

# MTSS for Academics at the Middle & High School: Optimize Supports for At-Risk Learners

*Jim Wright*

*[www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)*



**INTERVENTION  
CENTRAL**

## About Jim Wright



Jim Wright is a presenter, trainer and author on topics that cover the essentials and beyond of Response to Intervention and Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

He has worked for 17 years in public education as a school psychologist and school administrator. Jim has published *"The RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools"* and is the creator of the [InterventionCentral.org](http://InterventionCentral.org) website.

# Handout 1



*RTI Classroom Teacher Toolkit*

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## RTI/MTSS for Academics: An Audit

Jim Wright, Presenter

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Workshop Materials: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/rtiaudit>

Workshop PPTs and handout available at:

<http://www.interventioncentral.org/rtiaaudit>

## Handout 2

### RTI/MTSS for Academics: District-Wide Planning Tool

Directions: This planning tool guides school districts to audit their current RTI/MTSS system for academic support, select priority goals to be addressed immediately, and decide which goals can be temporarily postponed. Follow these steps:

1. Appoint a recorder.
2. For every category below, review each RTI/MTSS goal. If you judge a goal as accomplished, mark the 'Status' column with a '0'. If you decide that a goal should be a priority to complete during the current school year, mark it with a '1'. If you believe a goal can be delayed until at least the next school year, mark it with a '2'.
3. Use the Discussion column to record any notes about a goal, including its current implementation, next steps, person(s) responsible, etc.

**Tier 1: Core Instruction.** The teacher delivers high-quality core instruction— at least 80% of students at each grade level perform at or above academic screening benchmarks through classroom instructional support alone.

<i>Status</i> (0,1,2)	<i>GOALS: The teacher's whole-group instruction:</i>	<i>Discussion (current implementation; questions; next steps; persons responsible, etc.)</i>
	- [A.1.1] maximizes time devoted to instruction by reducing or avoiding interruptions—e.g., overlong transitions, episodes of problem behavior, etc.	
	- [A.1.2] incorporates essential elements of explicit and systematic instruction into lessons.	
	- [A.1.3] for reading and mathematics instruction, uses programs and/or practices supported by research.	



# RTI/MTSS Training Agenda: Tasks

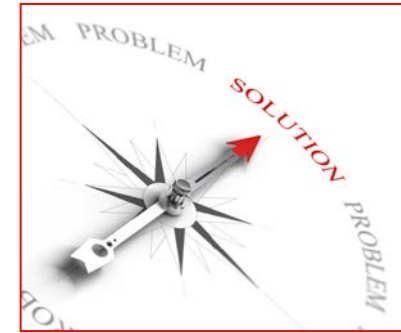
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1. US: Review 'best practices' in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 of RTI/MTSS.
2. YOU: Consider your school's RTI/MTSS model; identify areas for change.
3. US: Review your school's current RTI/MTSS process; agree on 'next steps' to recalibrate.

# MTSS for Middle & High Schools: Maintaining Perspective...

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1. Nothing changes in your current problem-solving process based on today's training.
2. The goal today is not to convince you to adopt an MTSS model. MTSS is about providing support to at-risk learners, so it is not a 'new thing' for **secondary** schools. In fact, you've been doing it all along.
3. The MTSS model is easily understood—but does have multiple components. If your school is new to this model, don't be overwhelmed by today's content. You can take time in your schools to master the model, prepare your staff, and create resources. Today is the **START** of that journey.



MTSS for Academics:  
An Overview of the Multi-  
Tier Support Model





### RTI vs. MTSS: What is the Difference?

Many schools use the terms Response to intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) interchangeably. However, there is a difference.

- RTI usually refers to a school's academic support system only.
- MTSS is more expansive, describing the systems set up in a school to provide coordinated support for both academic and behavioral/social-emotional needs.
- However, RTI and MTSS are similar in that each offers several levels of intervention support, uses data to identify students requiring services, and employs research-based strategies to help at-risk learners.

## MTSS: ACADEMICS

### **Tier 3: High-Risk Students: 5%**

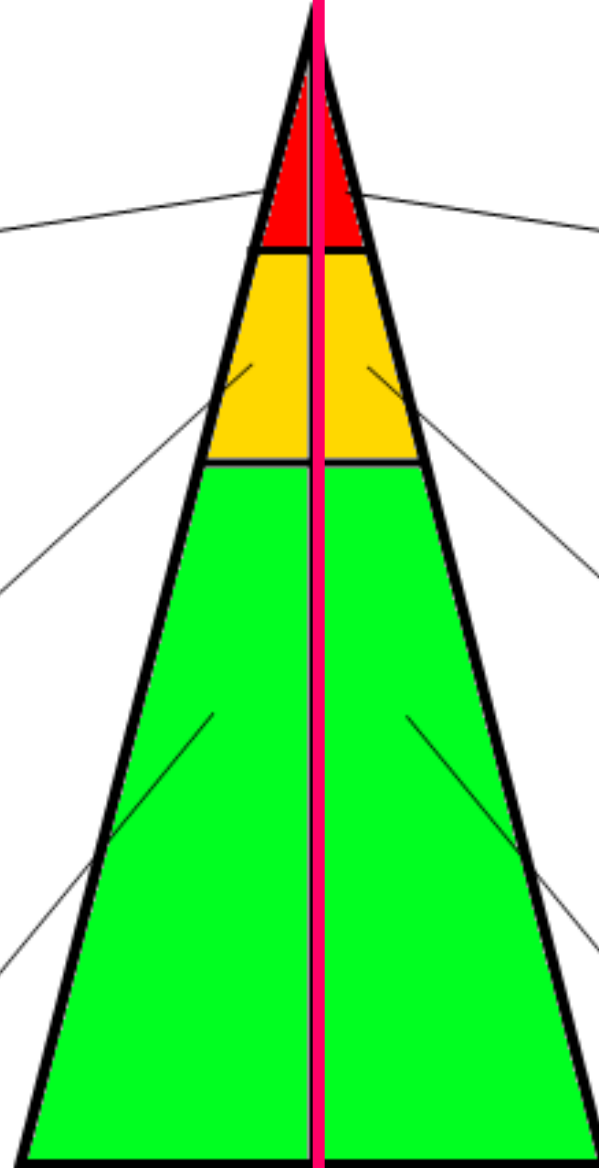
- Diagnostic assessment of academic problems
- RTI Team Meetings
- Customized/intensive academic intervention plan
- Daily progress-monitoring

### **Tier 2: At-Risk Students: 15%**

- Small-group interventions to address off-grade-level academic deficits
- Regular progress-monitoring

### **Tier 1: Universal: Core Instruction: 80%**

- Effective group instruction
- Universal academic screening
- Academic interventions for struggling students



## MTSS: BEHAVIOR

### **Tier 3: High-Risk Students: 5%**

- Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)
- Wrap-around RTI Team meetings
- Daily progress-monitoring

### **Tier 2: At-Risk Students: 15%**

- Small-group interventions for emerging behavioral problems
- Regular progress-monitoring

### **Tier 1: Universal: Classroom Management: 80%**

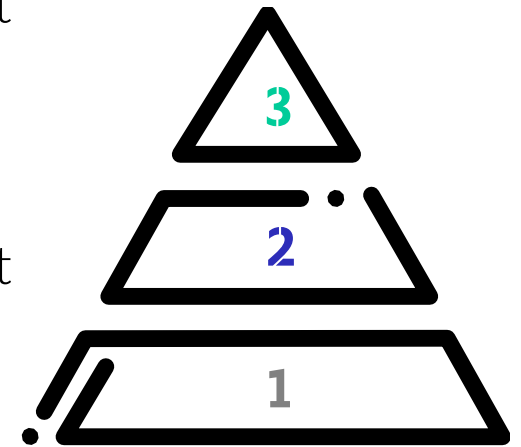
- Clear behavioral expectations
- Effective class-wide management strategies
- Universal behavior screening

# RTI/MTSS Continuum of Services: Tiers 1-3

**Tier 3: Intensive Intervention (1-5%).** Students who failed to respond to lesser interventions are reviewed by the RTI/MTSS problem-solving team and receive an individualized intervention plan. Groups are capped at 3 students and meet daily for at least 30 minutes.

**Tier 2: Strategic Intervention (10-15%).** Students receive small-group intervention (group size of 5-7) at least 3 times weekly for 30 minutes. The focus is on finding and fixing off-grade-level skill gaps.

**Tier 1: Classroom Instruction (100%).** The teacher provides strong core instruction, differentiates as needed for individual students.



# Continuum of MTSS: Across Grade Levels



Elementary School



Middle School



High School



# RTI/MTSS: Decision Rules: Identifying the 'Non-Responding' Student in Academics

The student:

- received interventions in current classroom to address concerns.
- has completed a combination of 3 or more 'intervention trials' at Tiers 2 & 3 (with at least one at Tier 3)—each lasting 6-8 weeks.
- continues to show a large academic 'performance deficit'.
- has failed to close the academic gap with peers (as measured by school-wide screening tools).


The RTI/MTSS 'evidence trail' shows the interventions were:

- research-based.
- appropriately matched to the student concern.
- carried out with integrity.

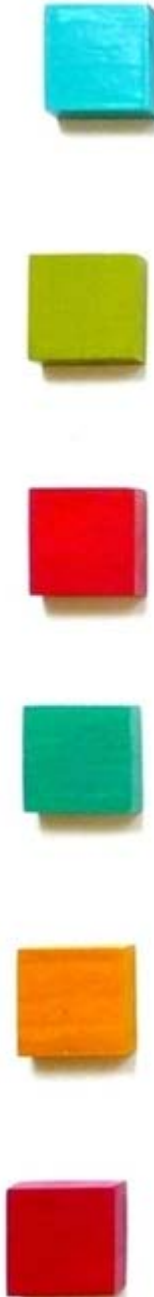


## RTI/MTSS for Academic Support: Key Ideas

1. **Early intervention is cost-effective.** Small academic problems are easier and less costly to fix than big problems.
2. **Interventions are put into writing.** Teachers write down individual interventions so that other educators can know what strategies do or do not benefit those learners.
3. **Data determines who needs interventions.** The school uses academic data to move students into / out of intervention services.
4. **Interventions are monitored.** Teachers collect progress-monitoring data for any RTI/MTSS intervention that 'counts' –so they can judge whether it is actually helping the student.
5. **RTI/MTSS is everyone's responsibility.** Every educator in the school has a defined role and toolkit of resources to participate in RTI/MTSS for academics.



*Pivot Points.* What are key classroom competencies that ANY student needs for school success?



## The Struggling Student in a General-Education

### Setting: Pivot Points



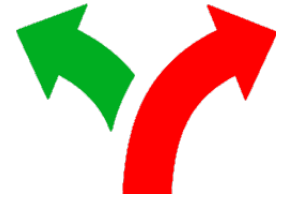
**Directions.** The student competencies in the table below represent 'pivot points'—opportunities for educators to support the at-risk student to 'pivot' them toward school success. Number in descending order the 5 competencies that you believe pose the greatest challenge for students in your classroom or school to attain.

Ranking	Student Competency
	A. <b>Basic Academic Skills.</b> The student has sufficient mastery of basic academic skills (e.g., reading fluency) to complete classwork.
	B. <b>Academic Survival Skills.</b> The student possesses the academic survival skills (e.g., homework skills, time management, organization) necessary to manage their learning.
	C. <b>Work Completion.</b> The student independently completes in-class work and homework.
	D. <b>Transitions.</b> The student flexibly adapts to changing academic routines and behavioral expectations across activities and settings (e.g., content-area classes; specials).
	E. <b>Attentional Focus.</b> The student has a grade- or age-appropriate ability to focus attention in large and small groups and when working independently.
	F. <b>Emotional Control.</b> The student manages emotions across settings, responding appropriately to setbacks and frustrations.
	G. <b>Peer Interactions.</b> The student collaborates productively and has positive social interactions with peers.
	H. <b>Self-Efficacy.</b> The student possesses a positive view of their academic abilities, believing that increased effort paired with effective work practices will result in improved outcomes ('growth mindset').
	I. <b>Self-Understanding.</b> The student can articulate their relative patterns of strength and weakness in academic skills, general conduct, and social-emotional functioning.
	J. <b>Self-Advocacy.</b> The student advocates for their needs and negotiates effectively with adults.

Handout 1  
p. 2



# The Struggling Student in a General-Education Setting: Pivot Points



Successful students must be able to juggle many competencies simultaneously as they negotiate complex classroom demands.

The following slides present 10 such pivot points that include competencies in academics, behavior, self-management, and motivation.

Teachers can play an important role in supporting the struggling student by identifying potentially weak pivot points and assisting the learner to attain them.

# Pivot Points: Strengthening the Student Skillset

Basic academic skills

Emotional control

Academic  
'survival skills'

Peer interactions

Work completion

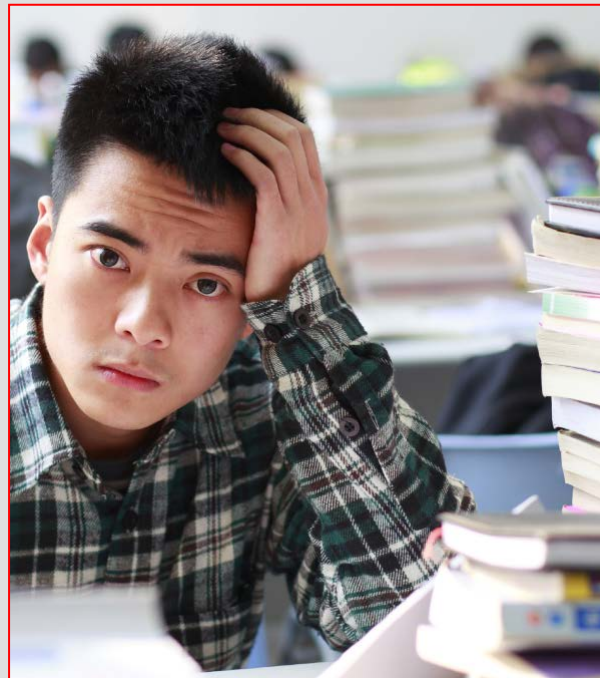
Self-efficacy

Transitions

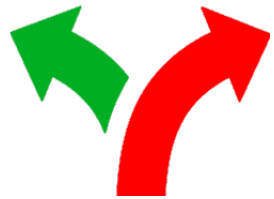
Self-understanding

Attentional focus

Self-advocacy



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



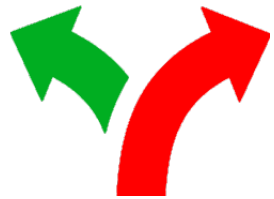
1. **Basic Academic Skills.** The student has sufficient mastery of basic academic skills (e.g., reading fluency) to complete classwork.



