4. Questions for Indicator 3 include:

- Does Tier 1 include agreed-upon evidence-based instructional strategies?
- How are staff trained in curriculum materials? How do new staff receive training?
- Does Tier include adequate time to teach the content and provide sufficient opportunities for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback?
- What procedures are in place to ensure consistent use of evidence-based instructional strategies?

Indicator 4: Differentiated Instruction. Indicator 4 examines the extent to which teachers utilize data to design and differentiate instruction for diverse groups of learners. A score of 5 is awarded when clear evidence indicates that all staff utilize data to design and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students at, below, and above-grade level. A score of 3 is provided when some staff do so, and a score of 1 is provided when few staff do so. To meet the criteria, team members should refer to the use of formative assessment and within-program mastery measurement to guide their instructional delivery for groups of students. Teachers may utilize methods learned from formal training or may discuss informal processes of differentiation, such as using daily exit slips or student surveys to match instruction to student needs and group/regroup students for pre-teaching or re-teaching of material. Schools that have strong collaboration time and document their PLCs often perform higher on this item. The questions for Indicator 4 include:

- How do teachers in this school use student assessment data and knowledge of student readiness, language, and culture to offer students in the same class different teaching and learning strategies to address student needs?
- How consistent is this effort among the teaching staff?
- What data do teachers use to determine how Tier 1 reading instruction will be differentiated?

Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention. Schools provide standardized interventions that target academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs using validated programs to support students identified as needing supports to meet end-of-the-year expectations. Teams select or design interventions and supports that have demonstrated positive effects for desired outcomes and are aligned with student needs. Tier 2 interventions and supports are delivered with fidelity at an appropriate duration and frequency to ensure students have increased opportunities for practice and corrective feedback (Center on MTSS). The National Center for

Systemic Improvement has developed an [online module](#) intended to help teachers and leaders at the school, district, and state level identify and select interventions, practices, and programs that have evidence of effectiveness. The Center on MTSS identified [10 Essential Features of Tier 2](#). Examination of Tier 2 indicators can help schools meet the WAC requirements for using RTI in SLD evaluations. [WAC 392-172A-01165](#) requires that two or more intensive scientific research-based interventions, as defined in [WAC 392-172A-01165](#), be provided for students who need additional instruction. These interventions must be appropriate for the student's identified needs and implemented with fidelity.

Tier 2 rubric indicators include (1) Evidence-Based Intervention, (2) Complements Core Instruction, (3) Tier 2 Instructional Characteristics, and (4) Addition to Primary.

Indicator 5: Evidence-Based Intervention. This indicator assesses the standardization of Tier 2 interventions, their alignment with student needs, and the extent to which evidence supports these interventions. A score of 5 requires teams to demonstrate that interventions are (1) standardized, (2) matched to student needs, and (3) evidence-based for the target content areas, grade levels, and student population. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two of the criteria are met and a score of 1 if only one or none of the criteria are met.

Interventions are standardized when they are consistently delivered to students with similar needs following a written/pre-determined format. Interventions do not need to be published programs (e.g., Elkonin Boxes, Cover-Copy-Compare, Check-In Check-Out), but instructors should have written guidance from a reputable source for program delivery. Interventions should specify the total number of minutes, targeted skills, and intended strategies.

Facilitators should encourage teams to discuss their processes for selecting Tier 2 interventions and grouping students for participation. Placement protocols are helpful to guide the selection of Tier 2 interventions. Having fewer interventions delivered by trained instructors provides a greater likelihood of standardization. **Research has shown that one of the most powerful predictors of student response to intervention is accurately matched interventions to student needs (Burns et al., 2024).**

Criterion 3 for Indicator 5 requires that Tier 2 interventions have evidence of effectiveness from well-established research studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Like assessment tools (Indicators 12 & 15) and Tier 1 curriculum materials (Indicator 2), teams may lack knowledge regarding the evidence base of interventions. Facilitators should be familiar with terminology related to evidence-based practices. Required features are listed for Indicator 2. The [Vanderbilt IRIS Module on Evidence-Based Practice](#) provides further definitions of promising practice, research-based practice, and emerging practice.

To score Indicator 5, facilitators may also need to explore websites that provide summaries of research. Some of the sources provided in Indicator 2 are also helpful for Indicator 5. Those sources are listed again below, along with additional websites that review supplemental and intensive interventions.

- [Evidence for ESSA](#) – identifies the level of evidence under ESSA that is associated with a given program (both academic and SEB), provides a snapshot of what the program looks like and costs, identifies the grades, communities, and children included in the program's evaluations, and provides more information about the program, its evaluations, and implementation.

- [What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Reports](#) - summaries of findings of the highest-quality research on a given intervention or practice in education. Many Tier 1 curricula may not have existing intervention reports.
- [IRIS Evidence-Based Practice Summaries](#) – includes summaries of both practices and programs
- National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) [Academic Interventions Tools Chart](#) and [Behavior Interventions Tools Chart](#) - present information about academic intervention programs. The following four tabs include information and ratings on the technical rigor of the studies: (a) Quality of Design & Results, (b) Quality of Other Indicators, (c) Intensity, and (d) Additional Research
- National Center for Rural School Mental Health [Early Identification System Intervention Hub](#)

Questions for Indicator 5 include:

- What program(s) does your school use for Tier 2 reading?
- How were these programs selected? What research evidence supports the use of the interventions (e.g., has research shown that interventions positively impact student achievement)?
- How are interventions matched to student needs?
- Are interventions offered to students in a standardized (consistent) format?

Indicator 6: Complements Core Instruction. This item examines the relationship of Tier 2 interventions to Tier 1 programming and learning objectives. A score of 5 requires Tier 2 interventions to align with Tier 1 programming *and* incorporate foundational skills that support the learning objectives of Tier 1. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if Tier 2 interventions incorporate foundational skills but only occasionally align with the Tier 1 learning objectives. A score of 1 should be provided when Tier 2 interventions are poorly aligned with the foundational skills and learning objectives taught in Tier 1.

Foundational skills are the prerequisite skills needed to successfully meet Tier 1 learning objectives. For instance, students may need basic reading skills or self-regulation skills to successfully meet Tier 1 objectives. Tier 2 interventions offer a more explicit, small-group experience, providing students with more frequent opportunities to respond and receive feedback. By aligning Tier 2 interventions with Tier 1 learning objectives, schools ensure that students receive a consistent and reinforced learning experience, preventing confusion with different programs or content and fostering the efficient acquisition of skills. This is particularly important for multilingual learners and should be a point of discussion while exploring Indicator 6.

