



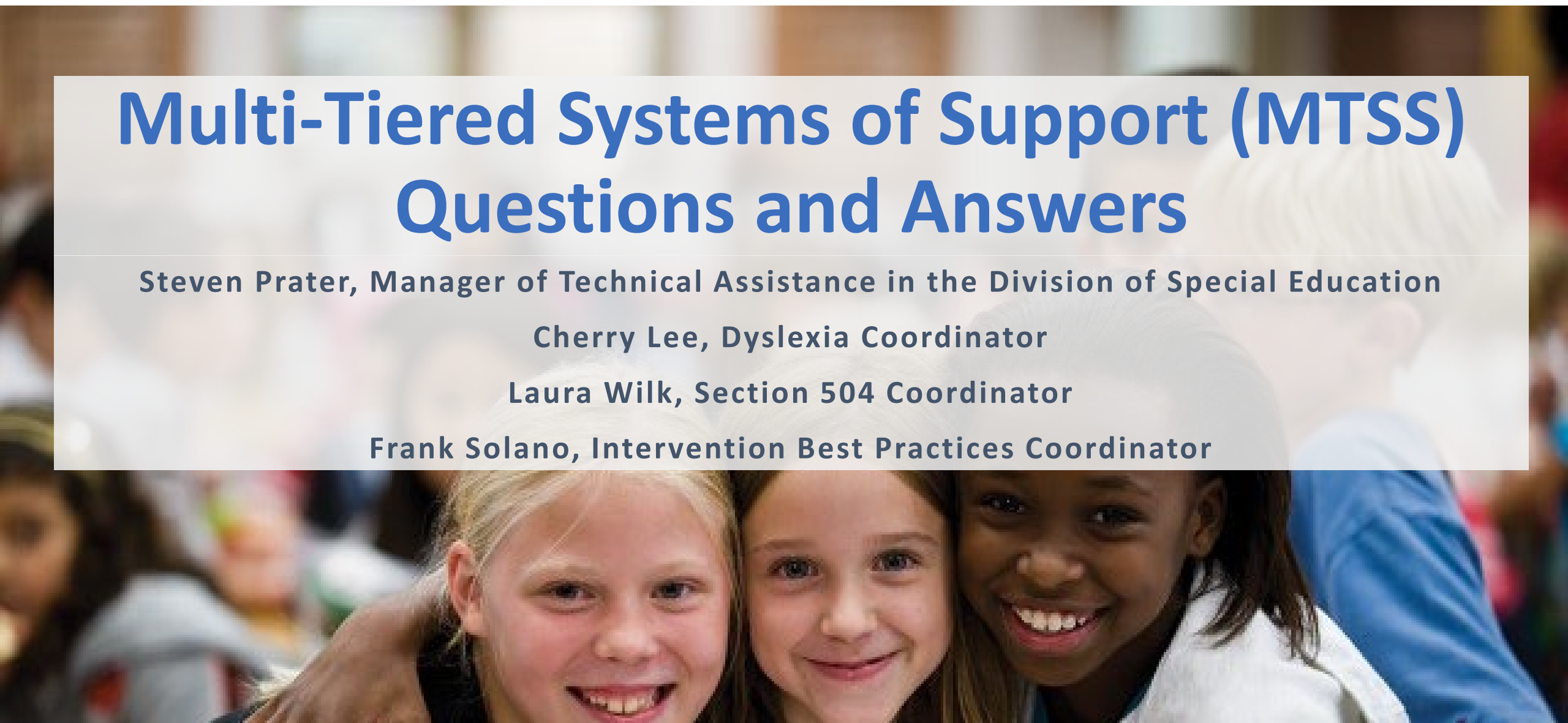
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Questions and Answers

Steven Prater, Manager of Technical Assistance in the Division of Special Education

