



Objective

RI MTSS (Rhode Island Multi-Tiered System of Supports) is a training and technical assistance opportunity that will provide professional development and systems development support for the implementation of an integrated model of supporting academic (RTI) and behavioral (PBIS) interventions, strategies and practices. RI MTSS is a joint venture by RIDE (Rhode Island Department of Education) and the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College. At the end of participation, your school/district will be working towards a self-sustainable integrated RTI/PBIS framework for providing evidence-based and data-based decision making procedures to enhance student development across all tiers of support (Universal {School-Wide} Prevention, Targeted Group Interventions, and Individual Intensive Supports).

Grant

RI MTSS is funded by the United States Department of Education OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) under SPDG (State Personnel Development Grant). The SPDG is funded for five years, was awarded in 2012 until 2017. Funding supports training, professional development, and technical assistance activities that enhance school infrastructure around data, systems and practices. Project funding goes toward training materials and the development of local training and coaching capacity. The project is not intended to cover any costs associated with MTSS implementation within a given fiscal year and throughout the project commitment of three to five years. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to leverage existing funding sources to offset implementation costs associated with development, sustainability and scale up and technical assistance (i.e., substitutes to attend training, reposition staff/FTE to support district capacity in training and technical assistance). No direct funding is provided to district/school systems.

Overview

Response to Intervention (RTI) is defined as “the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions” (Batsche et al., 2005). Based on a problem-solving model, RTI provides services/intervention as soon as the student demonstrates a need. Focused primarily on addressing academic problems, RTI has emerged as the new way to think about both disability identification and early intervention assistance for the “most vulnerable, academically unresponsive children” in schools and school districts (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007, p. 131, emphasis added).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a process that is consistent with the core principles of RTI. Similar to RTI, PBIS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems. Critical features of PBIS are expectations defined, expectations taught, acknowledgment system, a system for responding to challenging behavior, a system for monitoring and decision-making, and a management system.

Both RTI and PBIS are grounded in differentiated instruction. Each approach delimits critical factors and components to be in place at the Universal (Tier 1), Targeted Group (Tier 2), and Individual (Tier 3) levels. MTSS will improve outcomes for students with, or at-risk for academic, social-emotional and behavioral difficulties through a “whole child approach.” MTSS will enhanced family/community partnerships and provide support from Higher Education.



Benefits of participation

- Improve student outcomes
- Enhance program quality in reading, math and behavior (and fidelity of implementation)
- Participating schools will demonstrate a minimum of 20% improvement for student outcomes in reading, math and behavior
- MTSS will assist in developing a continuum of supports and technical assistance for district implementation
- Creating a common vision that aligns the beliefs and practices needed to support the districts providing MTSS to address the needs of all students
- Assisting districts in developing consensus and commitment for the implementation of MTSS and creating efficiencies around resources, priorities, and integration of services
- Establishing ongoing feedback loops to support a model of continuous improvement through data-based decision making related to MTSS implementation.

Requirements for participation

District Level Commitment to:

- Create an active and representative “District Leadership Implementation Team” which is a working team designed to implement RI MTSS practices with fidelity.
- Identify a District Coach and provide adequate time to support development and knowledge, in-district capacity and sustainability, training and technical assistance
- Provide support by the district administration for the ancillary cost (e.g., substitutes, travel, etc.)
- Support the use of an effective and efficient data system for collecting and analyzing data
- Provide necessary supports to the schools, which include modifying school schedules, as needed, to implement RI MTSS with fidelity.
- Commit to a standing agenda item regarding MTSS implementation supports
- Participate with the project for a minimum of 3 years

School Level Commitment to:

- Create an active and representative “School/Building Leadership Implementation Team” for each participating school to support training and technical assistance
- Hold monthly team meetings to support development and implementation
- Collect related data

For more information, email RIMTSS@ric.edu.