2. **Academic Survival Skills.** The student possesses the academic survival skills (e.g. homework skills, time management, organization) necessary to manage their learning.



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



3. **Work Completion.** The student independently completes in-class work and homework.



4. **Transitions.** The student flexibly adapts to changing academic routines and behavioral expectations across activities and settings (e.g., content-area classes; specials).



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



5. **Attentional Focus.** The student has a grade- or age-appropriate ability to focus attention in large and small groups and when working independently.



6. **Emotional Control.** The student manages emotions across settings, responding appropriately to setbacks and frustrations.



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



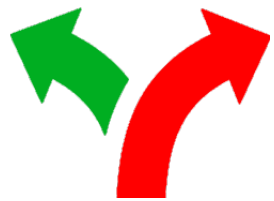
7. **Peer Interactions.** The student collaborates productively and has positive social interactions with peers.



8. **Self-Efficacy.** The student possesses a positive view of their academic abilities, believing that increased effort paired with effective work practices will result in improved outcomes ('growth mindset').



## Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



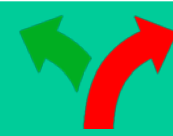
9. **Self-Understanding.** The student can articulate their relative patterns of strength and weakness in academic skills, general conduct, and social-emotional functioning.



10. **Self-Advocacy.** The student advocates for their needs and negotiates effectively with adults.



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General-Education Setting: ACTIVITY



05:00

1. **Basic Academic Skills.** The student has sufficient mastery of

**DIRECTIONS.** Review the 10 'pivot points' discussed today.

1. Select up to **3** that you or your school find most challenging.

2. Number those selected in order from greatest ('1') to least ('3') importance.

3. Be prepared to report out.

10. **Self-Advocacy.** The student advocates for their needs and negotiates effectively with adults.

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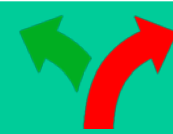
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# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General-Education Setting: ACTIVITY



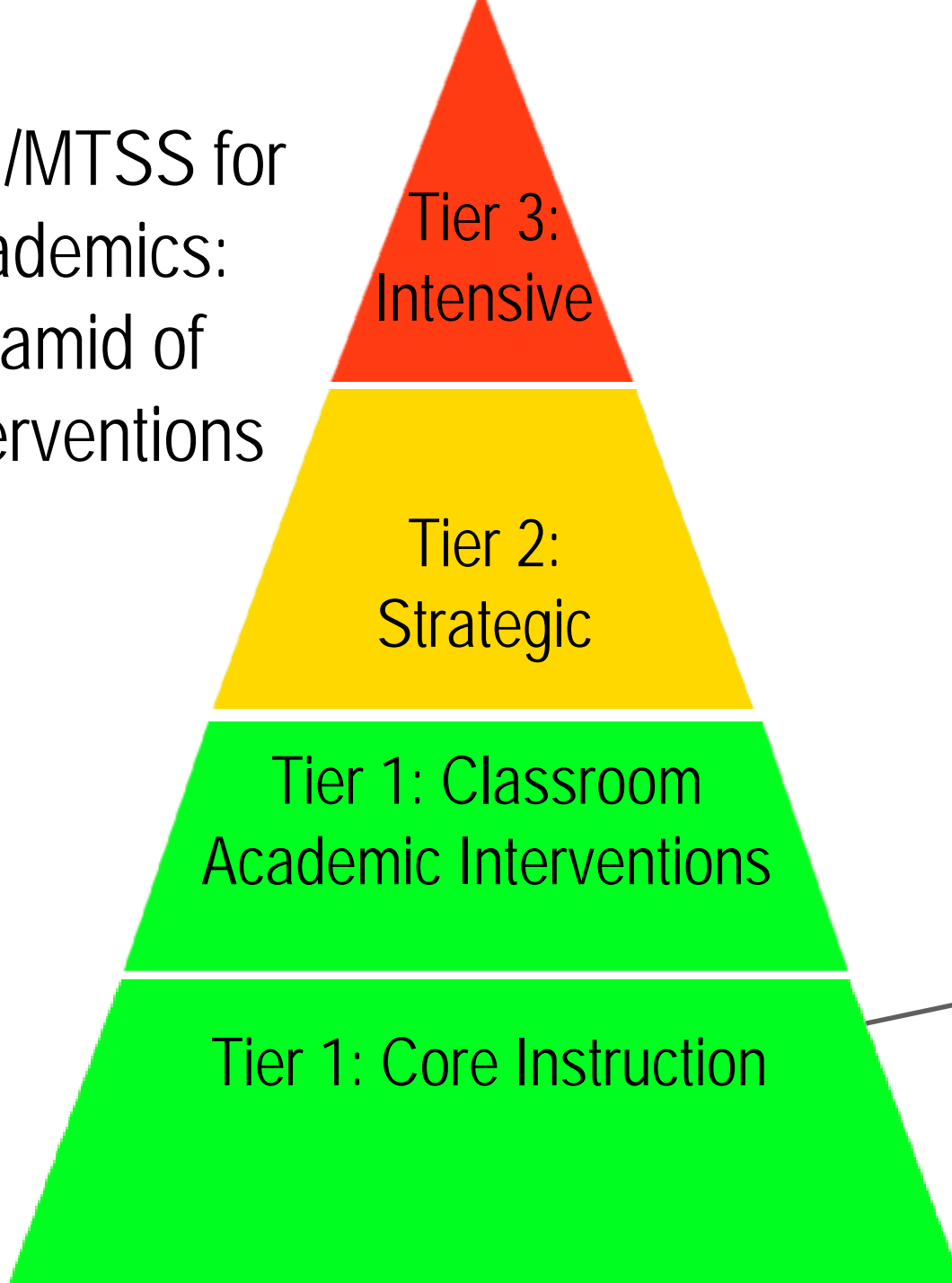
InterventionCentral  
5-Minute 'Count Down' Timer  
**05:00**  
[www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)

1. **Basic Academic Skills.** The student has sufficient mastery of basic academic skills (e.g., reading fluency) to complete classwork.
2. **Academic Survival Skills.** The student possesses the academic survival skills (e.g., homework skills, time management, organization) necessary to manage their learning.
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## CLOSE-UP: Tier 1: Delivering Strong Instruction to All Students



RTI/MTSS for  
Academics:  
Pyramid of  
Interventions



Tier 3:  
Intensive

Tier 2:  
Strategic

Tier 1: Classroom  
Academic Interventions

Tier 1: Core Instruction

**Tier 1: Core Instruction (100%).** Teachers in all classrooms deliver effective instruction to reach the widest range of learners.

# MTSS: Tier 1: Core Instruction

- Strong core instructional practices are the **foundation** of MTSS. They underlie and strengthen **classroom instruction**.

When teachers are able successfully to teach across the **full range** of classroom ability levels, individualized **interventions** may not be needed.

Strong instruction includes making optimal use of **instructional time**, integrating **direct-instruction elements** into lessons, and providing **accommodations & supports** as appropriate.

# The Challenge of Learning Differences...

Students often bring learning differences to their general-education classrooms that significantly impact their success.



Learning  
Problems

Attention



Behavior

Language  
Issues



One positive step is to have an efficient toolkit of research-based instructional strategies appropriate for the entire class.

# MTSS: Tier 1: Core Instruction: **Direct Instruction**

Teachers can strengthen their lessons by incorporating into them elements of direct instruction.

Handout: pp. 3-4

## How To: Implement Strong Core Instruction

Teacher:  Date:  Class/Lesson:

The checklist below summarizes the essential elements of a supported-instruction approach. When preparing lesson plans, instructors can use this resource as a 'pre-flight' checklist to make sure that their lessons reach the widest range of diverse learners.

1. Increase Access to Instruction	
Instructional Element	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Instructional Match.</b> Lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Content Review at Lesson Start.</b> The lesson opens with a brief review of concepts or material that have previously been presented. (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preview of Lesson Goal(s).</b> At the start of instruction, the goals of the current day's lesson are shared (Rosenhine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chunking of New Material.</b> The teacher breaks new material into small, manageable increments, 'chunks', or steps (Rosenhine, 2008).	

2. Provided 'Scaffolding' Support	
Instructional Element	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Detailed Explanations &amp; Instructions.</b> Throughout the lesson, the teacher provides adequate explanations and detailed instructions for all concepts and materials being taught (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Think-Alouds/Talk-Alouds.</b> When presenting cognitive strategies that cannot be observed directly, the teacher describes those strategies for students. Verbal explanations include 'talk-alouds' (e.g., the teacher describes and explains each step of a cognitive strategy) and 'think-alouds' (e.g., the teacher applies a cognitive strategy to a particular problem or task and verbalizes the steps in applying the strategy) (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Work Models.</b> The teacher makes exemplars of academic work (e.g., essays, completed math word problems) available to students for use as models (Rosenhine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Active Engagement.</b> The teacher ensures that the lesson engages the student in 'active accurate responding' (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005) often enough to capture student attention and to optimize learning.	

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

## 1. Access to Instruction

- Instructional Match
- Content Review at Lesson Start
- Preview of Lesson Goal(s)
- Chunking of New Material

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support

- Detailed Explanations & Instructions
- Talk Alouds/Think Alouds
- Work Models
- Active Engagement
- Collaborative Assignments
- Checks for Understanding

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support (Cont.)

- Group Responding
- High Rate of Student Success
- Brisk Rate of Instruction
- Fix-Up Strategies

## 3. Timely Performance Feedback

- Regular Feedback
- Step-by-Step Checklists

## 4. Opportunities for Review/ Practice

- Spacing of Practice Throughout Lesson
- Guided Practice
- Support for Independent Practice
- Distributed Practice

# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Increase Access to Instruction*

1. **Instructional Match.** Lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).
2. **Content Review at Lesson Start.** The lesson opens with a brief review of concepts or material that have previously been presented. (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).



# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Increase Access to Instruction*

3. **Preview of Lesson Goal(s).** At the start of instruction, the goals of the current day's lesson are shared (Rosenshine, 2008).
4. **Chunking of New Material.** The teacher breaks new material into small, manageable increments, 'chunks', or steps (Rosenshine, 2008).

# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Provide 'Scaffolding' Support*

1. **Detailed Explanations & Instructions.** Throughout the lesson, the teacher provides adequate explanations and detailed instructions for all concepts and materials being taught (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).
2. **Talk-Alouds/Think-Alouds.** Verbal explanations are given to explain cognitive strategies: 'talk-alouds' (e.g., the teacher describes and explains each step of a cognitive strategy) and 'think-alouds' (e.g., the teacher applies a cognitive strategy to a particular problem or task and verbalizes the steps in applying the strategy) (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).

# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Provide 'Scaffolding' Support*

- 3. Work Models.** The teacher makes exemplars of academic work (e.g., essays, completed math word problems) available to students for use as models (Rosenshine, 2008).
- 4. Active Engagement.** The teacher ensures that the lesson engages the student in 'active accurate responding' (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005) often enough to capture student attention and to optimize learning.

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

## 1. Access to Instruction

- Instructional Match
- Content Review at Lesson Start
- Preview of Lesson Goal(s)
- Chunking of New Material

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support

- Detailed Explanations & Instructions
- Talk Alouds/Think Alouds
- Work Models
- Active Engagement
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## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support (Cont.)

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- Support for Independent Practice
- Distributed Practice



# Motivating Students Through Collaboration: Numbered Heads Together (Online)



**The Need.** Teacher questioning during whole-group instruction is a key way for instructors to monitor student understanding of content. When questioning:

- instructors should use a mix of closed-response queries (i.e., limited number of correct responses) and open-response questions (i.e., wide range of acceptable answers, opinions, or judgments).
- students should have enough wait-time to formulate an adequate answer.,
- the teacher should provide targeted performance feedback (Maheady et al., 2006).

# Motivating Students Through Collaboration: Numbered Heads Together

- **Solution.** Numbered Heads Together is an instructional technique build upon peer collaboration that provides the supports and structure necessary to promote effective teacher questioning and student responding (Maheady et al., 2006). This technique can be useful for students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD) (Hunter & Haydon, 2013).

# Motivating Students Through Collaboration: Numbered Heads Together

**Procedure:** During whole-group instruction, Numbered Heads Together is implemented using the following steps:

1. **Create teams.** The teacher divides the class into 4-person teams. Ideally, each team includes a mix of high, average, and low-achieving students. Students in each team assign themselves the numbers 1 through 4. (Note: If a team has only 3 members, one student takes two numbers: 3 and 4.)

# Motivating Students Through Collaboration: Numbered Heads Together

2. **State a question.** The teacher poses separate queries to the class. After each question, the instructor tells students to *"put your heads together, think of the best answer you can, and make sure that everybody in your group knows that answer."*
3. **Allow think-time.** The teacher gives students 30 seconds to discuss an answer in their groups.