Cherry Lee, Dyslexia Coordinator

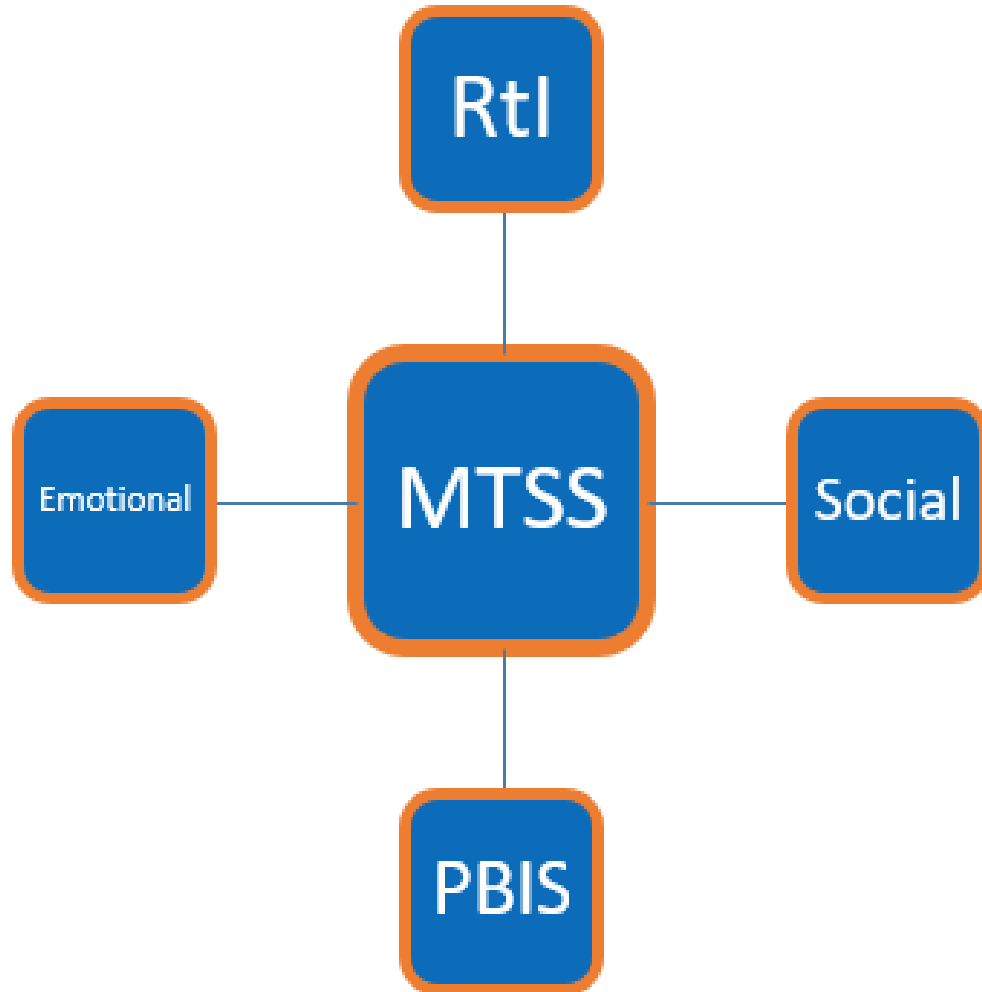
Laura Wilk, Section 504 Coordinator

Frank Solano, Intervention Best Practices Coordinator



Will TEA continue to use the term Response to Intervention (RtI), or do we all need to move to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



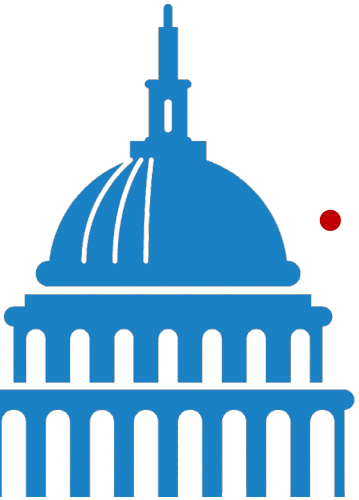
- MTSS encompasses supports for the whole child, and takes into account academics, behavior, and social/emotional supports.
- MTSS is the term that is being used more and more nationwide.
- Rtl and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) are examples of tiered systems under the MTSS umbrella.
- Intervention Best Practices Statewide Leadership Network will develop guidance, including professional development modules, about MTSS.

**Will TEA determine an MTSS
minimum standard/process?
Will this be in rule?**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



- The Intervention Best Practices Network will develop materials and a framework that districts may use to guide their implementation of MTSS.