Schools that score higher in this area generally have an aligned curriculum and instruction that aligns with standards and are knowledgeable about the big ideas for instruction in the relevant area (i.e., reading, math, writing, behavior). Some schools will have Tier 2 interventions created by the publisher of the core curriculum or overlays that make Tier 1 more explicit (e.g., Enhanced Core Reading Instruction). These may include supplementary materials or involve pre-teaching or re-teaching practices using portions of the core materials that students are struggling with. In this case, the connection between Tier 2 interventions is directly tied to the core.

When working with secondary schools, facilitators should be aware that teaching foundational skills becomes more challenging in these settings, as the gap between Tier 1 learning objectives and student skills may widen. Often, Tier 2 interventions may align with Tier 1 learning objectives but miss teaching

foundational skills that students need for success. Questions for Indicator 6 include:

- How do instructors of Tier 2 interventions ensure that the content they address is well aligned and complements the core instruction for each student?
- How do Tier 2 interventions address foundational skills students need for success with Tier 1 learning objectives?

Indicator 7: Tier 2 Instructional Characteristics. This indicator examines the delivery of Tier 2 instruction and interventions. A score of 5 requires four criteria to be met: (1) interventions are delivered using evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by staff trained according to intervention requirements, (3) the group size and dosage are optimal for the age and needs of students (e.g., sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback on skills), and (4) implemented consistently. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the criteria are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

Facilitators should review resources for Indicator 3, Tier 1 Instructional Practices, to be familiar with EBPs. In general, students participating in Tier 2 should have more explicit instruction and follow the instructional guidelines provided by the publisher (if a published program). Schools should establish standards of practice for Tier 2 instruction with programs that are not published. Criterion 2 is straightforward; however, facilitators should consider the perspectives of teachers or interventionists and opportunities for training when staff turnover occurs. For criterion 3, facilitators should note that Tier 2 interventions are typically offered for groups of 3 – 7 students. Whenever possible, facilitators should prompt the team to consider whether the group size aligns with the guidance provided by the publisher and allows for the active participation of students.

Finally, the term “implemented consistently” is slightly different from that for Tier 1, where teams must demonstrate that “procedures are in place to ensure consistent use.” That is, teams must not only have procedures in place to ensure that Tier 2 interventions are consistently implemented; they must also have data to demonstrate that these interventions are consistently implemented. Special attention should be paid to how schools are monitoring the delivery of computer-based interventions. While documentation of progress within programs provides some evidence of participation, schools must also have a way to document student engagement with the computerized programs. Questions for Indicator 7 include:

- Who delivers the interventions in your school? (for each intervention listed in Indicator 5).
- Please describe the evidence-based practices used in Tier 2.
- What training is provided to interventionists? (Again, prompt for each intervention).
- Is there a formal procedure for monitoring the delivery of Tier 2 interventions? If so, please describe this process.
 - How often is fidelity monitored?
 - Are Tier 2 interventions consistently delivered as expected for most settings?
 - For computer-based Tier 2 reading interventions, is there a procedure in place for staff to review electronic completion data? If so, please describe this process.
- On average, what size are your school’s Tier 2 intervention groups?

Indicator 8: Addition to Primary. This indicator examines the relationship between Tier 2 interventions and Tier 1 instruction in terms of time. Specifically, Tier 2 intervention should not take place during Tier 1 instruction and is often confused with differentiated instruction (Indicator 4). A score of 5 requires Tier 2 interventions to always be provided in addition to Tier 1. Facilitators should assign a score of 3 if Tier 2 interventions sometimes supplement Tier 1 and sometimes replace it, and a score of 1 if Tier 2 interventions consistently replace Tier 1. A master schedule that includes intervention times is helpful for facilitators to see the relationship of interventions to Tier 1.

This indicator is slightly more challenging to score for SEB interventions, as these interventions may be offered during Tier 1 instruction to support students' participation and engagement. If students fully participate in Tier 1 instruction during the designated time in the schedule, a score of 5 may be provided for SEB interventions. Questions for Indicator 8 include:

- Are Tier 2 interventions always implemented as supplements to the core curriculum?
- [Follow-up if needed] During the day, when do students receive Tier 2 intervention?

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention - Intensive intervention that is intensified and individualized based on the student's needs. It is provided to students who do not respond adequately to Tier 2 interventions and may have low achievement or ongoing, intensive needs. The Center for MTSS provides an infographic of [key features of Tier 3 Intensive Intervention](#). Tier 3 rubric indicators include (1) Intensified interventions, (2) Tier 3 Instructional Characteristics, and (3) Tier 3 Relationship to Tier 1.

Indicator 9. Intensified Interventions. This indicator examines the individualization process that defines Tier 3. A score of 5 requires Tier 3 interventions to be both individualized based on student data (See section on “Additional Assessment Consideration” below) and more intensive than Tier 2 interventions. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if Tier 3 interventions are either individualized based on diagnostic data OR more intensive. Facilitators should provide a score of 1 if Tier 3 interventions are not offered or are neither individualized nor more intensive. Data-based decision-making may vary across interventions, and a score of 3 may also be assigned if some (but not all) Tier 3 interventions are individualized based on data and are more intensive than Tier 2. As with all items, scores of 2 or 4 may be applied when the intensification process appears to be between rating descriptors. To provide accurate ratings for Tier 3 indicators, facilitators should be familiar with the process of [Data-Based Individualization \(DBI\)](#). NCI provides guidance and tools regarding the [Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity](#) that can assist facilitators in understanding how to use data to consider multiple ways to intensify interventions. Questions for Indicator 9 include:

- How are evidence-based interventions intensified or individualized at the intensive level?
- Are Tier 3 interventions always more intensive than Tier 2?

Indicator 10. Tier 3 Instructional Characteristics. The instructional characteristics for Tier 3 are similar but slightly different from those of Tier 2 Instructional Characteristics, Indicator 7. A score of 5 requires four criteria to be met: (1) interventions are delivered using evidence-based instructional practices, (2) led by trained staff experienced in intensifying instruction based on student data, (3) the group size and dosage are optimal for the age and needs of students (e.g., sufficient opportunity for students to respond, practice, and receive feedback on skills), and (4) implemented consistently. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the criteria are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

The evidence-based instructional strategies used in Tier 3 should be similar, but they should be guided by the student needs identified in the DBI process. Those delivering Tier 3 interventions should be trained in the specific interventions they are delivering but also know how to use data to adapt and intensify instruction to meet individual student needs. Tier 3 groups should be smaller than Tier 2 groups. Questions for Indicator 10 include:

- Who provides intensive intervention? Describe their training for the programs they are delivering. What training do they have in providing data-based individualized instruction?
- Does the group size allow for the interventionist to adjust and individualize instruction to address the needs of each student?
- Describe an example of a student experiencing intensive intervention.