# Motivating Students Through Collaboration: Numbered Heads Together



- 4. Elicit student responses.** The teacher randomly selects a number from 1-4 and says, "*All number [1, 2, 3, or 4] students who know the answer, raise your hand.*" The teacher then calls on one student with hand raised and asks him or her to give the answer. The teacher next says, "*How many [1, 2, 3, or 4] students think that that answer is correct? Raise your hand.*" [Optional: The teacher can call on additional students with hand raised to elaborate on a previous student's answer.]

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

## 1. Access to Instruction

- Instructional Match
- Content Review at Lesson Start
- Preview of Lesson Goal(s)
- Chunking of New Material

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support

- Detailed Explanations & Instructions
- Talk Alouds/Think Alouds
- Work Models
- Active Engagement
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- Support for Independent Practice
- Distributed Practice

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

## 1. Access to Instruction

Instructional Match

Co  
 Pre  
**Activity: Strong Direct Instruction**

Ch  
1. Review this list of elements of **direct instruction**.

2. Discuss how your school might use this or a similar checklist to create school-wide expectations for strong, consistent Tier 1 (core) instruction to benefit struggling learners.

Checks for Understanding

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support (Cont.)

Group Responding

High Rate of Student Success

Brisk Rate of Instruction

Fix-Up Strategies

**Timely Performance Feedback**

Regular Feedback

Step-by-Step Checklists

**Opportunities for Review/ Practice**

Spacing of Practice Throughout Lesson

Guided Practice

Support for Independent Practice

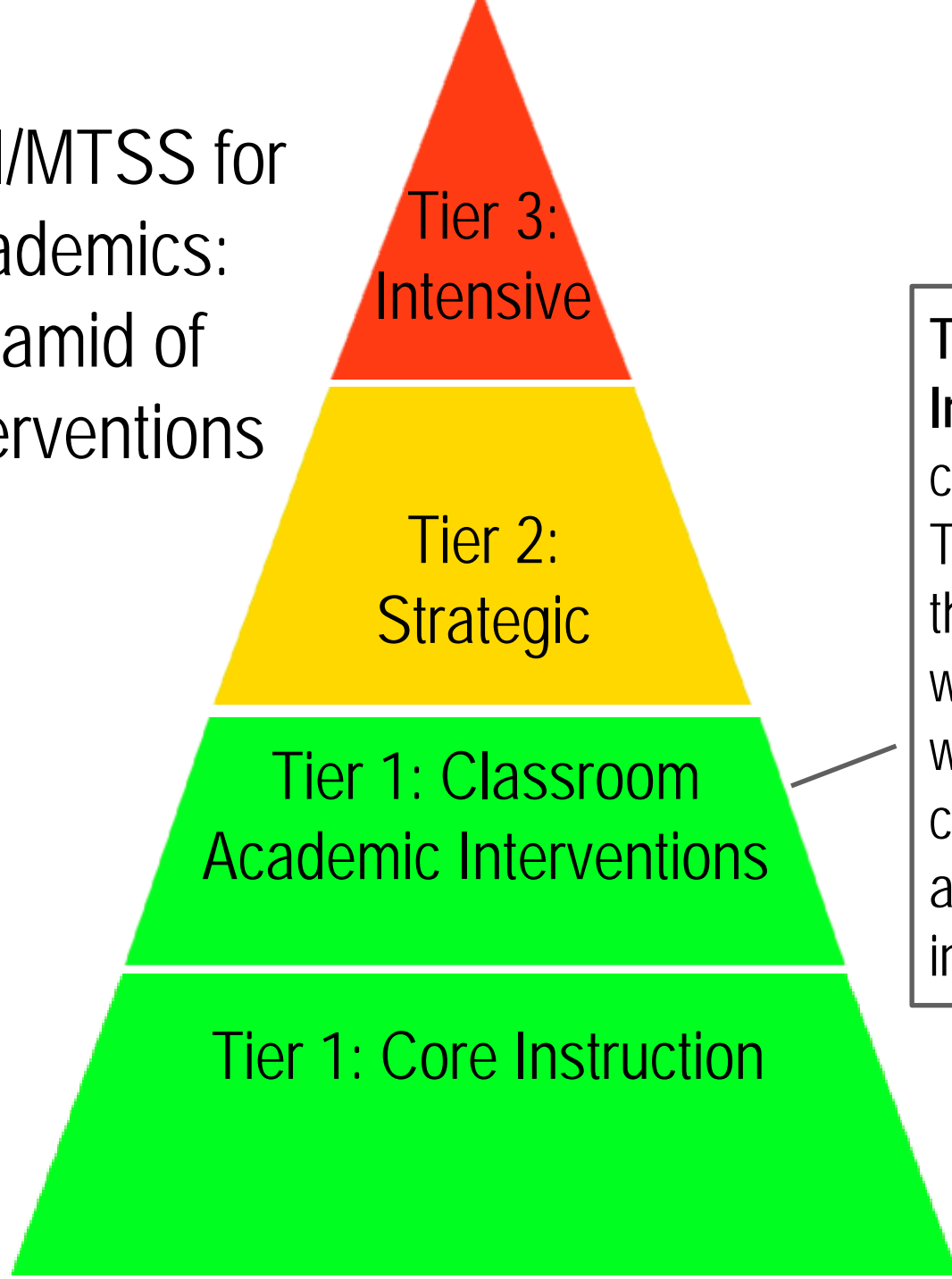
Distributed Practice



CLOSE-UP: Tier 1:  
Helping the Classroom  
Teacher to Become an  
Intervention 'First  
Responder'



RTI/MTSS for  
Academics:  
Pyramid of  
Interventions



**Tier 1: Classroom Intervention.** The classroom teacher provides Tier 1 interventions to those individual students with academic difficulties who need additional classroom support to achieve success in core instruction.

# MTSS: Tier 1: Classroom Intervention

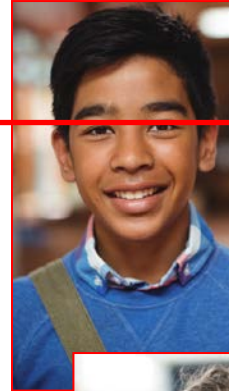
- Teachers sometimes need to put reading (or other academic) interventions in place for **'red flag' students**. These are students whose **delays** or **difficulties** require a sustained **remediation plan** that will last at least several weeks.

Tier 1 interventions take place in the **classroom**, typically **during core instruction**.

Tier 1 interventions are often modest in scope but can still have strong **positive outcomes**. They follow the full MTSS **problem-solving approach**--adapted to the realities of a busy classroom environment.

# RTI Files...

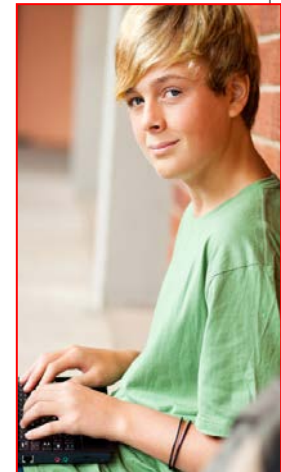
Case 1: Tomás: Grade 7:  
Reading Comprehension



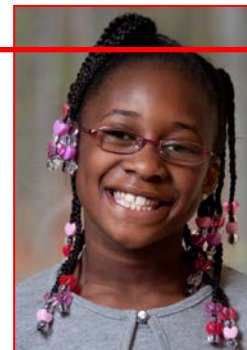
Case 2: Jacqueline:  
Grade 1: Letter Knowledge



Case 3: Russell: Grade 10: Attendance  
& Preparedness



Case 4: Neda: Grade 4:  
Math-Fact Fluency



# RTI Files: Case 1

Tomás

Grade 7

*Problem:* Reading  
comprehension

*Intervention:* Read-  
Ask-Paraphrase





# RTI Files: Case 1

- **Problem:** When Tomás reads assigned informational passages independently, he does not always retain the key ideas.
- **Intervention:** His Social Studies instructor, Mr. Garber, decides to teach Tomás to use **Read-Ask-Paraphrase (RAP)**, a self-managed reading comprehension strategy. The student will then use RAP on all assigned readings.



### Reading Comprehension: Self-Management Strategies

- **RETAIN TEXT INFORMATION WITH PARAPHRASING (RAP).** The student is trained to use a 3-step cognitive strategy when reading each paragraph of an informational-text passage: (1) **READ** the paragraph; (2) **ASK** oneself what the main idea of the paragraph is and what two key details support that main idea; (3) **PARAPHRASE** the main idea and two supporting details into one's own words. This 3-step strategy is easily memorized using the acronym **RAP** (read-ask-paraphrase). **OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED:** Create an organizer sheet with spaces for the student to record main idea and supporting details of multiple paragraphs—to be used with the RAP strategy—to be used as an organizer and verifiable work product.

## Read-Ask-Paraphrase (RAP) Sheet

Name: Date: Title/Pages of Reading: 

Student Directions: For each paragraph from your assigned reading, (1) READ the paragraph; (2) ASK yourself what the main idea of the paragraph is and what two key details support that main idea; (3) PARAPHRASE the main idea and two supporting details in your own words and write them in the blank provided.

## Read-Ask-Paraphrase: STEPS:

1. **Read:** Read the paragraph closely.
2. **Ask:** What is the main idea and 2 supporting details?
3. **Paraphrase:** Write key idea and details in your own words.

READ-ASK-PARAPHRASE  
(RAP) Sheet: Reading  
Comprehension: Cognitive  
Strategy (Available on  
Conference Web Page)

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5

# RTI Files: Case 1

- **Progress-Monitoring:** Mr. Garber already assesses class-wide comprehension of assigned readings once per week with a brief bell-ringer quiz (5-item: short-answer).



At **baseline**, Tomás is earning quiz grades averaging 40 percent (2 of 5 correct). The **outcome goal** in 6 weeks is for Tomás to earn quiz grades of 80 percent or higher.

*Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs)*. RATs are brief teacher-made assignments that students complete *after* reading but *before* that reading is reviewed in class (Weinstein & Wu, 2009). The teacher identifies the most relevant information from the assigned reading and constructs a few questions (e.g., 5) to test that knowledge.

The instructor selects the RAT-question format: short-answer; essay; multiple-choice, or any combination.

## *Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs): Sample Questions.*

### *Multiple Choice.*

A solar eclipse occurs when:

- A. the sun cools and dims.
- B. the moon passes between the earth and sun.
- C. the earth spins on its axis.
- D. the earth blocks moonlight.

### *Short Answer.*

A solar eclipse occurs when the \_\_\_\_\_ passes  
between the \_\_\_\_\_ and sun.

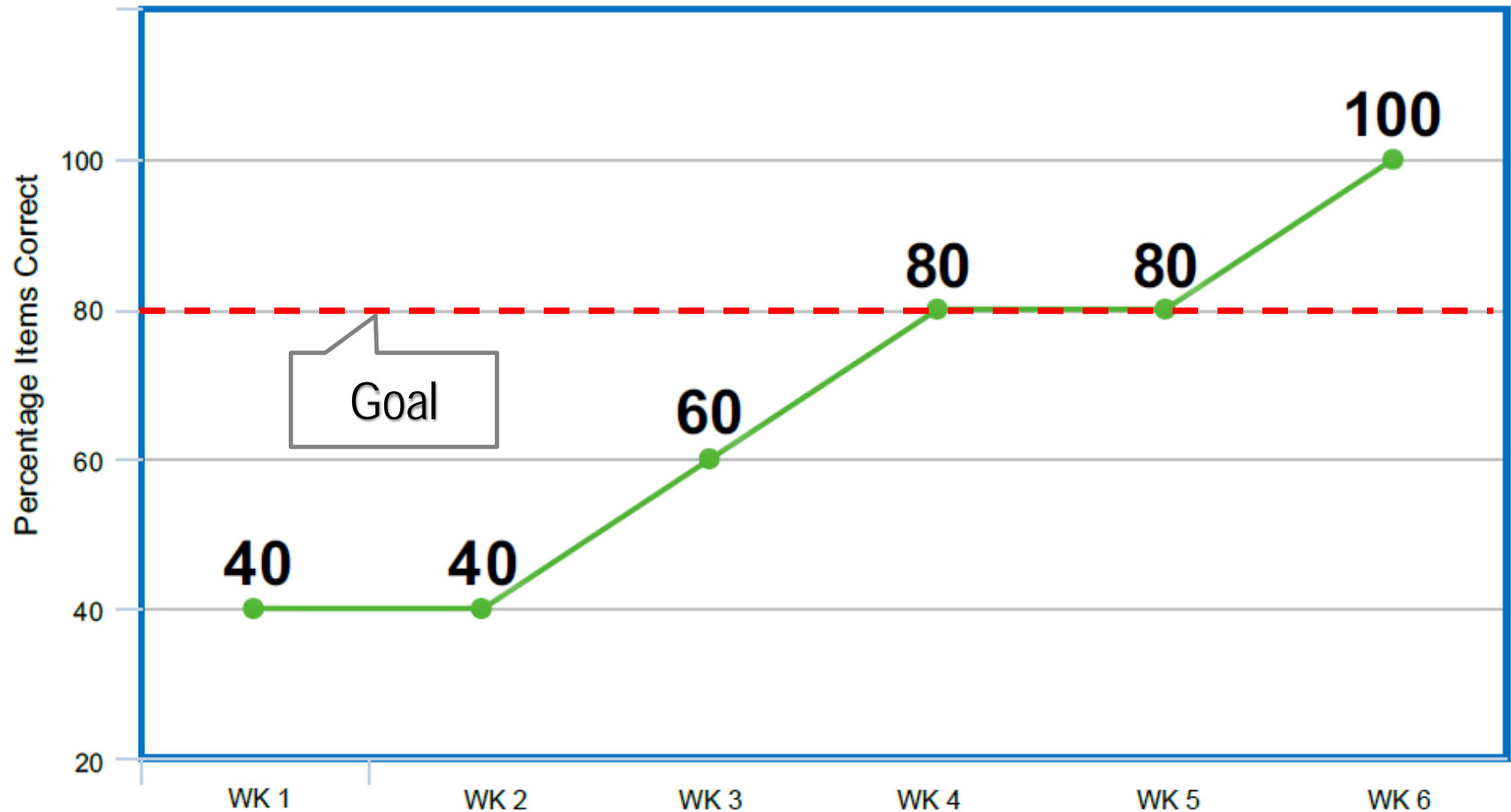
### *Essay*

Write a brief essay explaining the cause of a solar eclipse.