- At this time, there is no plan to mandate MTSS or any specific minimum standard or process.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Current TEA sponsored guidance for MTSS can be found at:

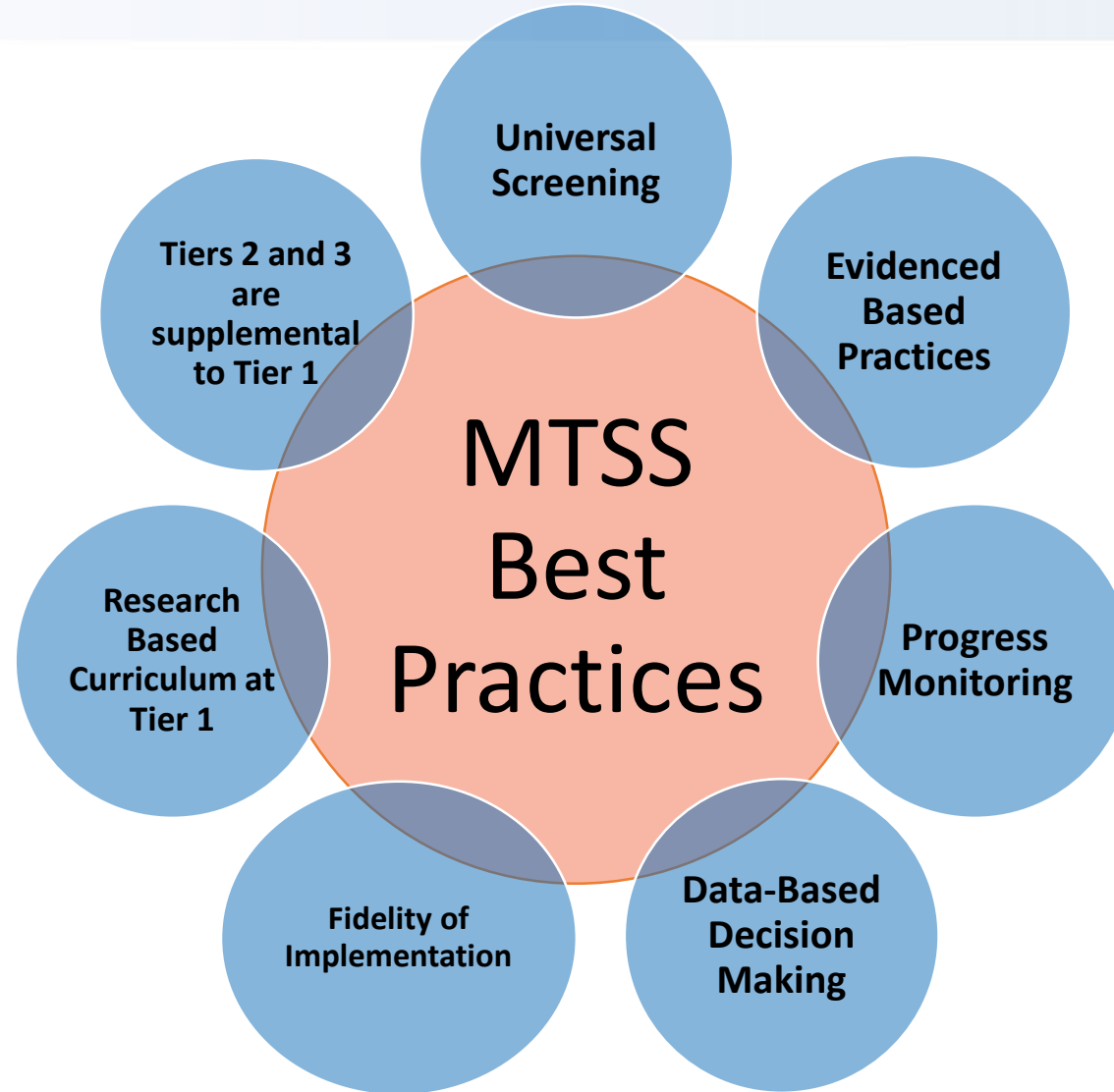
- The TEA Response to Intervention page:
[https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special Student Populations/Special Education/Programs and Services/Response to Intervention/](https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Special_Education/Programs_and_Services/Response_to_Intervention/)
- Building RtI Capacity Website:
<https://buildingrti.utexas.org/>
- Texas Behavior Support Website:
<https://www.txbehaviorsupport.org/>

Who “owns” MTSS? What are some best practices on well-functioning programs?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- MTSS should be provided through the collaborative efforts of general and special education.
- Students with disabilities should have access to all tiers in MTSS.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