Indicator 11. Tier 3 Relationship to Tier 1. This indicator is similar to Indicator 8 but has different criteria. Tier 3 interventions do not always need to be in addition to core instruction, and decisions regarding student participation should be based on the data produced and collected through the use of the DBI process (see Indicators 9 and 10). A score of 5 for Indicator 11 requires that (1) decisions regarding student participation in both Tier 1 and Tier 3 to be made on a case-by-case basis, and (2) Tier 3 interventions to address the general education curriculum in an appropriate manner for students. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if only one of the conditions is met and a score of 1 if neither of the conditions is met. For a higher score, the team needs to discuss how these decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Questions for Indicator 11 include:

- Are intensive interventions always implemented as supplements to the core curriculum? If not, please explain.
- How do you decide if a student receiving intensive intervention should remain in primary-level instruction?
- How do you ensure meaningful connections between intensive intervention and the general education curriculum (e.g., the Common Core)?

Essential Component: Screening (Section 1 of MTSS Rubric)

Screening is a systematic process for identifying students who require additional support to achieve positive learning outcomes, including academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and school completion outcomes, as well as college and career readiness outcomes. This section of the rubric includes three Indicators: Screening Tools (technical and usability features), Universal Screening (the process of screening), and Risk Verification (the use of additional data sources to ensure accurate identification of needs).

For the Screening, Progress Monitoring, Diagnostic Assessment, and Data-Based Decision-Making sections of the rubric/interview, facilitators must be knowledgeable regarding assessment practices within an MTSS framework (for both academic and behavioral domains). Knowledge of both PBIS and SEL assessment practices is needed. The following resources may be helpful for facilitators and are excellent to share with teams in reports.

- [Assessment Practices Within MTSS](#), published by CEEDAR/NCII
- [AIMS White Paper](#) on Selecting a Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring Tool

Indicator 12: Screening Tools. This Indicator considers the usability and technical properties of the screening tools used by a school. A score of 5 requires screening tools to be (1) brief, (2) reliable and valid, (3) accurately identify student risk status (*classification accuracy*), and (4) aligned to valued outcomes. Additionally, school staff can articulate the benefits and limitations of the tools. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the criteria are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

Like the process for reviewing curriculum materials, facilitators should first ask team members to list and describe their screening tools. They may not be familiar with the technical characteristics of district-selected tools. Facilitators should encourage reflection on reasons for selection of the tools (if known) and **should not belabor this part of the interview**. Facilitators will most likely need to complete independent research on the assessment tools for accurate scoring of criteria 2 – 4. The National Center for [Intensive Intervention Academic Screening Tools Chart](#) provides ratings of many academic screening tools. The [Behavior Screening Tools Chart](#) currently provides ratings of just one tool. For instances where screening measures are not reviewed, facilitators should find peer-reviewed articles to support their ratings (e.g., McIntosh et al., 2010, found ODRs may produce valid and reliable scores for predicting student risk (AUC ~.70). In instances where peer-reviewed research is used, psychometric properties should be compared to NCII's [Academic](#) or [Behavior](#) Tools Chart Rubric. Most publishers provide technical manuals and references to research involving their screening tools. The BUROS Center for Testing developed a [four-part process for evaluating the technical quality of SEL assessments](#) that may be helpful. The following questions are suggested for this indicator:

- What tools do you use for universal screening?
- How long does each tool take for screening?
- What evidence did a team review regarding the validity, reliability, and accuracy of the tools when selected?
- For SEB, in addition to any published screeners, do you use office discipline referral data or other existing data as a part of the screening process? If so, please explain.

Indicator 13: Universal Screening. This Indicator assesses the school's practices in administering the screening tools. To obtain a score of 5, (1) screening occurs more than once per year, (2) the process limits disruptions to learning or instruction, and (3) procedures are in place to ensure consistent and accurate administration. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the criteria are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

Facilitators should encourage discussion within the team related to the universal screening process to gather

perspectives from teachers, support staff, and administrators regarding conditions 2 and 3. Kovalski et al. (2023) note that schools may over-screen students, thereby incurring the cost of lost instructional time and resources. This indicator provides teams with an opportunity to consider whether assessment practices are appropriately brief. To meet the second condition, teams should indicate that the selection and use of screening tools limit redundancy (i.e., the team is not over-screening students with measures of similar content) and that administering screening tools does not significantly disrupt instructional time.

Commented [1]: Comment re. CATs

Commented [2R1]: See Academic Skills Problems 5th Edition for info to add.

To meet the third condition to ensure consistent and accurate administration, teams should discuss the procedures their site has in place to increase the reliability of their findings. That is, do they provide regular training/refresher training for administration procedures, scoring procedures, and data entry related to screening scores? Are there other ways the school reduces errors in the administration process (e.g., using a cadre, conducting peer observations, discussing vague directions in administration at meeting times, etc.)? Do they verify consistency in a small sample of protocols or employ procedures to assess inter-rater reliability? The following questions are suggested for this Indicator:

- Describe the process for conducting screening in your school. To what extent is this process consistently followed?
- Are all students screened?
- How many times during the school year are students screened?
- Does the universal screening tool indicate which students are at risk for not meeting expected outcomes?
- How do you ensure that administration of screening assessments follows the developer's guidelines?

Indicator 14: Data Points to Verify Risk. This indicator assesses the school's utilization of multiple data sources to inform decisions about student needs. To obtain a score of 5, teams must identify two appropriate data sources (follow up administration, summative assessments, assessments embedded within curriculum, diagnostic data) used in conjunction with the screening data for informed decision-making about student needs. If only one other appropriate data source is used to verify decisions about student needs, facilitators should provide a score of 3. If no additional data sources are identified or if screening is not in place for the area (reading, math, or SEB), facilitators should provide a score of 1. The following questions are suggested for this Indicator:

Commented [3]: Gave some examples!

- Do you review other information to help verify that the results of the initial screening are accurate before placing a student in secondary-level or intensive intervention? If so, what other types of assessment data do you use?
- [If office discipline referral (ODR) data are used for screening] Has the school defined minor and major disciplinary issues?
- [If ODR data are used for screening] Does the school have a storage system in place for ODR data?