# RTI Files: Case 1

Tomás: Grade 7: Read-Ask-Paraphrase

Tomás: Bell-Ringer Quiz Grades



# RTI Files: Case 1: Take-Away

- With many middle- and high-school classroom academic interventions (such as **Read-Ask-Paraphrase**), the student is the interventionist and the teacher is the coach.
- That is, students are encouraged to become self-managing learners, mastering and using effective strategies on their own.



# RTI Files: Case 3

Russell  
Grade 10

*Problem:*

Attendance and  
preparedness

*Intervention:*

Learning Contract



# RTI Files: Case 3

- **Problem:** Russell is often tardy to his science class. He is also frequently unprepared, not bringing work materials or turning in assignments.
- **Intervention:** Russell's science teacher, Mr. Rappaport, meets with the student during the school's 'extra-help' period. In that session, he works with Russell to develop a **learning contract**.



### Learning Contracts: Put Student Promises in Writing...

- **Description.** A learning contract is a voluntary, student-completed document that outlines actions the learner promises to take in a course to achieve academic success.
- This contract is signed by the student, the instructor, and (optionally) the parent.

*Sources:* Frank, T., & Scharff, L. F. V. (2013). Learning contracts in undergraduate courses: Impacts on student behaviors and academic performance. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(4), 36-53.

Greenwood, S. C., & McCabe, P. P. (2008). How learning contracts motivate students. *Middle School Journal*, 39(5), 13-22.

## Learning Contract: Example

Name: Russell B. Teacher: Mr. Rappaport Class/Course: Science 10 Date: Feb 4, 2018

### Russell B: Success Contract: Science 10

I am taking part in this learning contract to improve my grades and pass the course.

#### Student Responsibilities

I have chosen to complete the following actions:

- 1 I will arrive to class on time.
- 2 I will bring my work materials to class, including paper, notebook, textbook, and current assignments.
- 3 I will keep my desk organized during independent work.
- 4 I will submit any current homework at the start of class.

#### Teacher Responsibilities

My teacher will help me to achieve success in this course through these actions/supports:

1. Weekly reminders about any missing homework.
2. Extra-help period available for challenging assignments.
- 3.
- 4.

#### Length of Contract

The terms of this contract will continue until:

April 8, 2018: At that point, teacher and student will review progress and decide whether to continue, amend, or end this learning contract.

#### Sign-Offs

<i>Mr. Rappaport</i>	<i>Russell B.</i>	
Mr. Rappaport Teacher	Russell B. Student	[Parent Name] Parent

# Learning Contracts: Put Student Promises in Writing...

## **Benefits.** Learning contracts:

- provide academic structure and support,
- motivate struggling learners by having them pledge publicly to engage in specific, positive study and learning behaviors, and
- serve as a vehicle to bring teachers and students to agreement on what course goals are important and how to achieve them.

*Sources:* Frank, T., & Scharff, L. F. V. (2013). Learning contracts in undergraduate courses: Impacts on student behaviors and academic performance. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(4), 36-53.

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<i>Mr. Rappaport</i>	<i>Russell B.</i>	
Mr. Rappaport	Russell B.	[Parent Name]
Teacher	Student	Parent

Name: Russell B. Teacher: Mr. Rappaport Class/Course: Science 10 Date: Feb 4, 2018

I am taking part in this learning contract to improve my grades and pass the course.

Contract: Science 10

... and pass the course.

... have chosen to complete the following actions:

- 1 I will arrive to class on time.
- 2 I will bring my work materials to class, including paper, notebook, textbook, and current assignments.
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Sign-Offs

Mr. Rappaport	Russell B.	
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Mr. Rappaport Teacher	Russell B. Student	[Parent Name] Parent
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Learning Contract

**Statement of Purpose.** The contract opens with a statement presenting a rationale for why the contract is being implemented.

## Learning Contract: Example

Name: Russell B.      Teacher: Mr. Rappaport      Class/Course: Science 10      Date: Feb 4, 2018

### Russell B: Success Contract: Science 10

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Mr. Rappaport Teacher	Russell B. Student	[Parent Name] Parent



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## Russell B: Success Contract: Science 10

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### Student Responsibilities-----

I have chosen to complete the following actions:

- 1 I will arrive to class on time.
- 2 I will bring my work materials to class, including paper, notes, and assignments.
- 3 I will keep my desk organized during independent work.
- 4 I will submit any current homework at the start of class.

**Student Actions.** The contract lists any actions that the student is pledging to complete to ensure success in the course.

Sign-Offs-----

*Mr. Rappaport*

*Russell B.*

Mr. Rappaport  
Teacher

Russell B.  
Student

[Parent Name]  
Parent

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[Parent Name]  
Parent

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Russell B: Success Contract: Science 10

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Responsibilities

I have chosen to complete the following actions:

I will arrive to class on time.

I will bring my work materials to class, including paper, notebook, textbook, and current assignments.

I will keep my desk organized during independent work.

I will submit any current homework at the start of class.

Teacher Responsibilities

My teacher will help me to achieve success in this course through these actions/supports:

**Teacher Actions.** Listing teacher responsibilities on the contract emphasizes that success in the course is a shared endeavor and can prod the student to take advantage of instructor supports that might otherwise be overlooked.

**Teacher Responsibilities**

My teacher will help me to achieve success in this course through these actions/supports:

1. Weekly reminders about any missing homework.
2. Extra-help period available for challenging assignments.
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Mr. Rappaport Teacher	Russell B. Student	[Parent Name] Parent
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#### Sign-Offs

*Mr. Rappaport*

*Russell B.*

Mr. Rappaport  
Teacher

Russell B.  
Student

[Parent Name]  
Parent

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bring to class, including paper, notebook, textbook, and current

independent work.

at the start of class.

in this course through these actions/supports:

ing homework.

challenging assignments.

due until:

at that point, teacher and student will review progress and decide whether to  
or end this learning contract.

### Sign-Offs

*Mr. Rappaport*

*Russell B.*

Mr. Rappaport

Russell B.

[Parent Name]

Teacher

Student

Parent

**Sign-Off.** Both student and teacher (and, optionally, the parent) sign the learning contract. The student signature in particular indicates a voluntary acceptance of the learning contract and a public pledge to follow through on its terms.

## Learning Contract: Example

Name: Russell B. Teacher: Mr. Rappaport Class/Course: Science 10 Date: Feb 4, 2018

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Mr. Rappaport	Russell B.	[Parent Name]
Teacher	Student	Parent

# RTI Files: Case 3

- **Progress-Monitoring:** Mr. Rappaport decides to measure intervention progress using a 4-item Daily Behavior Report (DBR). Each item is scored YES=1/NO=0— so Russell can earn a maximum of 4 points per day.



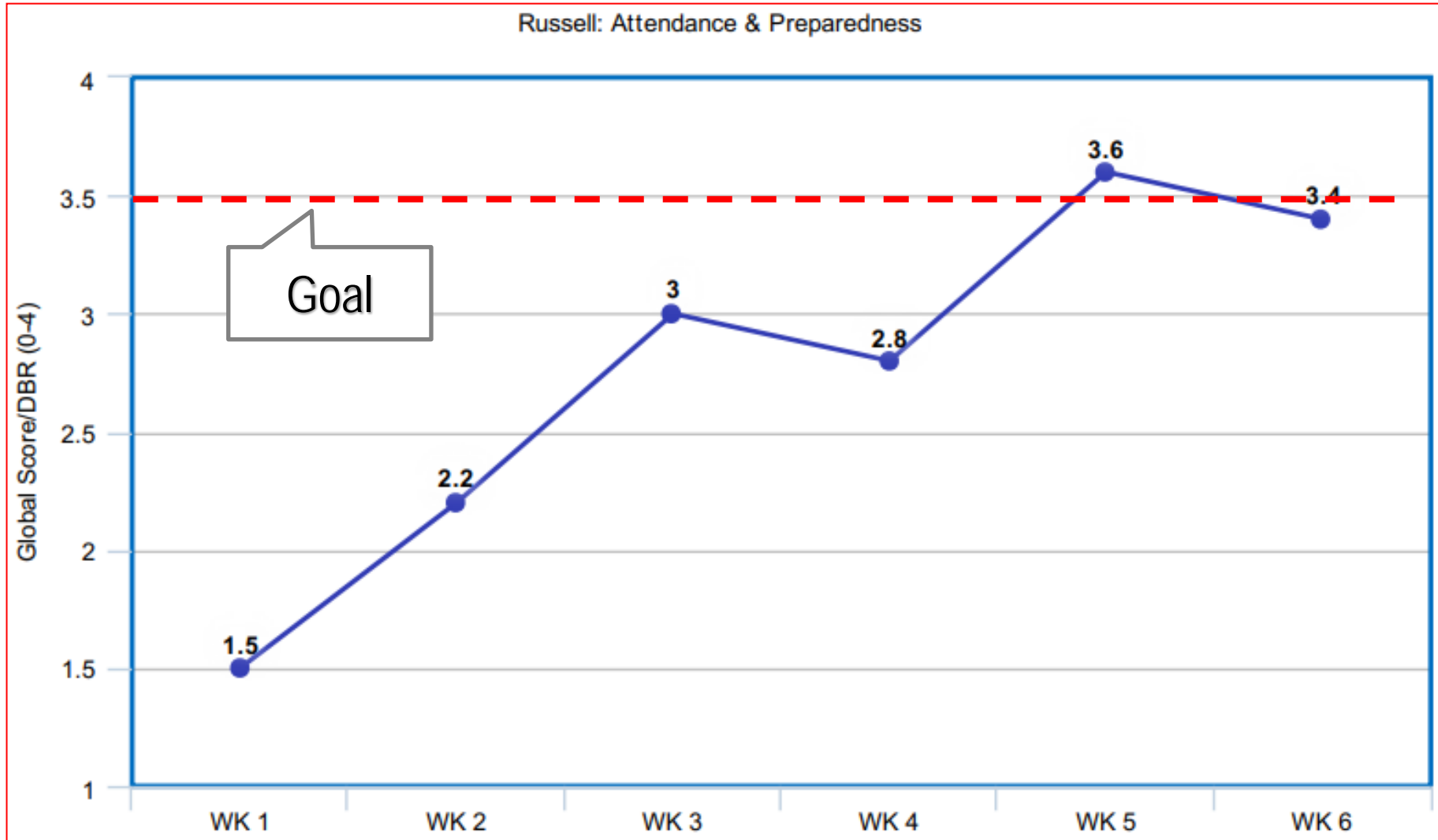
***Russell was on-time to science class.***

YES     NO

To monitor, the teacher calculates average daily scores per week. At **baseline**, Russell earns an average rating of 1.5 pts of 4. The **outcome goal** is that Russell will earn average weekly DBR scores of at least 3.5 pts of 4.

# RTI Files: Case 3

Russell: Grade 10: Attendance & Preparedness





# RTI Files: Case 3: Take-Away

- **Learning Contracts** are a great tool to record the outcome of parent conferences.

The list of strategies coming out of teacher/parent conferences to help a struggling learner are likely to qualify as 'RTI plans'—but only if they are written down. The act of creating a Learning Contract provides focus and structure to the meeting while also resulting in a written record of the plan.