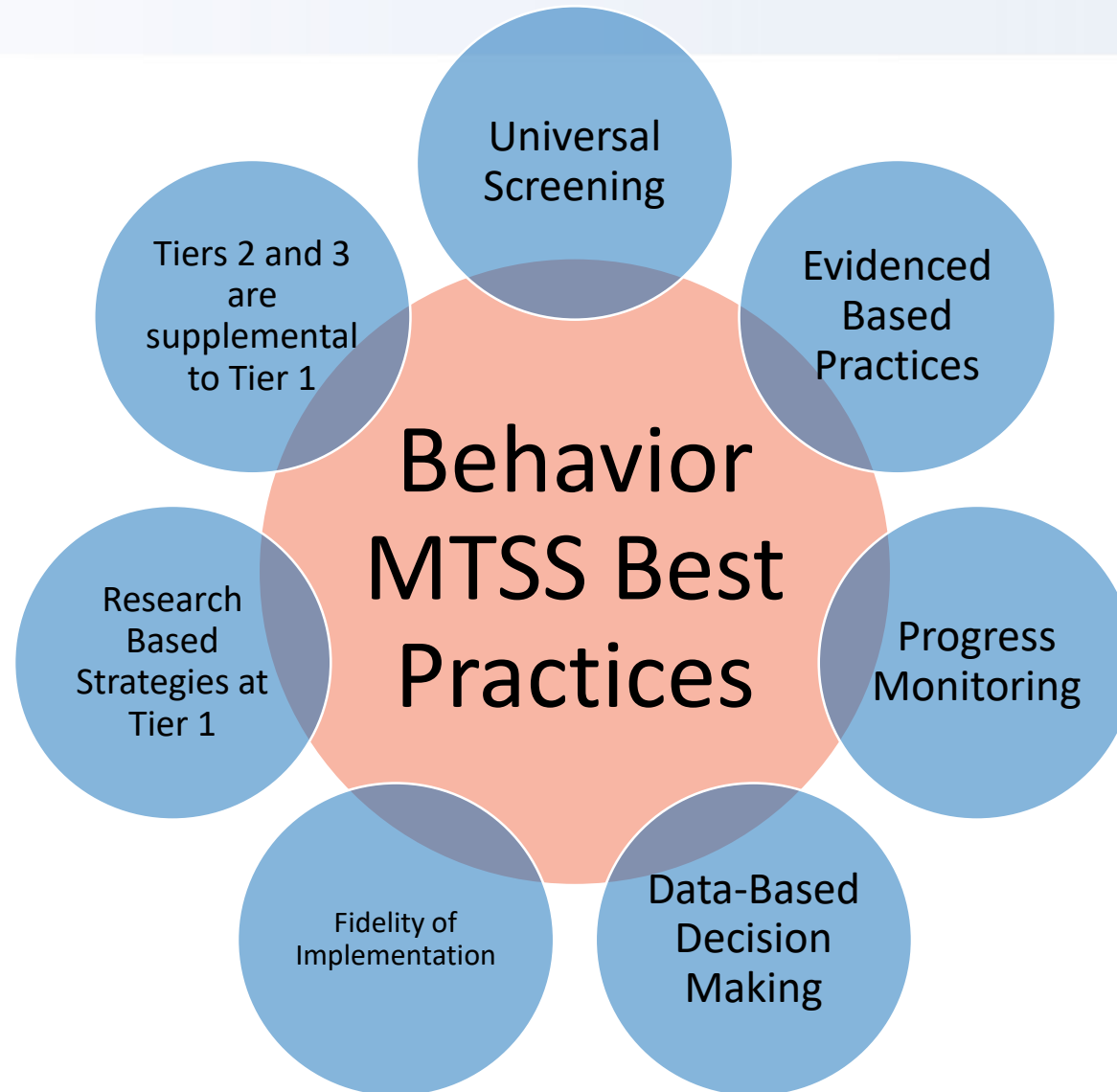


Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- The Building RTI Capacity website provides a campus needs assessment and tools for planning and monitoring MTSS implementation.
 - Campus Needs Assessment Tools: <https://buildingrti.utexas.org/resource-pages/campus-needs-assessment-tools>
 - Instructional Decision-Making Procedures: Ensuring Appropriate Instruction for Struggling Students In Grades K-12: <https://buildingrti.utexas.org/booklets/instructional-decision-making-procedures-ensuring-appropriate-instruction-for-struggling>

How does MTSS work with behavior challenges? Please offer some best practices.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- The National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII) provides case studies and further guidance on behavior interventions in a MTSS framework at: <https://intensiveintervention.org/resource/taxonomy-intervention-intensity-case-example-building-intervention-intensity-behavior>
- NCII Tools Chart for Behavior Screeners: <https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/behavior-screening>
- NCII Tools Chart for Behavior Interventions: <https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/behavioral-intervention-chart>
- NCII Tools Chart for Behavior Progress Monitoring: <https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/behavioral-progress-monitoring-tools>

How does the MTSS process relate to students with dyslexia?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



- Students who are struggling with reading, or showing early risk factors associated with dyslexia, may receive interventions through MTSS.