Essential Component: Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is the ongoing, frequent collection and use of data using reliable and valid measures to (1) assess students' performance, (2) quantify a student's rate of improvement or responsiveness to

instruction or intervention, and (3) evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and intervention. Educators use measures that are appropriate for the student's grade and/or skill level. This section of the rubric includes two Indicators: Progress Monitoring Tools (technical and usability features) and Progress Monitoring Process (frequency and accuracy of administration).

[WAC 392-172A-01165](#) requires frequent monitoring of individual student progress to occur in accordance with the constructs of the multitiered delivery system implemented in the school, consistent with the intervention and tier at which it is being applied.

Indicator 15: Progress Monitoring Tools. This indicator considers the usability and technical properties of the progress monitoring tools used by a school. A score of 5 requires screening tools to be (1) brief, (2) reliable and valid, (3) sensitive to growth, (4) allow for repeated measurement, and (5) have typical growth rates and end-of-year benchmarks. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two or three of the conditions are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the conditions is met. As with all items, facilitators may provide a score of 2 or 4 if discussions suggest that implementation falls between two of the described implementation levels.

Like the process for reviewing curriculum materials and screening tools, facilitators should first ask team members to list and describe their progress monitoring tools. They may not be familiar with the technical characteristics of district-selected tools. Facilitators should encourage reflection on reasons for selection of the tools (if known) and should not belabor this part of the interview. Facilitators will most likely need to complete independent research on the assessment tools for accurate scoring of criteria 2 – 4. The National Center for [Intensive Intervention Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart](#) provides ratings of many progress monitoring tools. The [Behavior Progress Monitoring Tools Chart](#) has some ratings as well. Alongside NCII resources for monitoring behavior interventions, please see a review of common non-published assessments by [Riley-Tillman and colleagues \(2005\)](#), which may guide further research. Most publishers provide technical manuals and references to research involving their progress monitoring tools (both academic and behavioral). If progress monitoring tools are independently reviewed, it is recommended that psychometric properties are compared to NCII's [Academic](#) and [Behavioral Progress Monitoring Rubric](#). The following questions are suggested for this Indicator:

- What tools does your school use for progress monitoring?
- How was the tool selected?
- What evidence from the vendor did the district/building review regarding the validity, reliability, and accuracy of the progress monitoring tool(s) when selecting it/them?

Indicator 16: Progress Monitoring Process. This item examines the frequency of progress monitoring and procedures in place to ensure consistent and accurate administration. To obtain a score of 5, (1) progress monitoring occurs at least biweekly for students receiving Tier 2 interventions, (2) progress monitoring occurs at least weekly for students receiving Tier 3 interventions, and (3) procedures are in place to ensure consistent and accurate administration. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if two of the conditions are met, and a score of 1 if none or only one of the criteria is met.

Facilitators should be aware that certain groups of students receiving interventions may be monitored at an adequate frequency, while others receiving the same level of interventions may not be monitored at an

adequate frequency. In this case, scores of 2 or 4 might be utilized. For example, if *most* students in Tier 2 interventions are monitored at least biweekly and *all* students in Tier 3 interventions are monitored at least weekly, a score of 4 would be given. If *most* students in Tier 2 interventions are monitored at least biweekly and *none* of the students in Tier 3 interventions are monitored at least weekly, a score of 2 would be given. If *some* students in Tier 2 interventions are monitored at least biweekly and *some* students in Tier 3 interventions are monitored at least weekly, a score of 3 would be given.

To meet the third condition to ensure consistent and accurate administration, teams should discuss the procedures their site has in place to increase the reliability of their findings. That is, do they provide regular training/refresher training for administration procedures, scoring procedures, and data entry related to progress monitoring scores? Are there other ways the school reduces errors in the administration process (e.g., using a cadre, conducting peer observations, discussing vague directions in administration at meeting times, etc.)? Do they verify consistency in a small sample of protocols or employ procedures to assess inter-rater reliability? The following questions are suggested for this Indicator:

- Describe the process used for monitoring progress.
- How often is the progress of students in Tier 2 interventions monitored?
- How often is the progress of students in Tier 3 monitored?
- Does monitoring occur with sufficient frequency to show a trend in academic progress over time?
- How closely does the administration of the progress monitoring tool(s) follow the developer's guidelines?
- [If Check-In/Check-Out is being used as a progress monitoring tool] Is Check-In/Check-Out progress monitoring data kept separately from the point sheet the student sees?

Additional Assessment Considerations Not on the MTSS Rubric

The MTSS Rubric refers to the use of diagnostic assessment in placing students in appropriate interventions for Tier 2 and for adapting interventions in the DBI process for Tier 3. However, there is not a separate section for best practices with diagnostic assessments on the rubric. Diagnostic assessments are used to determine a student's specific need(s) and to inform the focus for intervention. The Integrated MTSS Rubric (Gandhi et al., 2024) includes the following criteria for diagnostic assessments: (1) are aligned with student need and curriculum standards; (2) are administered with fidelity to an individual student or group of students; and (3) are intended to identify a specific skill or behavioral need.

Although this item is not scored, facilitators should provide feedback, recommendations, and resources to teams. The NCII offers multiple resources related to diagnostic assessment, including a guide for [Using Diagnostic Data to Inform Intervention Planning](#), and training modules for [academic diagnostic assessment](#) and [behavioral diagnostic assessment](#) practices.

Essential Component: Data-based Decision Making

Data-based decision making is the use of screening, progress monitoring, and other forms of data to make

decisions about instruction, movement within the multi-level prevention system, intensification of instruction and supports, allocation of resources, and identification of students with disabilities (which will be required in Washington State by 2028). Data-based decision making occurs at all levels of MTSS implementation, from individual students to the district level. This section of the rubric includes three indicators: Decision-Making Process, Data System, and Responsiveness to Tier 2 and Tier 3 Intervention (applying decision rules with progress monitoring data when examining responsiveness to intervention). Full implementation requires data-driven procedures, involves appropriate personnel, has guidelines for setting goals, and agreed-upon decision rules. Systems are needed that allow users to document and access individual student-level data and instructional decisions with timely data entry and visual/graphic representation. Procedures are necessary to ensure the consistent application of decision-making criteria. **To ensure these requirements are met, districts should provide schools with written guidance for decision-making related to RTI.**

The MTSS Rubric does not have separate sections for universal, targeted, intensive decision making, or continuous improvement (as seen on the IMFR). However, these elements are reflected across the rubric. Facilitators are encouraged to review the table to assist teams with applying decision-making across different levels. Table 1 aligns the MTSS indicators with their respective levels of data-based decision-making.