# RTI Files...

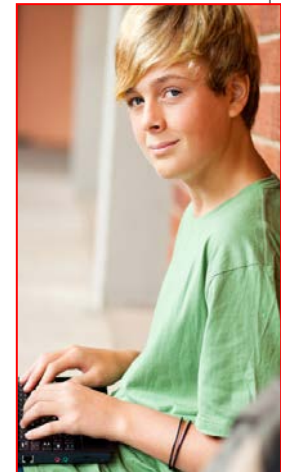
Case 1: Tomás: Grade 7:  
Reading Comprehension



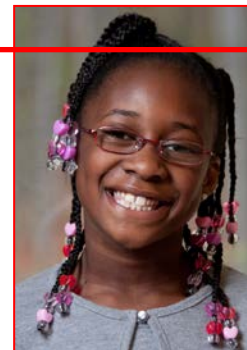
Case 2: Jacqueline:  
Grade 1: Letter Knowledge



Case 3: Russell: Grade 10: Attendance  
& Preparedness



Case 4: Neda: Grade 4:  
Math-Fact Fluency



# Teacher Problem-Solving: Just a Part of the Job...

Instructors regularly engage in problem-solving efforts, such as:

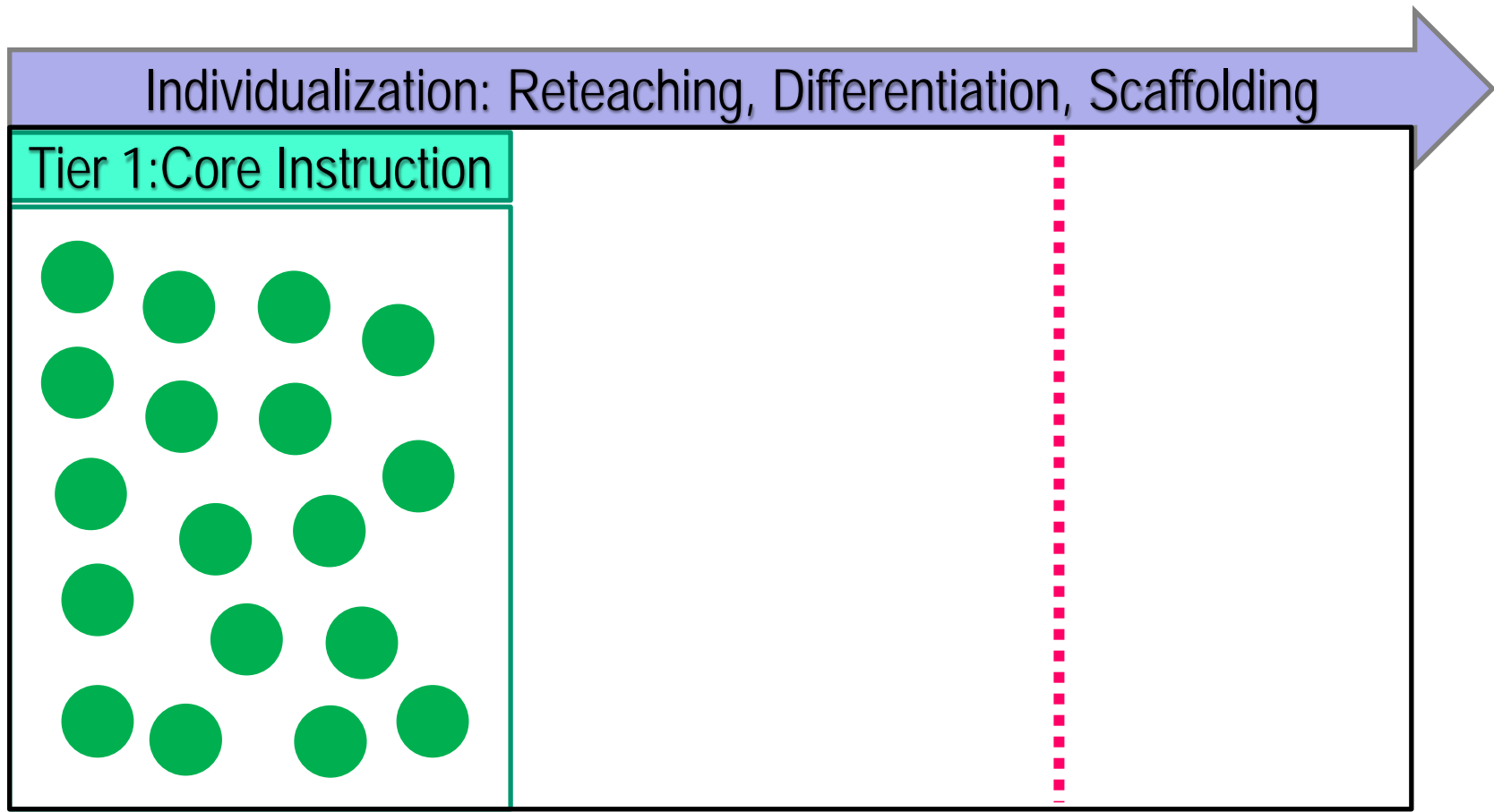
- searching the Internet for ideas to help a struggling learner.
- pulling a student aside to identify deficits in knowledge or skills and reteach instructional content as needed.
- conferencing with a student to develop an action-plan to improve academic performance.
- brainstorming with members of the grade-level or instructional team for ideas to support a student.
- meeting with a consultant (school psychologist; reading or math teacher, etc.) for intervention suggestions.
- scheduling student-parent conferences to enlist home and school to boost academic performance or address behaviors.

### Teacher Problem-Solving: All the Work, Little Credit...

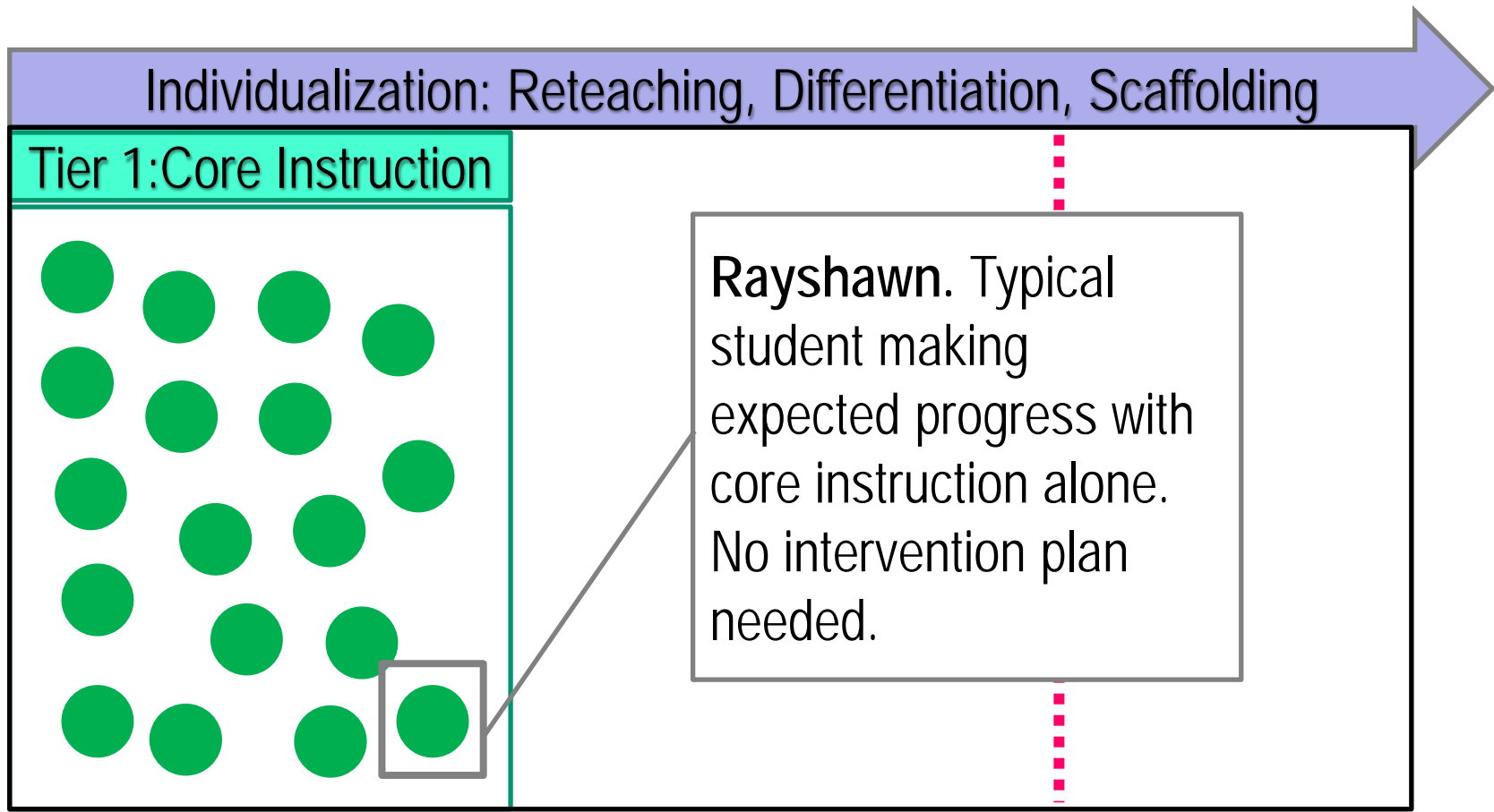
In this era of accountability, classroom intervention efforts are not acknowledged unless they are documented: *"Teachers are already doing 90% of the work. But they are often getting zero credit."*

RTI/MTSS provides a structure and toolkit for teachers to record and share classroom intervention plans. With little or no extra time, instructors can get full credit for their problem-solving work.

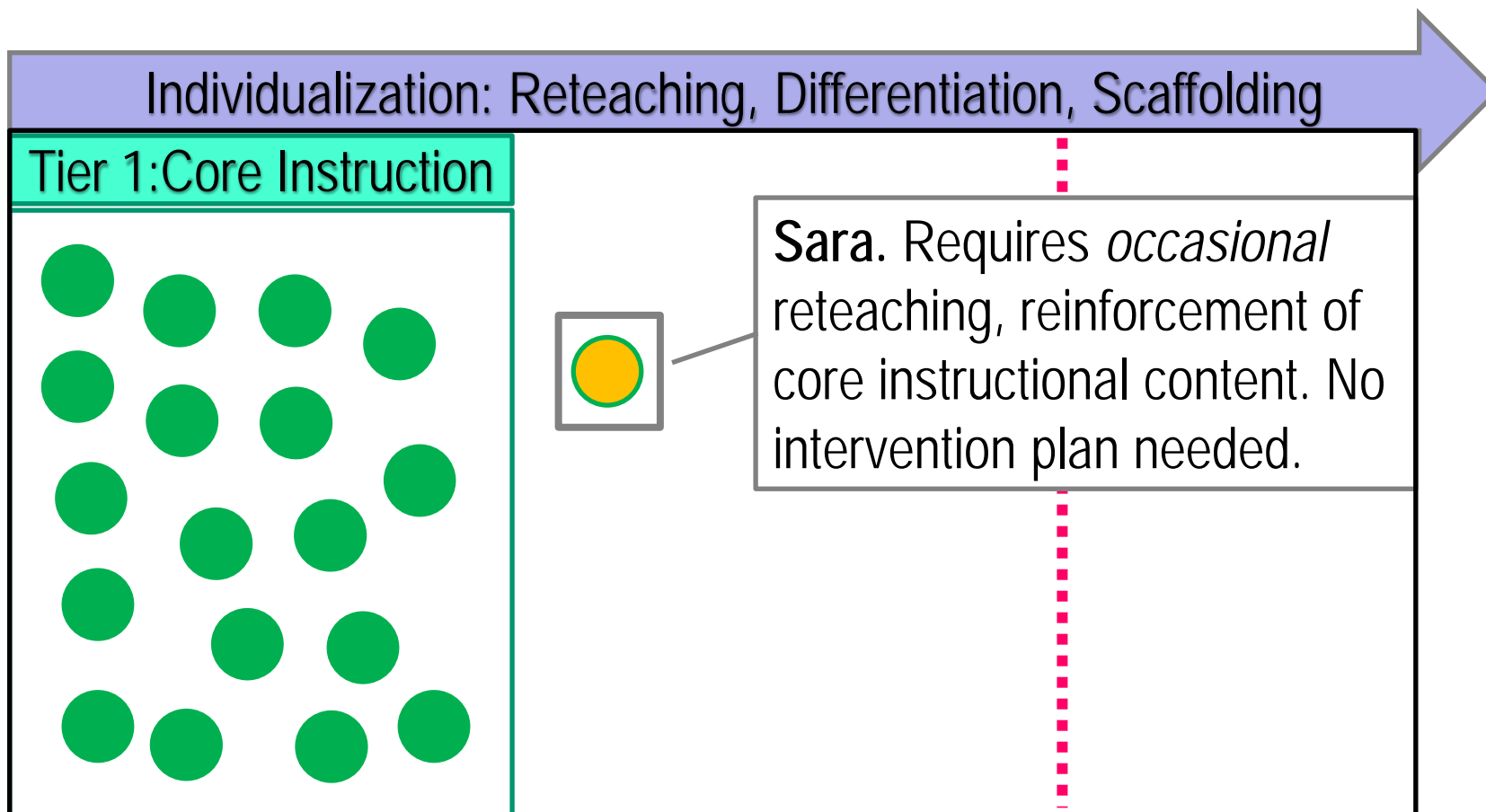
# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?



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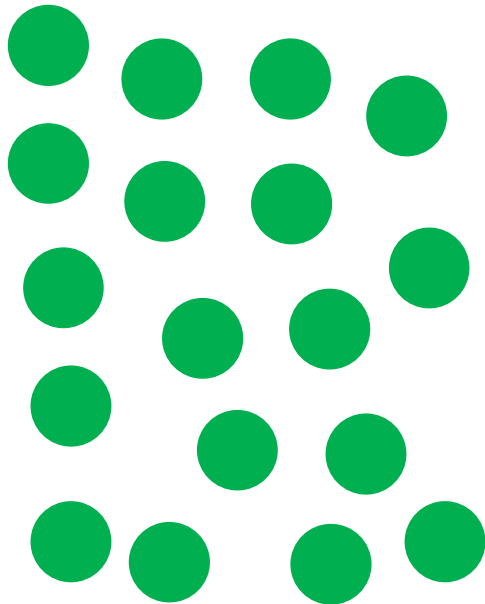
# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?



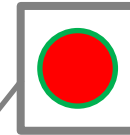
# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?

Individualization: Reteaching, Differentiation, Scaffolding

## Tier 1: Core Instruction



**Tomás.** Needs sustained teacher attention across several instructional weeks. Benefits from strategy to boost comprehension (i.e., Read-Ask-Paraphrase). Documentation of intervention plan recommended.





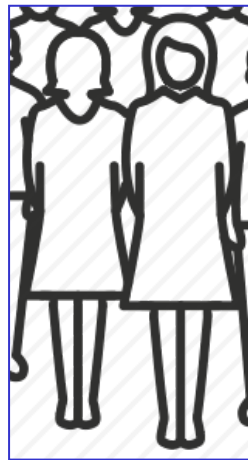
# Teachers & Classroom Support Plans: Finding the Balance

When helping teachers to plan Tier 1/classroom interventions, what is the right balance between *too little* and *too much* support?

