



# Utah MTSS 3-Tier Critical Components Definitions

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework for implementing systemic, evidence-based practices to maximize student achievement in academics and behavior in preparation for and leading to College and Career Readiness. The MTSS model includes Universal, Targeted, and Intensive levels of support, which are defined below by identified critical components. Universal (Tier 1) represents those supports provided to each student. Tier 1 practices should be implemented with fidelity prior to addressing practices for Tiers 2 or 3. Targeted (Tier 2) represents additional supports to intervene or enrich for student success. Intensive (Tier 3) represents individually-responsive supports intended to further intervene or enrich student success and are developed based on individual student need. Tier 3 supports may be provided individually or in a small group and are *in addition to*, not in place of, Tier 1 instruction, and do not necessarily equate to special education services.

## HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION

**Process:** Focus on intended learning outcomes as a key to high student achievement with the understanding that high quality instruction is central to that ideal. Implement evidence-based instruction differentiated for each student based on relevant content and professional standards. This includes instructional strategies, textbooks, and materials used for content instruction, which should be evidence-based, aligned to the Utah Core Standards, and selected to address the needs of each student.

**Outcomes:** Teachers are trained in both content knowledge and evidence-based strategies (pedagogy) to ensure students are actively engaged in and have access to grade-level content instruction. Students are meeting benchmark and grade-level standards or are working toward mastery of grade-level standards.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
<p>Rigorous grade-level content instruction using evidence-based curriculum and instructional strategies that include Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Differentiation provided for students considering various modes of delivery and learning needs. Short, medium and long-term data points are used to measure progress.</p>	<p>Supplemental instruction and supports systematically delivered in addition to, and aligned with, the grade-level content instruction. These supports address the needs of students who have not responded sufficiently to Tier 1 content instruction or who would benefit from enrichment activities. For students who would benefit from intervention, supports may include adapted strategies, increased frequency, intensity, and/or time. For students who would benefit from enrichment, supports may include an increase in rigor, pacing, and/or complexity. Supports do not take away from time spent in Tier 1 content instruction.</p>	<p>Individually-responsive instruction and supports delivered in addition to, and aligned with grade-level content instruction. These supports address specific needs of students who are most at risk or have not responded to Tier 2 interventions. Supports may represent the use of adapted strategies and an increase in frequency, intensity, and/or time, and do <i>not</i> necessarily equate to special education services. Enrichment supports for each student are individually planned and provide opportunity for nurturing talents at all levels of performance. Supports for students should not negatively impact access to Tier 1 content instruction. Tier 3 supports may be provided individually or in a small group.</p>

## DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING

**Process:** Use multiple data sources (reported to parents/students as needed) and provide transparency in the public educational system using evidence-based data that determines “what to measure, why to measure it, and how to measure it.” Data from parents/guardians are included in decision-making.

**Outcomes:** Data are regularly used to make changes in instruction to meet the academic and behavioral needs of each student. Students make measureable progress towards achieving proficiency.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
Ongoing evaluation of each student using short, medium and long term data points to measure progress along with formative and end-of-level assessments and grades to identify academic and social-behavior needs of students.	Progress monitoring of each student receiving targeted supports every 2–4 weeks, using reliable tools sensitive to incremental change.	Progress monitoring of students receiving intensive supports at least weekly, using valid, reliable tools sensitive to incremental change.

## TEAM-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING

**Process:** Using a structured problem-solving process, district or building leadership teams identify challenges, barriers, and solutions; prioritize and set goals; identify or develop and implement intervention or enrichment; measure fidelity of implementation; and evaluate outcomes. Parent/guardians and community stakeholders are included in team, as appropriate.

**Outcomes:** Goals are set and a plan for implementation is created. Outcomes are evaluated and adjustments are made based on data gathered through implementation. Teachers identify evidence-based instructional strategies appropriate for level of tiered supports. Students make measureable progress towards achieving proficiency.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
School-, grade-, subject-, and/or class-wide Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or Student Support Teams and School Leadership Teams use a problem-solving process to plan and evaluate academic and behavior supports.	Teams use a problem-solving process to select, implement, and evaluate Tier 2 supports.	Teams use a problem-solving process to select, implement, and evaluate Tier 3 supports.

## EQUITABLE EDUCATION FOR EACH STUDENT

**Process:** Create general statewide conditions in which each student can excel, including equity of educational resources and opportunities and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and wellbeing.

**Outcomes:** Each student has increased access to high quality instruction, advanced courses (particularly for students who are traditionally underserved), and counselors and psychologists to increase equity by closing the opportunity performance/achievement gap.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
Data-driven equitable access to rigorous grade level content by qualified educators is created through culturally responsive practices and consideration of diversity, language supports, and in collaboration with students, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community stakeholders.	Supplemental small group supports and/or opportunities provided to each identified student, taking into consideration related cultural, language, and home factors. Using data-based decisions and evidence-based practices to ensure high expectations and avoid tracking to ensure that gaps in opportunity are addressed.	Individually-responsive supports and/or opportunities provided to each identified student, with consideration of related cultural, language, and home factors. Using data-based decisions and evidence-based practices to ensure high expectations and avoid tracking.