Table 1. Alignment of MTSS Rubric Indicators with Levels of Data-based Decision Making (DBDM)

Level of DBDM	Essential Component	Indicator Name
Universal	Multi-Level Prevention	Differentiated Instruction
	Screening	Data Points to Verify Risk
Targeted	Data-based Decision Making	Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention
Intensive	Multi-Level Prevention	Tier 3 Relationship to Tier 1
	Data-based Decision Making	Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention
Continuous Improvement	School Infrastructure and Supports	Evaluation of Fidelity
		Evaluation of Outcomes
All Levels	Data-based Decision Making	Decision-Making Process
		Data System

Indicator 17. Decision-Making Process. This indicator applies to all levels of data-based decision making (individual student to systems-level). Therefore, scoring requires familiarity with practices across various elements of MTSS within the building. A score of 5 is assigned when all the following conditions

are met when the process for making student and system-level decisions meet all of the following conditions: (1) is data-driven, (2) involves appropriate personnel with relevant decision-making authority, (3) has guidelines for setting goals, and (4) has agreed-upon decision rules.

To avoid redundancy in the interview, questions on this indicator mostly focus on Universal DBDM, as Indicator 19 focuses on targeted and intensive levels of DBDM, and Indicators 29 and 30 focus on continuous improvement. Facilitators should **first score Indicators 19, 29, and 30 before scoring Indicator 17** to consider student and system-level DBDM.

- What people or teams review screening data?
- Does your school apply data decision rules with screening data to determine if a student receives an intervention? If so, please describe the decision rules. [Follow-up if needed]
- Are these rules consistently applied?

Indicator 18. Data System. This indicator examines the data system in place to support decision-making. A score of 5 requires a school's data system to (1) allow users to document and access individual student-level data, (2) have data entered in a timely manner, and (3) visually or graphically represent data. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if the data system meets two of the conditions and a score of 1 if the data system meets none or only one of the conditions. Questions for Indicator 18 include:

- Is there a system for collecting and organizing student screening data, progress monitoring data, and other forms of data? If so, please describe.
- Can users document and access individual student-level data and instructional decisions?
- Are data entered in a timely manner?
- Are data represented visually or graphically?
- Are instructional decisions made about students tracked in the data system or through another method (including movement between tiers)?

Indicator 19. Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention. This indicator examines the extent to which staff apply decision rules to progress monitoring data for decision making related to Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Ideally, staff should be examining data to make group decisions as well as individual students. [WAC 392-172A-01165](#) requires decision making using problem solving or standard treatment protocol techniques to be based upon, but not limited to, student-centered data, including the use of curriculum-based measures, available standardized assessment data, intensive interventions, and instructional performance level. Additionally, the duration of the intensive, scientific research-based interventions implemented needs to be long enough to gather sufficient data points.

A score of 5 requires all staff to apply decision rules to progress monitoring data when examining responsiveness to instruction/intervention AND to have procedures in place to ensure consistent use of decision-making criteria. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if some staff apply decision rules to progress monitoring data when examining responsiveness to instruction/intervention and when there are limited procedures in place to ensure consistent use of decision-making criteria and a score of 1 if few staff apply decision rules and there are no procedures in place to ensure consistent decision making.

For consistent decision making, districts should provide schools with written guidelines that prescribes how

to set goals, the number of data points needed for decision making, and decision rules (e.g., comparison of the median of the last three data points to the goal line and/or calculation of rate of improvement (ROI) compared to expected ROI). This indicator is crucial for teams to consider in relation to the requirement for the use of RTI in evaluating students for special education services in the category of SLD. District guidance in this area will assist schools to consistently apply decision rules across schools (see Indicator 21 for Leadership Personnel). The [SLD TAP 2, Determining Insufficient Progress](#), provides guidance for decision making with progress monitoring. Typically, decision making rules are either classified as “data-point rules” or “trend-line rules” (Christ et al., 2013). NCII provides an [overview of three common decision making rules](#), including four-point analysis, trend line analysis, and median of the last three data points. These methods each identify a student’s progress compared to the goal and thereby determine the effectiveness of the intervention for that student. The DBI resources provided for Indicator 9, Intensive Interventions, will be helpful to consider in this area. Additionally, NCII provides [guidelines for decision rules in analyzing academic progress monitoring data](#) and a module on [Using Behavior Data to Inform Decisions](#). Questions for Indicator 19 include:

- Who reviews Tier 2 and Tier 3 data?
- What data do this team review and how often are data reviewed?
- Does your school apply data decision rules on Tier 2 diagnostic and progress monitoring data to select and monitor Tier 2 interventions and supports? [If yes] What decisions are made or what is the outcome of this process? E.g., to identify interventions that are matched to students’ specific learning/behavioral needs; to monitor the students’ response to the intervention.
- Are these rules used consistently by most teams and grade levels that engage in targeted DBDM? If so, please explain.

Essential Component: School Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms (MTSS Rubric Section 5)

School infrastructure and support mechanisms include the knowledge, resources, and organizational structures necessary to operationalize and implement all components of MTSS in a unified system to meet the identified implementation and outcome goals. This [infographic from the Center on MTSS](#) provides a summary of all indicators. In general, the School Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms are broad and more difficult to define. Evidence such as school and staff handbooks, written policies, practices guidelines and procedures, and material that may exist in learning management systems (such as Canvas) will provide insight into the level of school infrastructure and support that exists within the building, district, and community.

Facilitators should look for evidence across the interview to assist in scoring these indicators. Whenever possible, facilitators should summarize previous discussions from prior indicators rather than asking teams to provide redundant information. For instance, the team may have already discussed excellent support from the district for screening materials or identify gaps in math interventions at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 level. This might reflect actions at the district level (Leadership) and challenges with Resources.

Indicator 20. Buy-In. This indicator examines staff understanding and willingness to implement essential components of the MTSS framework. Additionally, it examines the role that building and/or district leaders have taken to establish staff understanding and participation with implementation of MTSS. A score of 5 requires all staff to understand that MTSS is a framework to support all students, including

students with disabilities, and to prevent poor learning outcomes, AND leadership takes proactive steps to build buy-in and understanding of MTSS. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 if some staff have understanding/buy-in with the MTSS framework and if leadership takes limited steps to proactively build buy-in and understanding. If staff generally perceive MTSS as a program that solely supports the prereferral process for special education and leadership does not take proactive steps to build buy-in and understanding of MTSS, facilitators should provide a score of 1.