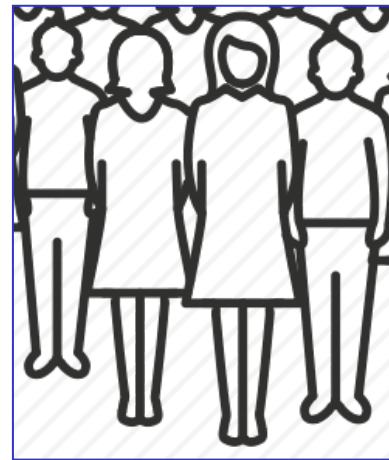
Teacher Alone



Teacher & Consultant



Teacher & Grade-Level/Instructional Team



Teacher & RTI Problem-Solving Team



Too *Little* Support

"Sweet Spot": Appropriate Support

Too *Much* Support



## Tier 1 Intervention Plans: Essentials...

- At Tier 1, problem-solving occurs when the teacher meets briefly with a team (e.g., grade-level team, instructional team, department) or a consultant.
- The teacher defines the student problem(s), selects intervention(s), decides how to monitor the intervention, and documents the intervention plan—with the guidance of the team or consultant
- The teacher meets again with team or consultant several weeks later to check on the status of the intervention.

# RTI/MTSS Classroom Support Plan: 'Message in a Bottle': Who might benefit?

**Colleagues.** Your intervention efforts can be read by your fellow teachers and future educators

**Parents & Student.** You can make the creation of the Classroom Support Plan the focus of student and parent conferences.



**RTI/MTSS Problem-Solving Team.** Your classroom intervention plan helps the team to make better recommendations.

**Special Education Eligibility Team.** Evidence of a classroom intervention plan is often a requirement when attempting to diagnose a learning disability or other IEP condition.

## Activity: What Are Your Expectations of the Teacher as Academic 'First Responder'? (Handout 1; p. 9)

- Imagine a teacher who has a student experiencing ongoing, serious academic difficulty in a class or course.
- Which of the responsibilities on the right do you feel would **not** be appropriate to expect of that classroom teacher to support this struggling student?



## Elements of Effective Classroom Academic Intervention

1. *Describe the student academic problem(s) clearly and specifically*
2. *Find/use effective academic-intervention strategies.*
3. *Use instructional adjustments/ accommodations as appropriate.*
4. *Record (write down) intervention efforts.*
5. *Collect data on whether academic performance improves*
6. *Communicate with the student.*
7. *Communicate with parent(s).*

**Teacher skills:** Teachers do not identify and prioritize student concerns in clear and specific terms.

**System:** Schools lack objective risk profiles to ensure equity in identifying students eligible for Tier 1/classroom interventions (e.g., being considered for retention; failing a course in second consecutive marking period).

**System:** Teachers lack an easily accessible intervention bank with sufficient ideas to address most common classroom concerns.

**System:** Teachers lack a supportive setting (e.g., consultant, instructional team meeting, etc.) to discuss interventions.

**System:** Schools lack a single, shared form/format to document (put into writing) Tier 1/classroom interventions.

**System:** Tier 1/classroom interventions are not routinely archived for long-term storage, indexing, and retrieval.



**Teacher skills:** Teachers do not identify and prioritize student concerns in clear and specific terms.

### Activity: Tier 1: Intervention Roadblocks

1. Look over this list of potential **classroom intervention roadblocks**.
2. Pick **one** that you feel is most important to address at your school.

Look at student profiles to ensure equity in identifying common classroom interventions (e.g., being considered for a second consecutive marking period).

Develop an accessible intervention bank with common classroom concerns.

Use a variety of settings (e.g., consultant, instructional interventions).

Use a standard form/format to document (put into

writing) Tier 1/classroom interventions.

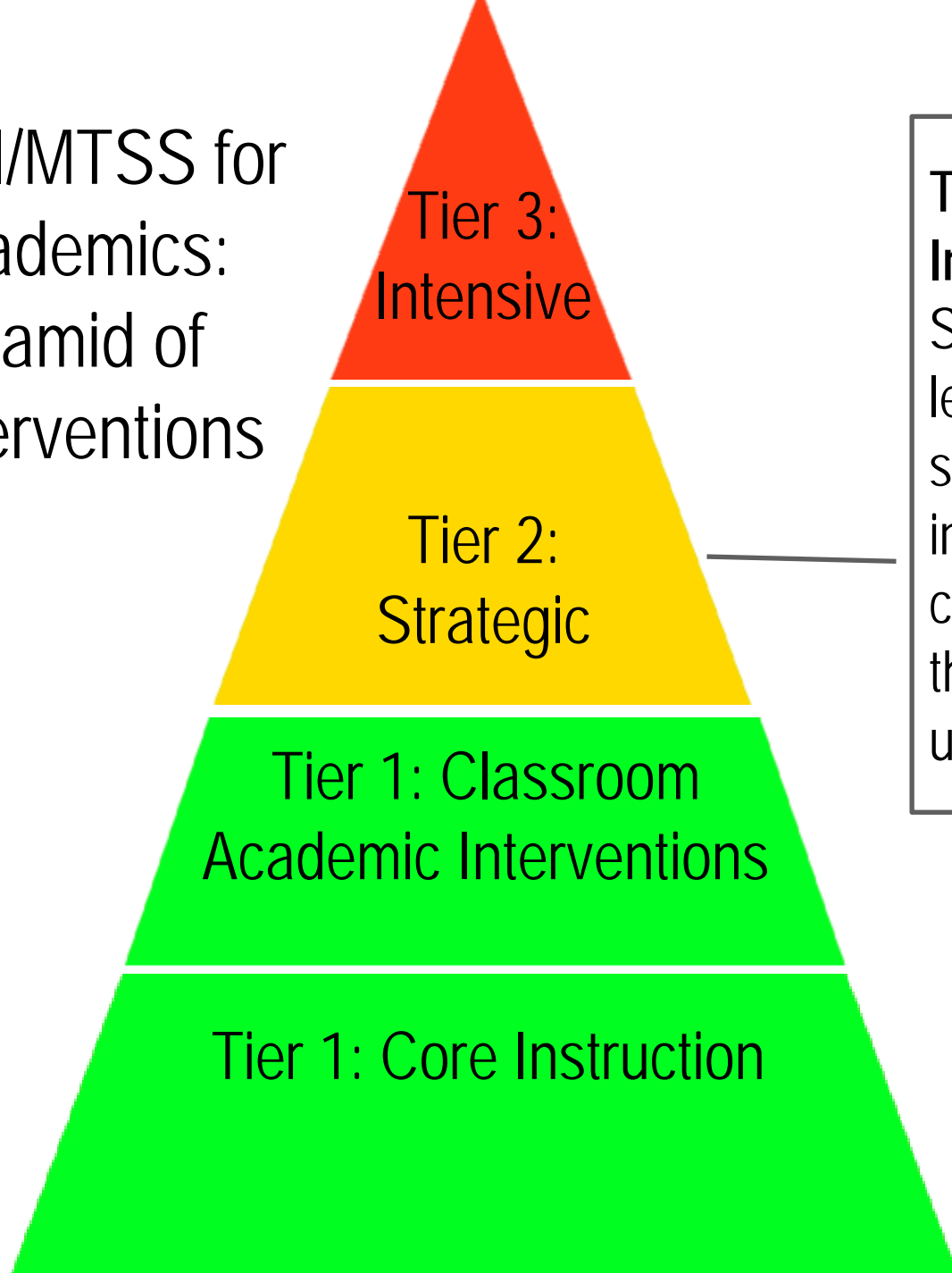
**System:** Tier 1/classroom interventions are not routinely archived for long-term storage, indexing, and retrieval.



CLOSE-UP: Tier 2:  
Targeting Off-Grade-  
Level Deficits with  
Supplemental  
Interventions



RTI/MTSS for  
Academics:  
Pyramid of  
Interventions



**Tier 2: Strategic Intervention (10-15%).** Students with off-grade-level skill deficits receive supplemental small-group interventions outside of core instruction to fill in those gaps. Interventions used are research-based.



# RTI/MTSS for Academics: Tiers 2: Strategic Interventions

## Guiding Points for Leadership...



- Tier 2 interventions should target off-grade-level academic skill deficits. They are **not** simply reteaching of classroom content, homework, or test preparation.
- Tier 2 interventions should be **dynamic**—students can enter or exit Tier 2 at several checkpoints during the school year.
- Schools should **inventory** their current range of Tier 2 academic interventions to verify quality and note any gaps in service.

“ *The perfect is the enemy of the good.* ”

-Italian Proverb

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: Essentials



Tier 2 services are about using data to identify the right learners and providing them with effective academic interventions matched to student need.

View the following slides for recommendations on how MTSS: Tier 2 services should be structured at your school...

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Interventions**



**Use Interventions Supported by Research.**  
Intervention plans for Tier 2 students contain programs or practices supported by research.

## MTSS: Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention

*Q: Where can schools find good Tier 2 programs to match different areas of academic need?*

- The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is the best source of impartial information about effective Tier 2/3 programs:  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

Select topics to **Find What Works** based on the evidence



Literacy



Mathematics



Science



Behavior



Children and Youth with Disabilities



English Learners



Teacher Excellence



Schoolwide Programs



Early Childhood (Pre-K)

K-12

Kindergarten to 12th Grade



Path to Graduation



Postsecondary

Question: What **instructional packages** or **software** does your school use to provide Tier 2 interventions?



## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Interventions**



**Cap Group Size.** Tier 2 services are delivered in small-group format to allow enough adult attention to close the gap in academic skills or performance. Tier 2 groups are capped at 7 students. (Tier 3 groups are capped at 3 students.)

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Interventions**



**Schedule Adequate Time.** The schedule allocates sufficient time outside of core instruction for the delivery of Tier 2 interventions to promote accelerated student learning. Tier 2 services meet at least 3 times weekly for 30 minutes.  
(Tier 3 services meet daily for at least 30 minutes.)



# Scheduling Elementary Tier 2/3 Interventions

Option 3: *'Floating MTSS': Gradewide Shared Schedule*. Each grade has a scheduled MTSS time across classrooms. No two grades share the same MTSS time. Advantages are that outside providers can move from grade to grade providing push-in or pull-out services and that students can be grouped by need across different teachers within the grade.

## Anyplace Elementary School: MTSS Daily Schedule

Grade K	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	9:00-9:30
Grade 1	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	9:45-10:15
Grade 2	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	10:30-11:00
Grade 3	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	12:30-1:00
Grade 4	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	1:15-1:45
Grade 5	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	2:00-2:30

Source: Burns, M. K., & Gibbons, K. A. (2008). *Implementing response-to-intervention in elementary and secondary schools: Procedures to assure scientific-based practices*. New York: Routledge.

# MTSS: Tier 2/3: Supplemental Intervention

- Secondary schools have explored these scheduling ideas:
  - *Schoolwide MTSS period.* The school sets aside a period per day (e.g., 35-45 minutes) for Tier 2/3 support.
  - *'Zero' period.* Students attend electives before the official start (or after the end) of the school day—freeing up time for MTSS help.
  - *Core course with extended time.* Students attend a double period of English or math, allowing additional time for MTSS support.
  - *Study hall coordinated with MTSS services.* 4-6-week MTSS mini-courses run opposite a study hall. Students can be recruited for a mini-course based on need.
  - *Credit recovery.* Students can take a core course online (via credit recovery) to allow time for MTSS support during the school day.

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Interventions**



**Put Plans in Writing.** Tier 2 intervention plans are written down before the intervention begins.

Sample Tier 2/3  
Intervention  
Documentation  
Form (Online)

Tier 2: Small-Group Intervention Plan

Interventionist. Identify the interventionist(s) for this group.

--

Interventionist

Targeted Academic Skills. Describe the academic skill(s) to be the focus of this intervention group.

--

Targeted  
Academic Skills

Time Allocated:	Start Date	End Date	Session Length (e.g., 30 mins)	Session Frequency (e.g., daily)

Contact Time  
(e.g., length and  
frequency of  
sessions, etc.)

Students: Name	Baseline: Starting Point	Goal: Criterion for Success

Student List with  
Baseline and Goal

Intervention(s). Describe the research-based program(s) or practice(s) to be used with these students.

--

Intervention  
Program or  
Practice(s)

Progress-Monitoring. Record the type of data to be used to monitor student growth during the intervention.

--

Progress-  
Monitoring Plan

Frequency of Data Collection. How often will data be collected? (e.g., daily, every other day, weekly):

--

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Data**



**Monitor the Intervention.** Student progress is measured throughout the intervention period. Tier 2 data collection occurs at least twice per month. (Tier 3 data collection occurs at least weekly.)



**Measure Intervention Integrity.** Information is collected (e.g., student attendance, direct observation of Tier 2 sessions) to verify that the intervention is being delivered with adequate integrity to be effective.

## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: **Data**

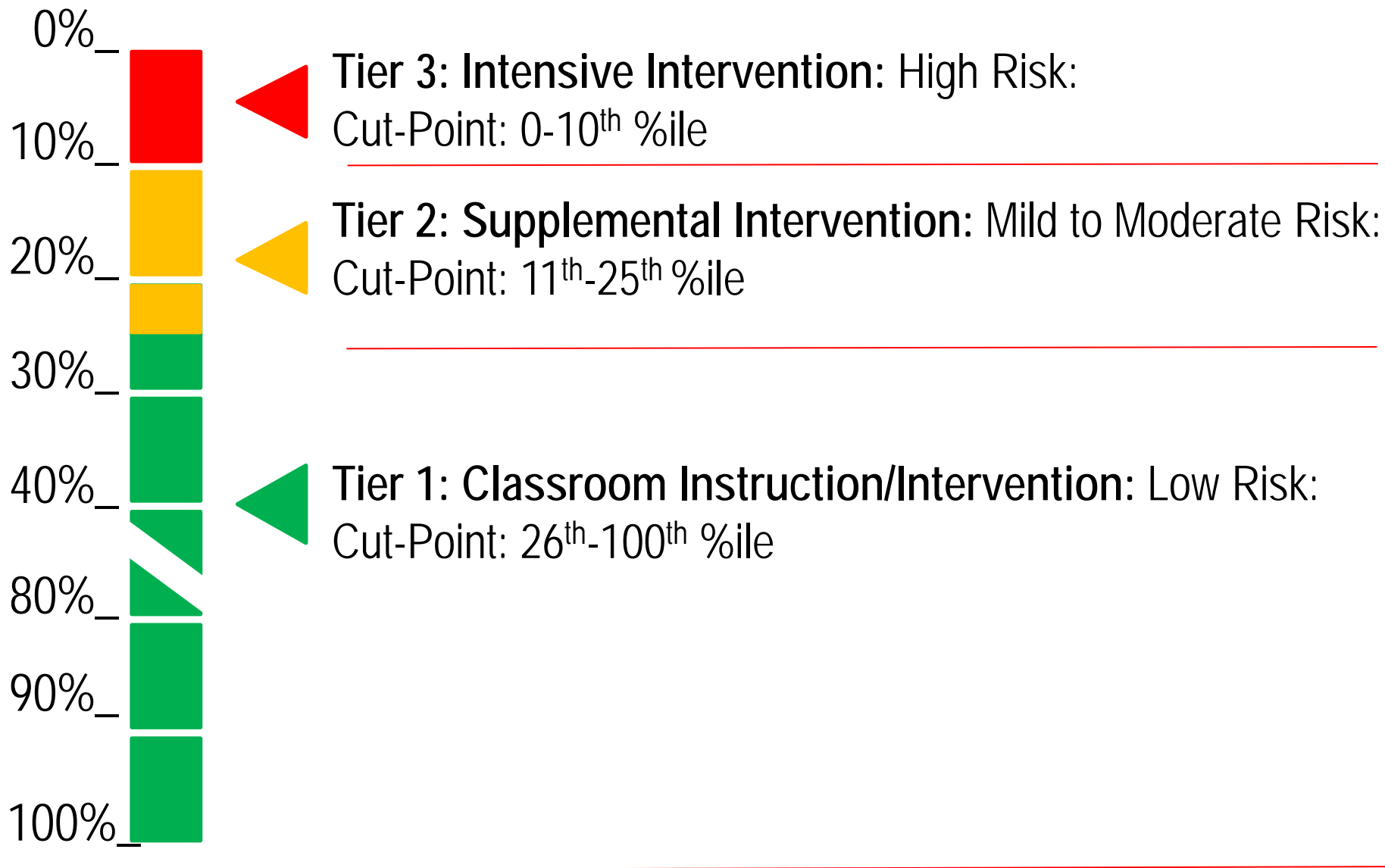


**Adopt Entrance/Exit Criteria.** Enrollment in Tier 2 services is dynamic: students can enter or exit at several points during the school year, depending on measured academic need.



**Use Objective Data Sources.** Students are identified for Tier 2 services based on objective data sources. School-wide screenings are the primary data source and are carried out at least 3 times per year with all students.

# Typical Academic Screener Cut-points for RTI/MTSS Eligibility



# Data for Tier 2 Eligibility: Weight It, Don't Triangulate It...

**MTSS School-Wide Screener:**  
iReady/Star/NWEA MAPS, etc.

Valid,  
reliable risk-  
prediction  
tool

**Classroom Data:**  
Fountas & Pinnell Reading BAS,  
Developmental Reading Assessment, etc.

Instructional  
information:  
not normed

**Teacher Concern/Nomination**

Subjective,  
not  
independent  
of 'classroom  
data' source



# Applying Tier 2 School-Wide Screener Eligibility Cut-Points: 4 Possible Outcomes

### FALSE POSITIVE (+).

The student possesses **grade-appropriate** academic ability **but** the screening shows that they **qualify** for Tier 2 intervention.

### TRUE POSITIVE (+).

The student is in the 'at-risk' range for academic ability **and** the screening shows that they **qualify** for Tier 2 intervention.

### TRUE NEGATIVE (-).

The student possesses **grade-appropriate** academic ability **and** the screening shows that they do **NOT qualify** for Tier 2 intervention.

### FALSE NEGATIVE (-).

The student is in the 'at-risk' range for academic ability **but** the screening shows that they do **NOT qualify** for Tier 2 intervention.

NOTE: POSITIVE = QUALIFIES FOR TIER 2 SERVICES

NEGATIVE=DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR TIER 2 SERVICES

# Setting Screening-Data Cut-Points: Setting Eligibility Criteria While Controlling for Error

Cut-points are applied to screening data to serve as the 'gates' that admit students or block them from Tier 2 services.

- A 'relaxed' cut-point for Tier 2 (e.g., 30<sup>th</sup> percentile) will increase FALSE-POSITIVE errors—admitting more students for services whose skills DO NOT require remediation—while minimizing FALSE-NEGATIVE errors.
- A stringent cut-point for Tier 2 (e.g., 15<sup>th</sup> percentile) will increase FALSE-NEGATIVE errors—blocking more students from services whose skills DO require remediation—while minimizing FALSE-POSITIVE errors.

### Questions:

- What **data sources** or **information** does your school use to identify students who qualify for Tier 2/3 services?
- How would you **rank** these data sources from MOST important to LEAST important?



## Tier 2: Strategic Intervention Services: Data



**Select Screeners that Identify the Right Students.** Data sources used for Tier 2 accurately highlight areas of academic deficit and assess degree of academic risk among the student population.



**Appoint a Data Analysis Team.** The Data Analysis Team is the decision-maker to decide whether and when students move into or out of Tier 2 services.



## Tier 2: MS/HS Essentials for Academic Intervention.

- **Identification.** Students qualify for Tier 2 academic support using reliable data sources.
- **Matching Services to Need.** Tier 2 students are matched to appropriate intervention services based on academic need.
- **Contact Time.** Students get sufficient time in Tier 2 services to make a positive difference in skills.
- **Group Size.** Students are grouped to allow adequate educator contact time for instruction/ supervision (e.g., computerized interventions: staff monitor, check in regularly).
- **Data.** Student-performance data is collected to monitor progress.
- **Documentation.** There is a written record of the Tier 2 supports that students have received that is archived and accessible.

## Tiers 2/3 Academic Intervention Programs & Practices: Building Inventory

School:

Date of Inventory:

Person(s) Completing:

**Directions.** Please list details for all of the Tier 2/3 intervention programs or practices that your school currently has in place to address reading, math, and/or other student academic delays or deficits. NOTE: If you are unsure of exact dates of purchase or most recent training, use approximate dates.

Name of Academic Program or Practice	Academic Area(s) Targeted (e.g., reading comprehension, math computation)	Grade Level(s) Served	Date of Purchase or First Use in Your School	Interventionists (who in your school is trained to use this program?)	Date of Most Recent Training in this Program/ Practice	Additional Comments (Optional)
<b>EXAMPLE:</b> HELPS Program www.helpsprogram.org	Reading fluency	Grades 4-5	Dec 1, 2012	2 Reading Teachers 1 Teaching Assistant	Refresher training Sept 2015	Our school intends to expand this program to grade 6 next year.

Available  
Online

# Conducting a School-Wide Inventory of Tier 2/3 Services

Schools can verify the quality of their Tier 2/3 reading services and better coordinate them by inventorying their current Tier 2/3 offerings. For each program, the following information is collected:

- *Name of Academic Program or Practice*
- *Academic Area(s) Targeted (e.g., phonics/alphabetics; reading comprehension)*
- *Grade Level(s) Served*
- *Date of Purchase or First Use in Your School*
- *Interventionists (who in your school is trained to use this program?)*
- *Date of Most Recent Training in this Program/ Practice*

### Tier 2 Services Roadblocks

**System:** Tier 2/3 interventionists primarily reteach/reinforce classroom instruction rather than identifying and fixing off-grade-level skill deficits.

**System:** Tier 2/3 interventionists do not use programs or practices supported by research.

**System:** Tier 2/3 interventionists do not put their student academic-intervention plans in writing—or fail to adequately document those plans.

**System:** The school uses a range of data sources of uneven quality to recruit students for Tier 2/3 services.

**System:** The school does not evaluate Tier 2/3 performance every 6-10 weeks to prevent students from spending too long in ineffective interventions.





## Tier 2 Services Roadblocks

**System:** Tier 2/3 interventionists primarily reteach/reinforce classroom instruction rather than address skill deficits.

### Activity: Tier 2: Intervention Roadblocks

1. Look over this list of potential **roadblocks** to Tier 2 services.
2. Pick **one** that you feel is most important to address at your school.

do not use programs or practices

do not put their student academic-  
l to adequately document those plans.

of data sources of uneven quality to  
s.

uate Tier 2/3 performance

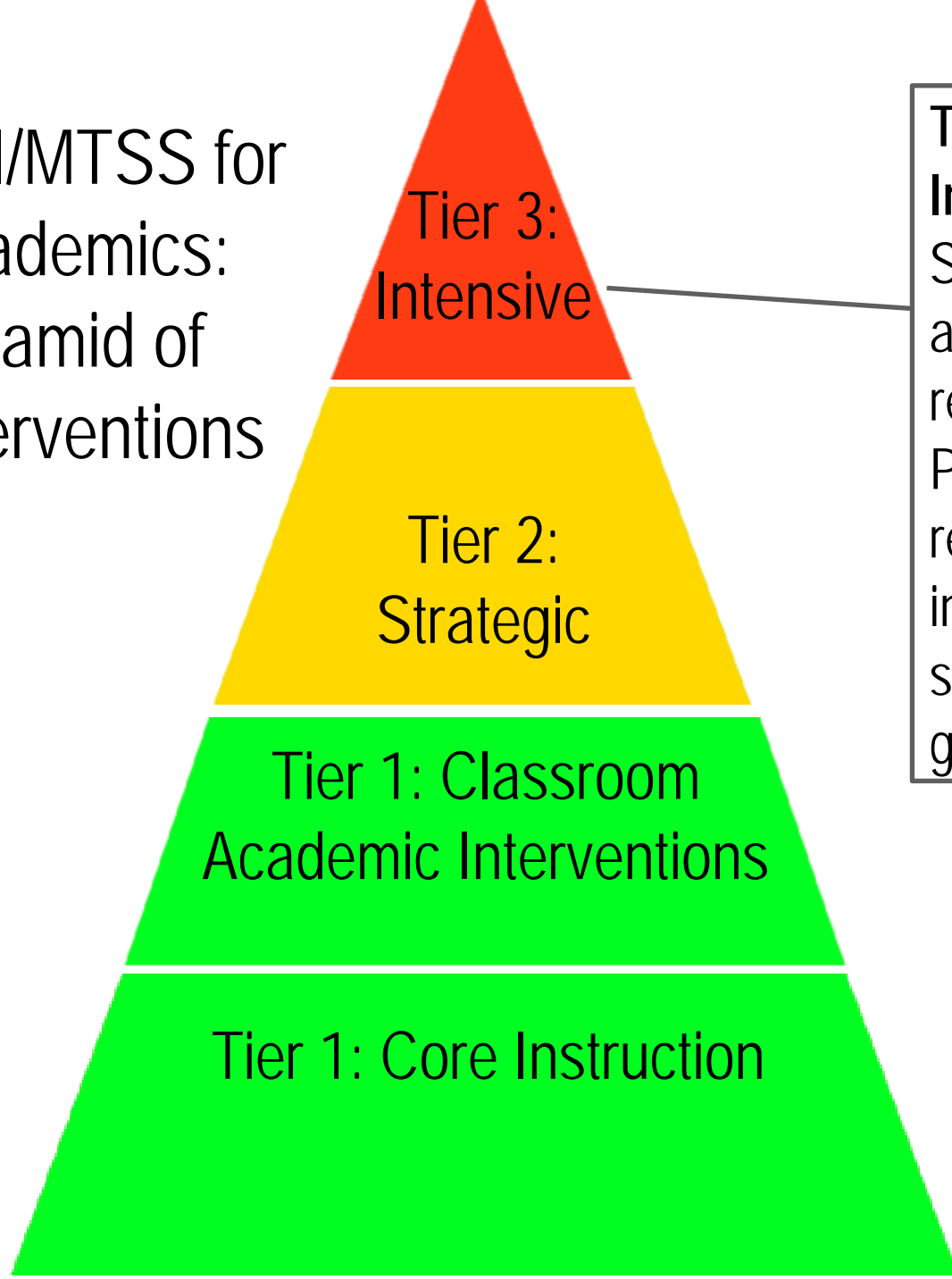
every 6-10 weeks to prevent students from spending too long in ineffective interventions.



CLOSE-UP: Tier 3:  
Creating a Strong MTSS  
Problem-Solving Team  
to Help Students with  
Intensive Needs



RTI/MTSS for  
Academics:  
Pyramid of  
Interventions



**Tier 3: Intensive Intervention (1-5%).** Students with intensive academic gaps are reviewed by the RTI/MTSS Problem-Solving Team and receive a customized intervention plan. Most students at Tier 3 are **still** general-education.

# RTI/MTSS for Academics: Tier 3: Intensive Intervention: RTI/MTSS Team: Guiding Points for Leadership...



- Schools need a well-functioning RTI/MTSS Team at Tier 3—because students who come to that team require an intensive ‘problem-solving’ approach to figure out why they are struggling.
- In districts fully implementing RTI/MTSS, a student is seldom referred to the Special Education Team to investigate a reading disability without first having gone through a Tier 3 MTSS Team meeting and intervention plan to verify that all reasonable general-education supports were provided.

## MTSS: Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

- Students with substantial reading deficits who do not respond to lesser interventions may receive a Tier 3 intervention. In a typical school, **1-5% of students** may need a Tier 3 intervention in a given year.

The group that designs and implements the Tier 3 intervention plan is the **MTSS Problem-Solving Team**.