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

**Process:** Set educational and career goals for each student that prepare them to experience fulfilling lives, actively participate in their communities as an informed citizen, and succeed in a competitive economy.

**Outcomes:** Utah defines career and college ready as: 1. Graduates from High School; 2. Receives at least an 18 on the ACT; and 3. Accomplishes at least one of the following: A. Passing score on an advanced placement (AP) course; or B. A “C” or higher on a concurrent enrollment (CE) course; or C. A passing grade on an international baccalaureate course; or D. A Career Pathway Completer (3.0 credits in an approved sequence of courses); or E. A Career Pathway Concentrator (1.5 credits in an approved sequence of courses and the student earns an industry credential of value from an approved list of career and technical education (CTE) pathways).

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
Student planning focused on College and Career Readiness including the acquisition of vital knowledge, dispositions, and independent living skills for student success in preK-12+. Increase access to advanced courses for all populations.	Supplemental, systematic, data-driven support for students at risk of leaving school unprepared for college, career, and independent living (such as school failure, excessive absenteeism, dropout or unemployment). Provide opportunities for all students to access and participate in advanced coursework.	Individually responsive, data-driven supports for students at high risk for leaving school unprepared for college, career, and independent living (such as school failure, excessive absenteeism, dropout, or unemployment) including transition planning and/or wrap-around services. Students are provided an opportunity to receive an Associate Degree in high school or enter college early if appropriate.

## PROACTIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STRUCTURE

**Process:** Use evidence-based efforts to improve school climate and structure, safety and learning include prevention, wellness promotion and pro-social behavior development as well as interventions that balance physical and psychological safety with effective, positive school discipline within a close collaborative community and social supports.

**Outcomes:** School climate and structure, as well as student behavioral outcomes and academic engagement, are measured and data are used to create a cycle of continuous improvement leading to pro-social behavior.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
School-wide environments that support individual and collaborative learning, positive social interaction, pro-social behaviors, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. Practices should focus on effective management of behavior in the classroom and in all school settings using positive, proactive supports (e.g., Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports . Parents and community stakeholders are involved in assessing school climate and in collaborating to continuously improve school climate.	Supplemental supports for some students who are in need of behavior support (including social skills instruction, social-emotional support, and trauma informed care). Parents/guardians know when their student accesses supplemental supports and collaborates with educators to support their student.	Individually responsive supports for students with high-risk behaviors requires collaboration with families, specialists, community agencies, medical professionals, and juvenile justice systems, commonly known as wrap-around services.

## PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**Process:** Set the conditions and systems for student success by working with, understanding, and listening to parents and community stakeholders on every level on practices, strategies, resources, and policies that will lead to continued and even greater efficiencies and improvements in student outcomes.

**Outcomes:** Parents are meaningfully engaged in the school and the school community. School/home communication is bi-directional, valued, and consistent.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
School teams involve parents and community stakeholders when developing and implementing rigorous grade level Core curriculum and positive behavior supports. Parents are aware of universal screenings and how their student is succeeding in mastering the Core content.	Parents are aware of the specific support being used, the data that is being collected, and the meaning of the data, when a student participates in Tier 2 interventions. Parents know what progress their student is making and how they can best support their student at home.	Collaboration between parents, community supports, and school interventionists is meaningful and productive. This collaboration results in timely communication and problem solving that integrates the resources of home, school, and community to increase the level of student support.

## SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Process:** Encourage all educators to engage in leadership opportunities. Improve existing teacher and administrator preparation and training. Encourage school leaders to engage in learning communities to improve collaboration and practice. Promote career pathways that incentivize effective teachers to engage in alternative teacher leadership roles while they remain active in the classroom.

**Outcomes:** Teachers are mentored and retained, engage in professional learning to enhance knowledge and skills, and participate collaboratively to advance professional practice. Leaders and teachers participate actively as part of the learning community, sharing responsibility for decision-making and accountability for each student's learning, and giving and receiving feedback. Leaders and teachers advocate for the learners, the school, the community, and the profession.

Universal (Tier 1)	Targeted (Tier 2)	Intensive (Tier 3)
Instructional leaders monitor fidelity of grade level content instruction to ensure that each student has access to high-quality content instruction. Instructional leaders ensure mentoring, coaching and professional development opportunities are provided in the use of evidence-based strategies aligned with core content standards. Instructional leaders ensure equitable access for each student to the grade level content standards and high-quality instruction.	When students participate in Tier 2 supports, instructional leaders ensure highly qualified instructors, high quality instruction, data-based decision-making, and adequate resources are provided such that students make progress in mastering grade-level standards. Leadership supports student-focused problem-solving and data-based decision-making through professional learning communities.	Collaboration between leadership and educators ensures adequate resources are provided to enable students with Tier 3 supports receive intensive instruction that accelerates learning. Leadership supports student-focused problem-solving and data-based decision-making through professional learning communities.