This indicator may seem subjective in terms of scoring. The tone of team members may or may not reflect the true consensus of teachers and staff across the building. A good way to encourage sites to develop evidence for this item would be for the school to survey staff regarding their perceptions of the MTSS framework. The Center on MTSS [Buy-In Tip Sheet](#) provides examples and recommendations for improving buy-in. Questions for Indicator 20 include:

- To what extent do you believe the teaching staff views the purpose of MTSS as primarily to prevent students from having academic and/or behavioral problems?
- What portion of the teaching staff view MTSS as primarily a means for special education identification?
- How do school and/or district level leaders take proactive steps to build buy-in and understanding of MTSS?

Indicator 21. Leadership Personnel. This indicator examines the involvement and support of both building leaders and district leaders for MTSS implementation. A score of 5 requires decisions and actions by school leaders to proactively support the essential components of MTSS and help make the framework more effective AND support for MTSS implementation is a high priority. A score of 3 represents decisions and actions by school leaders that are inconsistent and only somewhat supportive of the essential components of MTSS with inconsistent support for MTSS implementation, and a score of 1 represents decisions and actions by school leaders that do not actively support the essential components of MTSS with limited support for MTSS implementation. Because district level support and guidance is essential for consistency with implementation, the AIMS project encourages facilitators to consider both district and building leaders in the term “school leaders” and to seek understanding of both for feedback purposes.

Because the administrator is generally in the interview, teachers may have difficulty sharing true perceptions. By the time this question is asked in the interview process, facilitators generally have a good understanding of practices that are successful in the school building and of possible challenges in the school site. This background information may help to score this item.

The AIMS project established

The Center on MTSS [Leadership Tip Sheet](#) provides guidance for schools and districts. Generally, schools that score high on this indicator have strategic planning, mission statements, and goals around the essential components of MTSS. They have procured resources, optimized the schedule, and established professional development, coaching, and mentoring to support staff knowledge and skills (see Indicators 22, 23, and 24). Administrators have sought and provided PD across the Essential Components for teachers and staff. These leaders participate actively in decision-making processes. Questions for Indicator 21 include:

- To what extent are district administrators aware of the MTSS framework at your school?
- To what extent do the actions taken and decisions made by district administrators improve the effectiveness of the MTSS framework at your school?
- To what extent do the actions taken and decisions made by school administrators improve the effectiveness of the MTSS framework at your school?
- Does your school have a designated person who oversees and manages MTSS implementation? If yes, what percentage of that person's time is devoted to overseeing and managing MTSS?

Indicator 22. School-Based Professional Development. Indicator 22 considers how a school structures and obtains school-based professional development (PD). A score of 5 requires school-based PD to be embedded in the school system and structured so that all educators continuously examine, reflect upon, and improve instructional practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions and supports. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 when some forms of school-based PD are available, but most are inconsistent or not job-embedded to ensure continuous improvement in instructional practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions and supports. When the school has no well-defined school-based PD mechanism to support continuous improvement across the MTSS framework components, facilitators should provide a score of 1.

The Center on MTSS [Tip Sheet on School-Based Professional Development](#) provides tips for implementation of PD, key questions to help create a comprehensive training plan for a given component of MTSS, and coaching resources. Schools with higher scores in this area provide PD for all teachers and staff across the Essential Components of RTI: assessment, prevention and intervention practices (including core, strategic, and intensive program delivery), and data-based decision making processes. Sites should also include PD for overarching factors such as culturally competent practice and partnering with and including families. Systematic PD is based on information provided by teachers and staff (such as surveys) and is also developed in relation to findings from fidelity assessment. When fidelity assessment indicates a need, PD is made available. Additionally, appropriate PD needs to be scheduled when new programs are introduced or there is a change in staff. Staff should receive embedded coaching and other follow up support based on their needs.

- Please describe the structure for professional development in your school. If not discussed, include the following:
 - Have all staff been trained on the MTSS framework and essential components?
 - How often is refresher or new training provided?
 - Is MTSS training provided to new teachers?
 - What ongoing professional development is provided (in each of the essential components)?

Indicator 23. Schedule. Schedules play an important role in MTSS frameworks. Schedules can be challenging given the multiple priorities in schools, particularly in middle and high schools. A score of 5 requires the schoolwide schedule to provide adequate time for assessment, Tier 1 delivery, interventions for Tiers 2 and 3, and teaming and decision making. When the schedule partially provides adequate time for these areas, a score of 3 should be assigned, and when the schoolwide schedule provides inadequate time for these essential elements, a score of 1 should be assigned.

The Center on MTSS [Scheduling Tip Sheet](#) provides more tips for enhancing the schedule, strategies to find

time to intensify and individualize interventions, and resources for scheduling in middle and high schools. Questions for Indicator 23 include:

- Does the schedule reflect additional time beyond the core for Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention?
- Is there time scheduled for teacher collaboration on instruction and interventions?
- Are all the pertinent teachers and interventionists available for these collaborative meetings?

Indicator 24. Resources. A score of 5 requires resources (e.g., funds, programs, staffing) to be adequately allocated to support MTSS implementation. When resources are partially allocated to support MTSS implementation, facilitators should provide a score of 3, and when resources are not allocated to support MTSS implementation, facilitators should provide a score of 1.

This indicator is similar to Leadership Personnel above, in that facilitators may base scoring on previous discussions throughout the interview. Additionally, this item may feel subjective, as resources differ depending on the population served by the school. What might be adequate in terms of one school may not be adequate for another. Base scoring on the needs of the school to meet the academic and SEB needs demonstrated by students according to data discussed during the meeting or in the School Report Card. The Center on MTSS [Resources Tip Sheet](#) provides ideas for funding, programs, and staffing allocations. There is just one question for Indicator 24, and facilitators should prompt to make sure these are addressed for all areas (Reading, Mathematics, and SEB).

- Are there adequate materials, programs, and resources (funds, materials, and personnel) allocated to support:
 - interventions,
 - assessments,
 - Training?

Indicator 25. Cultural and Linguistic Relevance. This indicator considers the wide variety of practices a school uses to ensure that instruction, assessment, interventions consider cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors in the school. A score of 5 requires that all staff can articulate information and factors that they consider when adopting culturally and linguistically relevant instructional practices, assessments, and intervention programs. The word “articulate” implies that the school is well versed in discussing cultural and linguistic variables related to instruction, assessment, and intervention. Thus, to meet the full criterion on this indicator, teams should discuss the demographic makeup of their school and how particular factors guide Tier 1 instruction, assessment, and intervention considerations.