- Tiered intervention programs play an important role in providing access to research-based interventions for struggling students



- A referral for a full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) can occur at any point in the MTSS process, and MTSS is not required prior to any referrals for special education services.

- Learn more about the [“Provision of Services for Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders”](#)

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



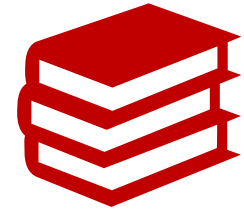
IDEA Child Find Mandate:

To identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability



LEA Responsibilities:

LEAs have an obligation to refer any student suspected of having a disability and needing special ed. services



Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia:

OSERS: There is nothing in the IDEA that prohibits the use of these terms in evaluation & IEP documents

Who should be on a student support team?

- Schools should be thoughtful about the team members that are needed
- Student support teams might include:

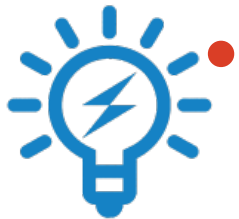
- General education teachers
- Special education teachers
- Interventionists
- Specialists (reading specialist, math specialist, behavior specialist, etc.)
- Administrators
- School counselors
- Social workers
- Evaluation personnel (diagnosticians, LSSPs)

Should an FIE be conducted while a student is receiving MTSS? When is the appropriate time to evaluate?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



The appropriate time to evaluate is when there is a suspicion that a student has a disability and requires special education and related services.



If a student is receiving MTSS services, and there is a decision to conduct an FIE, the student should continue with the MTSS services while the evaluation is being conducted.



Establish streamlined MTSS procedures:

- Universal Screening
- Evidenced-based interventions done with fidelity
- Progress monitoring
- Data based decision making



Establish guidelines for decision making:

- Decision Matrices
- Enter/Exit Criteria
- Other Processes
- Use expertise of educators and information from parents

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

19 TAC 89.1011(a) states:

a. Referral of students for a full individual and initial evaluation for possible special education services must be a part of the district's overall, general education referral or screening system. Prior to referral, students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for all support services available to all students, such as tutorial; remedial; compensatory; response to evidence-based intervention; and other academic or behavior support services. If the student continues to experience difficulty in the general classroom after the provision of interventions, district personnel must refer the student for a full individual and initial evaluation. This referral for a full individual and initial evaluation may be initiated by school personnel, the student's parents or legal guardian, or another person involved in the education or care of the student.

How does this rule fit with the requirement that MTSS may not be used to delay an evaluation of a student suspected to have a disability and the need for special education services?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

The key phrase in the rule is ". . . students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for all support services available to all students . . ." It does not state that the student must receive these supports.

If the student receives general education support services, and if the student continues to struggle, then the student must be referred for a full individual and initial evaluation (FIE).

But, at any time, if a student is suspected of having a disability and needing special education services, the student must be referred for an FIE.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Ideally, intervention should be provided as soon as a child displays an instructional need. Beginning the intervention as soon as a gap in learning or performance is being displayed, increases the likelihood that the student will close the gap between their current level of performance and grade level expectations.

The Building RtI Capacity website provides information and resources on the relationship between RtI implementation and IDEA, including an online professional development module entitled “Connecting RtI Implementation and IDEA: What School Leaders Need to Know.”

How does MTSS show whether there is an “educational need” for special education?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- MTSS, if done with fidelity and using evidence-based interventions, can provide useful data about the level of support a student needs.
 - If a student is responding positively and closing the gap between their performance and their same aged peers, the intervention is succeeding and the student probably is not a student that would need the specially designed instruction of special education.
 - If a student is not responding sufficiently, or closing the gap between their performance and their peers' performance, the student may be a student with a disability and a need for special education services.
- An FIIE helps the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee determine the educational need for special education and related services. Data collected from MTSS can and should be used as part of that evaluation.