The MTSS Team develops **customized** intervention plans. The Team identifies the most important blockers to student success and develops a unique **intervention plan** to address those concerns.

### MTSS Team: A Multi-Disciplinary Group

The MTSS Problem-Solving Team functions best when it has a mix of disciplines serving on it.

Possible members include general and special-education teachers, support staff (e.g., counselors, school psychologists), related-service providers, and administrators.

While a school may want to recruit a large pool of MTSS Team talent, a smaller number (e.g., 4-6 Team members) would typically be invited to a particular student meeting.



# RTI Problem-Solving Team Roles

- Facilitator
- Recorder
- Time Keeper
- Case Manager
- Coordinator





## RTI/MTSS Problem-Solving Team: Challenges

**Focus on the 'fixable'.** At RTI Team meetings, the discussion can easily veer toward factors contributing to student failure that are outside of the school's direct control—e.g., lack of structure at home, etc.

Because the RTI Team is focused on creating a plan to positively address the student's school issue(s), the facilitator and other Team members should be quick to nudge the conversation back to those factors that the school does have influence over.

Of course, if a parent contact is warranted to share school concerns, that can be written into the RTI Plan. However, the Team should then move briskly on to discuss fixable factors.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1:** Select Intervention Target(s)
- **Step 2:** Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives
- **Step 3:** Review Background/Baseline Data
- **Step 4:** Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress-Monitoring.
- **Step 5:** Design an Intervention Plan
- **Step 6:** Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)
- **Step 7:** Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans

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- **Step 7:** Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans

Creates a shared understanding among participants about meeting purpose and each person's role.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress-Monitoring.**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**

Requires team/teacher to prioritize/select no more than 2 areas of student concern and to define each concern clearly and specifically.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
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- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**

Provides ideas to motivate student. Can also contribute to a positive 'solution focus' in the meeting.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcomes, Goals and Methods for Progress-Monitoring.**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**

Requires 1 or more objective data sources to demonstrate the magnitude of the student concern(s).

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress-M**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Pa**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress Monitoring Plans**

Creates a clear goal defining student success for the follow-up meeting, along with methods to monitor intervention progress.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress Monitoring**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**

Contains strategies, etc., selected to help improve student concern(s). (Any stakeholder in the school setting can be written into the intervention plan.)



## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress Monitoring**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**

Ensures that the school keeps the parent(s) informed about the student's continuing RTI/MTSS support plans.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
  - **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
  - **Step 2: Inventory Student's**  
Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives
  - **Step 3: Review Background/Basic Information**
  - **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral**  
Outcome Goals and Methods for Monitoring
  - **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
  - **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan with Parent(s)**
  - **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**
- Prevents misunderstandings about the intervention and progress-monitoring plans. Also, allows a final check for understanding and agreement among participants.

## Tier 3: RTI Team: Meeting Format

- **Introductions/Talking Points**
- **Step 1: Select Intervention Target(s)**
- **Step 2: Inventory Student's Strengths, Talents, Interests, Incentives**
- **Step 3: Review Background/Baseline Data**
- **Step 4: Set Academic and/or Behavioral Outcome Goals and Methods for Progress-Monitoring.**
- **Step 5: Design an Intervention Plan**
- **Step 6: Share RTI Intervention Plan With Parent(s)**
- **Step 7: Review the Intervention and Progress-Monitoring Plans**



# RTI/MTSS Problem-Solving Team: Challenges

**Uphold the non-negotiables in the Team process.**

These 'non-negotiable' principles guide the Team:

- The Team's purpose is to create high-quality intervention plans for general education...NOT to fast-track students for special education services.
- Any stakeholder connected with the referred student can be written into a Tier 3 plan: classroom teacher(s), Tier 2 service provider(s), special-area teachers, support staff, paraprofessionals, the student, and parent(s).
- Compliance with Tier 3 plans is mandatory. Staff have a say in the plan's development. Once done, *all* stakeholders written in the plan are expected to carry out their responsibilities.

REVIEW: Common  
MTSS Middle- &  
High-School 'Crunch  
Points' and How to  
Overcome Them



## Common Middle & High School 'Crunch' Points



- **Teachers Are 'Reluctant' Classroom Interventionists.**  
There are several common reasons why teachers may fail to tackle classroom interventions.

If you identify the obstacles that are more prevalent in your school, you can positively 'message' with them about MTSS while also addressing those concerns.



***RTI & Teacher Reluctance:*** What are reasons why teachers may be reluctant to support RTI in the classroom?

## RTI & 'Teacher Reluctance'

The willingness of teachers to implement interventions is essential in any school to the success of the RTI model. Yet general-education teachers may not always see themselves as 'interventionists' and indeed may even resist the expectation that they will provide individualized interventions as a routine part of their classroom practice (Walker, 2004).

It should be remembered, however, that teachers' reluctance to accept elements of RTI may be based on very good reasons. Here are some common reasons that teachers might be reluctant to accept their role as RTI intervention 'first responders'...



# Engaging the Reluctant Teacher: 7 Reasons Why Instructors May Resist Implementing Classroom RTI Interventions

1. **Lack of Skills.** Teachers lack the skills necessary to successfully implement academic or behavioral interventions in their content-area classrooms.
2. **Not My Job.** Teachers define their job as providing content-area instruction. They do not believe that providing classwide or individual academic and behavioral interventions falls within their job description.

### Engaging the Reluctant Teacher: 7 Reasons Why Instructors May Resist Implementing Classroom RTI Interventions(Cont.)

3. **No Time.** Teachers do not believe that they have sufficient time available in classroom instruction to implement academic or behavioral interventions.
4. **'Status Quo' Bias.** Teachers are comfortable with the current situation and do not sense a need to change their professional routines.

### Engaging the Reluctant Teacher: 7 Reasons Why Instructors May Resist Implementing Classroom RTI Interventions (Cont.)

5. **Loss of Classroom Control.** Teachers worry that if they depart from their standard instructional practices to adopt new classwide or individual academic or behavior intervention strategies, they may lose control of the classroom.
6. **'Unmotivated Students'.** Teachers are unwilling to invest the required effort to provide academic or behavioral interventions for unmotivated students because they would rather put that time into providing additional attention to well-behaved, motivated students who are 'more deserving'.

# Engaging the Reluctant Teacher: 7 Reasons Why Instructors May Resist Implementing Classroom RTI Interventions (Cont.)

- 7. The Magic of Special Education.** Content-area teachers regard special education services as 'magic'. According to this view, interventions provided to struggling students in the general-education classroom alone will be inadequate, and only special education services have the power to truly benefit those students.

# Engaging the Reluctant Teacher: Seven Reasons Why Instructors May Resist Implementing Classroom RTI Interventions

1. **Lack of Skills.** Teachers lack the skills necessary to successfully implement academic or behavioral interventions in their content-area classrooms.
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6. **'Unmotivated Students'.** Teachers are unwilling to invest the required effort to provide academic or behavioral interventions for unmotivated students because they would rather put that time into providing additional attention to well-behaved, motivated students who are 'more deserving'.
7. **The Magic of Special Education.** Content-area teachers regard special education services as 'magic'. According to this view, interventions provided to struggling students in the general-education classroom alone will be inadequate, and only special education services have the power to truly benefit those students.

## Common Middle & High School 'Crunch' Points



- **The School Loses 'MTSS Momentum'**. Schools often encounter an initial burst of enthusiasm for MTSS. Over time, though, that momentum can fade.

Creating an MTSS Leadership Team and writing an MTSS Plan are related ways to build and maintain momentum and to see MTSS across the finish line.

SCHOOLWIDE  
CAPACITY-BUILDING:  
Establishing an MTSS  
Leadership Team;  
Writing an MTSS-  
Academic 'Blueprint' for  
Your School



# Building MTSS Capacity: Leadership Team & Plan...

Middle & high schools can increase their chances of reaching a positive 'tipping point' with MTSS by:

- establishing an **MTSS Leadership Team**. This internal team meets regularly to establish MTSS procedures, set goals for revamping intervention and data collection to support MTSS, creates and standardizes use of MTSS forms, develops a streamlined system to record and archive MTSS interventions, etc.






## Building MTSS Capacity: Leadership Team & Plan...

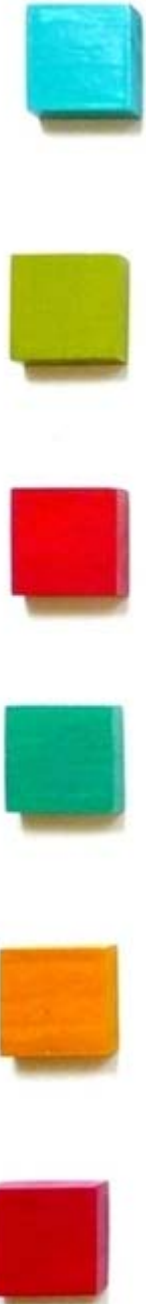
Middle & high schools can increase their chances of reaching a positive 'tipping point' with MTSS by:



- writing an **MTSS Building Plan**. As the Leadership Team develops an MTSS model for your school, this plan should be put in writing and revised as needed. Initially, the plan may cover only part of the MTSS process (e.g., Tier 1 core instruction and Tier 1/classroom intervention). But as your school incrementally 'grows' MTSS to encompass all Tiers, the plan is updated.



DISCUSSION: Next-  
Steps MTSS  
Planning for Your  
School



## Response to Intervention

### Tier 1

### Tier 2

### Tier 3

**Purpose:** To provide the student with classroom supports to 'get through the next lesson'.


**Purpose:** To find & fix off-grade-level skill gaps.


**Purpose:** To create an individualized intervention plan for intensive-need students.


**Team:** Classroom teacher meets with **Tier 1 Team:** consultant or grade-level team.

**Team: Data Analysis Team** meets after 3 yearly school-wide screenings to place students using data-based entrance criteria.

**Team: Multi-disciplinary MTSS Problem-Solving Team** meets on students who fail to succeed with lesser interventions.

**Progression:** Tier 1  continues as long as needed. The student may also advance to Tier 2 if Tier 1 is unsuccessful—but **only** if student is borderline or qualifies for Tier 2.

**Progression:** If  unsuccessful at Tier 2, the student is referred to Tier 3 MTSS Team.

**Progression:** If  student has met 'decision rules' for non-responder in MTSS, the Team may refer to CSE.

# RTI/MTSS for Your School: Suggested 2022-23 Goals...

## Tier 1: Classroom Intervention

- Goal 1: Develop shared documentation form.
- Goal 2: Create/update intervention bank.
- Goal 3: Develop format for Tier 1 meetings (e.g., meet w grade-level teams or consultant).

## Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention

- Goal 1: Clarify mission: To remediate off-level skills.
- Goal 2: Schedule daily 'intervention period'.
- Goal 3: Use objective data to recruit students—reducing dependence on teacher referrals.
- Goal 4: Group students by need, not availability.

## RTI/MTSS: District-Wide

- Goal 1: Develop 'decision rules' to judge when a 'non-responding' student should be referred to SPED.
- Goal 2: Update the district RTI/MTSS Plan based on changes agreed upon by this group.

# RTI/MTSS for Your School: Suggested 2020-21 Goals...

## Set RTI/MTSS Goals for the Current Year.

- Review the suggested goals on this slide.
- Agree on and record those KEY goals that your district should work on during the upcoming school year.

### Supplemental Intervention

Goal 2: Schedule daily 'intervention period'.

Goal 3: Use objective data to recruit students—  
reducing dependence on teacher referrals.

Goal 4: Group students by need, not availability.

### RTI/MTSS: District-Wide

Goal 1: Develop 'decision rules' to judge when a  
'non-responding' student should be referred  
to CSE.

Goal 2: Update the district RTI/MTSS Plan based on  
changes agreed upon by this group.

## HANDOUT 2: RTI/MTSS for Academics: District-Wide Planning Tool

Directions: This planning tool guides school districts to audit their current RTI/MTSS system for academic support, select priority goals to be addressed immediately, and RTI/MTSS goals that can be temporarily postponed. Follow the Status column with a '0'. If you decide that a goal should be a priority to complete during the current school year, mark it with a '1'. If you believe a goal can be delayed until at least the next school year, mark it with a '2'.

- Use the Discussion column to record any notes about a goal, including its current implementation, next steps, person(s) responsible, etc.

**Tier 1: Core Instruction.** The teacher delivers high-quality core instruction— at least 80% of students at each grade level perform at or above academic screening benchmarks through classroom instructional support alone.

<i>Status (0,1,2)</i>	<i>GOALS: The teacher's whole-group instruction:</i>	<i>Discussion (current implementation; questions; next steps; persons responsible, etc.)</i>
	- [A.1.1] maximizes time devoted to instruction by reducing or avoiding interruptions—e.g., overlong transitions, episodes of problem behavior, etc.	
	- [A.1.2] incorporates essential elements of explicit and systematic instruction into lessons.	
	- [A.1.3] for reading and mathematics instruction, uses programs and/or practices supported by research.	

# Handout 1: p. 10: Next Steps Planning Tool

## RTI/MTSS for Academics: District-Wide Planning Tool: 'Next Steps' Activity

**Directions:** Create a plan listing the key next steps that your school or district should take between now and June 2021 to advance the RTI/MTSS model for academics. Be prepared to report out.

	Goal Number(s) from Planning Tool/ Description of Task	Person(s) Responsible	Proposed Completion Date	Additional Resources Needed
E x a m p l e	<b>[A.1.5]</b> created a bank of academic intervention ideas accessible by all staff.	Reading Teachers; School Psychologist, MS Counselor	March 2020	Half-Day during Supt Conf Day in March for staff  Follow-up training with grade level teams
1				

## Activity: RTI/MTSS Next-Steps

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In your groups:

- Brainstorm a *manageable* number of RTI/MTSS next steps that each of you would like to accomplish in your school/district during this school year.