When teams go beyond talking about use of interpreters and translating documents and begin to discuss instructional decision making related to the unique needs of groups of students, facilitators may give higher scores. Some schools have much larger populations of multilingual learners and may offer dual language classrooms. Others may have smaller percentages and rely on different models of ELD services to support multilingual students. Schools teams with higher scores in this area often talk about the need to build vocabulary and consider background knowledge before delivering lessons. They might talk about using a variety of materials that represent diverse cultures. Teams might also talk about including members from diverse groups in leadership teams or in strategic planning initiatives. They should talk about considering

cultural and linguistic variables when choosing Tier 2 interventions and intensifying within Tier 3. We encourage all facilitators to explore the literature regarding this area so they may provide accurate scores. The Center on MTSS [Cultural and Linguistic Relevance Tip Sheet](#) describes what cultural and linguistic relevance looks like at the school level and links to several helpful readings. Brown et al. (2024) provide a comprehensive guide to [Culturally and Linguistically Aligned Practices for Multilingual Students within an MTSS Framework](#). Indicator 25 includes the following questions:

- How does core instruction address the needs of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse? Can all staff adapt instructional practices to meet the unique needs of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse?
- How do staff address variables of culture and language when assessing students? Is this something all staff can do?
- How do Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions address the needs of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse?
- How are the demographic and academic data of subgroups represented in your school used to inform the MTSS framework?

Indicator 26. Family Engagement. This indicator considers the involvement and communication with families regarding their child’s education within MTSS. A score of 5 requires the school to have both a description of the supports available for students and their families AND coherent mechanism for communication with and involvement of families. Additionally, there must be evidence that families feel a sense of belonging in the school community. Facilitators should provide a score of 3 when the school has just one of these pieces in place and a score of 1 if neither are in place. The Center on MTSS [Tip Sheet for Family Engagement](#) provides guidance for schools to build relationships and communicate with families.

To meet the first criterion, teams should share how families have access to a summary of the supports available for students. For the second criterion, the team should outline two-way methods for staff and families to communicate with each other. This should include how families are informed when their child receives intervention and are regularly informed of their child’s progress. Families with students receiving intensive intervention should be informed more frequently. Finally, at Tier 3, families need to be intentionally included in the intensification decision-making process. For the third criterion, the team should describe how they know if families report feeling connected to and a sense of belonging to the school. Questions for Indicator 26 include:

- How do families learn about the MTSS framework in your school?
- Describe how you communicate with parents about MTSS and student performance.
- How are parents involved in decision-making regarding the participation of their child in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions?
- How do you know if families have a sense of belonging in the school community?

Indicator 27. Staff Communication and Collaboration. This indicator examines the processes that support staff with multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) implementation. Staff communication and collaboration should include ongoing and frequent two-way communication between staff and leadership. It should also include structures that enable teacher collaboration, such as protected time, outlined data-based decision making processes, and expectations and roles when meeting. Information from Indicator 1, Articulation of Teaching and Learning, and Indicator 28, Teaming Structures, provide more information to

assist in scoring this indicator. A score of 5 requires (1) staff to have a common language and data-based decision making processes, (2) a bidirectional communication system to be in place, and (3) conditions to be in place for teachers to collaborate frequently. If two of the three criteria are in place, facilitators should provide a 3, and if one or none of the criteria are in place, facilitators should assign a score of 1. The Center on MTSS [Staff Communication and Collaboration Tip Sheet](#) provides schools with ideas and resources to improve communication and collaboration within schools. Questions for Indicator 27 include:

- Are teachers in your school knowledgeable about the MTSS framework?
- Describe how you communicate with teachers about the school's MTSS plan.
- How are teachers of students at the secondary or intensive level informed of their progress in the intervention?
- What process does your school use to ensure teacher collaboration in implementing MTSS?

Indicator 28. Teaming Structures. Washington State's MTSS Framework highlights the need for [team driven shared leadership](#). Exact teaming structures in districts and schools vary depending on the size of the district and buildings. The framework notes that sustained implementation of MTSS is dependent on building the capacity of the organization to lead and support the essential MTSS components. A score of 5 for Indicator 28 requires the school to have (1) at least one team responsible for implementation of MTSS schoolwide, (2) at least one team responsible for decisions about students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions, (3) structures and processes in place to guide team decision making, and (4) time set aside for teams to meet regularly. Facilitators should assign a score of 3 if the school has two or three of the required criteria and a score of 1 if the school has one or none of the criteria.

Teams use implementation data to evaluate the extent to which their assessments, interventions, and supports have been implemented as intended and to identify areas of improvement. Teams must use effective teaming practices. Effective and efficient teams establish and maintain (1) clear roles, (2) accountable norms, (3) a standard agenda format, and (4) clear communication. Districts should establish expectations for building level team operations and encourage schools to conduct a team audit to identify the purpose, data used, and membership for teams (see Harlacher et al., 2023; McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). Schools may find the [Team Initiated Problem Solving](#) technique helpful (and the [included team meeting minutes template](#)), which has been found to support team functioning and decision making (Horner et al., 2018).

In examining the first criterion, facilitators should know that implementation teams are often referred to as leadership teams and support all adults in the school building by planning, coordinating, monitoring, and adjusting MTSS implementation activities. Ideally, schools should have one team that examines integrated data; however, they may have separate academic and behavior (PBIS) leadership teams. These teams oversee the ongoing training and support to staff, families, and community partners to implement MTSS activities as intended. This team should comprise members representative of all key personnel and regularly solicit input and collect data from staff, students, families, and community partners to make implementation decisions. The leadership team must set aside time for regular meetings and follow established processes for decision-making. This team should examine data that capture the effectiveness of instruction, curriculum, and environment at the schoolwide, grade level (for elementary), and department level (for secondary). The leadership team guides the work in PLCs throughout the building and should consistently use data to determine whether Tier implementation is effective for all students and subgroups. Leadership teams should

look at data and core practices across the entire site, while grade-level or department-level teams examine their data with guidance and support from participants on a Schoolwide Tier 1 team.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams are often referred to as intervention teams and may combine the work as one team. This team(s) should review screening and progress monitoring data and provide guidance for implementation of Tier 2/3 interventions. These teams should include, but not limited to, general education teachers, administrators, and support personnel such as school psychologists, counselors, and interventionists. The team(s) should establish procedures to confirm which students need Tier 2 interventions, how these interventions are working for students and apply decision making criteria using the DBI process (see Indicators 9 AND 19) for students needing more intensive interventions/support. The teams should review progress monitoring data to determine if *most* students are making adequate progress. When Tier 2 interventions are not working for most students, teams should consider if the intervention is matched to student need, or how implementation might be improved. Teams should apply clear entry and exit criteria for student participation in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions/supports.