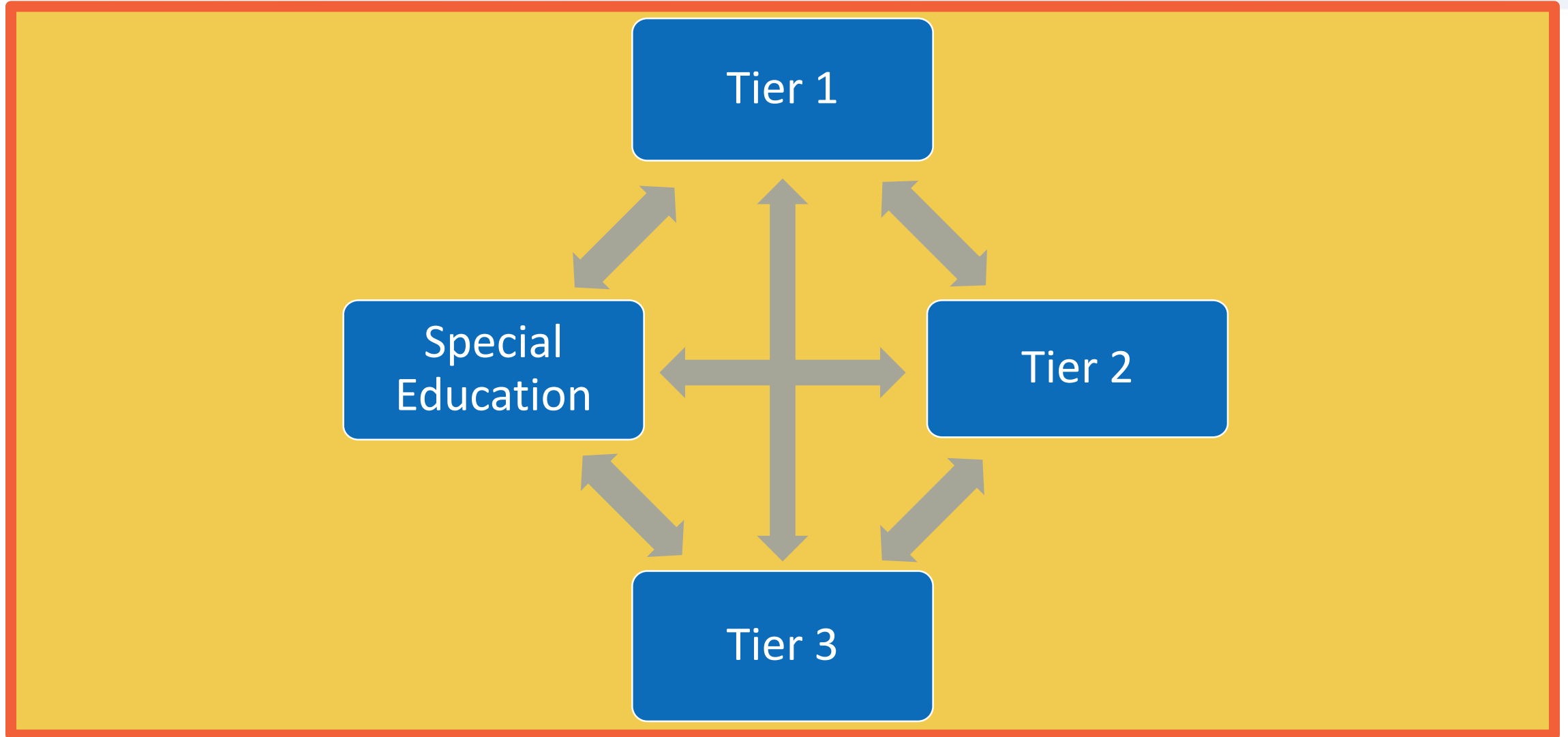
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

The Building RtI Capacity website has a resource called “Resource for Student Evaluation Personnel Working in Schools Implementing Response to Intervention.” This guide gives many references and resources from TEA, the U.S. Department of Education, and nationally recognized organizations and individuals.

<https://buildingrti.utexas.org/booklets/resource-for-student-evaluation-personnel-working-schools-implementing-response-to>

Is MTSS automatically “over” once a student is determined eligible for special education?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



Contact Info:

Special Education Division at TEA

- sped@tea.texas.gov
- 512-463-9414



Thank you!