The school may have a separate Problem-Solving or Student Study Team that reviews and provides support to students who need intensive support. If so, membership should include administrators, regular and special education teachers, and support personnel. This team may follow procedures established to make referrals for special education evaluations when students do not meet established goals. For SLD identification, [WAC 392-172A-01035](#) (k)(ii), requires that the team rule out vision, hearing, or motor problems, intellectual disability, emotional/behavioral disabilities, cultural and/or environmental issues, and limited English proficiency. [SLD TAP #3](#) provides guidance for identification of these factors (1) during the universal screening process, (2) within the data-based individualization (DBI) process for students receiving Tier 2 and 3 interventions, and (3) within a comprehensive evaluation for special education services. Thus, procedures should be in place **across the different teams** to identify and address possible alternative primary factors for student underachievement and insufficient progress. As mentioned in the Tier 1 section for Mult-Tiered Prevention System (Indicators 1 – 4), the team must rule out inadequate instruction before determining a student is eligible for special education in the category of SLD. [SLD TAP 4](#), Ruling Out Inadequate Instruction, provides more guidance for decision making. Questions for Indicator 28 include:

- Does your school have at least one team responsible for overseeing MTSS implementation schoolwide?
 - If so, please describe this team in terms of membership, processes, and structures in place to guide team decision making.
 - How often does this team meet?
- Does your school have at least one team responsible for making decisions about students receiving Tier 2/3 interventions?
 - If so, please describe this team in terms of membership, processes, and structures in place to guide team decision making.
 - How often does this team meet?

Indicator 29. Evaluation of Fidelity. Indicator 29 requires schools to have procedures in place to monitor the fidelity of all the following: (1) implementation of MTSS and its essential components, (2) instruction and interventions, (3) administering assessments, (4) decision-making procedures. In addition to having such procedures in place, teams should discuss how they evaluate fidelity data on a regular basis. All

four criteria must be in place for a score of 5. If two or three components are in place, facilitators should assign a score of 3, and if one or none of the components are in place, facilitators should assign a score of 1.

Facilitators ask questions related to this indicator throughout the interview, including **Indicators 3 (Tier 1 Instructional Characteristics)**, **7 (Tier 2 Instructional Characteristics)**, **10 (Tier 3 Instructional Characteristics)**, **13 (Universal Screening)**, **16 (Progress Monitoring Process)**, and **19 (Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention)**. Thus, facilitators should review responses to these items to avoid asking duplicative questions. They should summarize fidelity discussions and findings in these previous indicators and establish agreement of what is in place.

The Center on MTSS [Tip Sheet on Fidelity](#) provides additional guidance for schools. Facilitators may also wish to review Majeika's (2025) [Fidelity First: The Key to Unlocking MTSS](#) for ways to address and measure fidelity. Although not considered in the rubric indicator, schools may also want to consider fidelity of coaching for MTSS. The Center on MTSS provides a [Fidelity of Coaching Rubric and Worksheet](#).

If answers were not clear from the previous indicators listed above, the following questions should be used. Information from these questions may assist in scoring the previous indicators related to fidelity procedures and findings:

- Are procedures in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core curriculum? Of secondary-level and intensive intervention? Of screening, progress monitoring, and the decision-making process? If so please describe.
- Who is involved in monitoring the fidelity of implementation?
- Does the evidence indicate that instruction, interventions, assessments, and decisions are implemented with fidelity?

Indicator 30. Evaluation of Outcomes. The last rubric indicator examines how schools conduct process and outcome evaluations of their MTSS frameworks. A score of 5 requires schools to have procedures in place to monitor all of the following: (1) short- and long-term goals for MTSS, (2) impact of MTSS for all students and subgroups of students, and (3) the efficiency and effectiveness of MTSS implementation for continuous improvement. Additionally, team(s) must review data at least annually. Facilitators should assign a score of 3 if two of the criteria are in place and a score of 1 if one or none of the criteria are met. If all three criteria are in place but the school does not review data annually, a score of 4 might be assigned.

Facilitators may find the Center on MTSS [Tip Sheet for Evaluation of Outcomes](#) helpful. Additionally, the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) provides guidance for implementation teams in considering how their MTSS frameworks are working for students, families, and staff. See the [Brief for Engaging Critical Perspectives](#) and [Guidance on Engaging Critical Perspectives](#) for more information.

Questions for Indicator 30 include:

- In what ways are school level data used to assess areas of strength, identify areas of growth and plan for further improvements to MTSS implementation?
- Who is involved in the process?
- Is there a process for reviewing student-level data for all students and for subgroups of students?

- Is a process in place to evaluate implementation fidelity?
- Are teachers and interventionists involved in giving and receiving feedback on the effectiveness of the programs and materials?

Summing it Up: Completing the Scoring and Report Writing Process

Following the interview, facilitators should review/edit their notes while the interview is still easy to remember. Often we find that small clarifications might be needed following the interview, and we recommend that facilitators inform teams that they may be following up with clarifying questions. We find that we often have very messy notes and spend quite some time “cleaning up” the comments section of the interview form so that it is understandable for teams but still fully represents the discussion regarding each item. If facilitators utilize a voice recorder, the play back feature is extremely beneficial in checking reliability of note-taking. If working with a second facilitator for greater reliability, we recommend that each facilitator complete the scoring section separately and then compare item by item, discussing any discrepancies and “rounding down” when unsure.

Templates are available for [building level](#) and [district level](#) display of indicators. Facilitators must download these spreadsheets and save a copy before entering data. The visual display of MTSS Essential Component Indicators allows for monitoring changes with implementation over time.

The recommendations section of the report is arguably the most important feature of the interview process. Recommendations provide an opportunity for facilitators to shape future practice and to point out consistencies and inconsistencies evident throughout the interview process. We all differ in perspectives; however, providing resources can be extremely helpful for schools wishing to “go deeper” and utilize the interview process to plan for future professional development. We try to provide some free or reduced-cost recommendations for teams, as many resources are available to move teams forward without major expense associated. For instance, the NCII self-paced modules, IES Practice Guides, Vanderbilt IRIS Resource Modules, and NIRN implementation modules offer excellent opportunities for teams to utilize in moving ahead with implementation of MTSS Essential Components.

When facilitators complete the editing, scoring, and recommendation writing, they are ready to send reports. Check with the school site in advance to make sure where to send the report. We often send reports in PDF version straight to MTSS coordinators and principals. Facilitators should be prepared for possible follow up/clarifying questions from the site. We recommend that facilitators save any evidence they have collected from the interview and be prepared for future questions.

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