



***MTSS: MULTI-TIERED  
SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT:  
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?***

*Clarification by the BPS SISS  
Department*

# MOVING UPSTREAM: A STORY OF PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION



## SHE REPLIED...

*“It occurred to me that someone ought to go upstream and find out why so many kids were falling into the river. What I found is that the old wooden bridge had several planks missing, and when some children tried to jump over the gap, they couldn’t make it and fell through into the river. So I got someone to fix the bridge.”*



# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO US?

“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we teach? . . .  
punish?”

*~John Herner, Counterpoint (1998, p.2)*

## Prevent instead of React

## WHY

**“Early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success...The later in life we attempt to repair early deficits, the costlier remediation becomes...”**

*~James Heckman, Nobel Prize-Winner,  
Economics, 2000*

## WHAT WE KNOW...

- **The earlier school staff can identify students' difficulties, the quicker and less expensive the task is to help them catch up**
- **The longer a student goes without assistance, the longer the remediation time and the more intense the services must be**

# WHAT WE KNOW...

- Students must know what is expected of them
- Behavior is learned
- Schools must provide safe, learning conducive and predictable environments
- We must teach students what positive behaviors look like

# WHAT WE WANT...

- **All students achieving to high standards**
  - by being provided sufficient time and support
- **All low performing students**
  - being provided focused instruction
- **All teachers teaching students to high standards**
  - by being given the right conditions and assistance
- **All teachers intervening in the learning process**
  - when there is an indication of a failure to learn
- **All teachers focusing early intervention resources**
  - on the early years of schooling

*Leadership Compass, Fall 2006, National Association of Elementary School Principals*



# HOW...

By intentionally designing and redesigning resources to match student needs

Ensuring that every leader is responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating

Using academic and behavioral data to inform instructional/behavioral decisions

Including educators, families and community members as part of effective problem-solving and instructional decision making

Creating an empowering culture that maintains collective responsibility for every child's success

# **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)**

**A term that refers to the organizational framework (the system)**

**A way to organize academic and behavioral help for all students**

**Uses students' response to intervention data to find solutions**

**Student supports are based on student need; students who need intense supports are given additional help**

## **WHAT MTSS IS...**

- 1. Focused on every child's achievement and behavior**
- 2. Individual child problem solving**
- 3. Evidence-based practices for every child**
- 4. High quality, differentiated instruction**
- 5. Screening**
- 6. Progress monitoring**
- 7. Data-based decision making**
- 8. Timely, informative, systematic**

# MTSS VS. RTI VS. PBIS

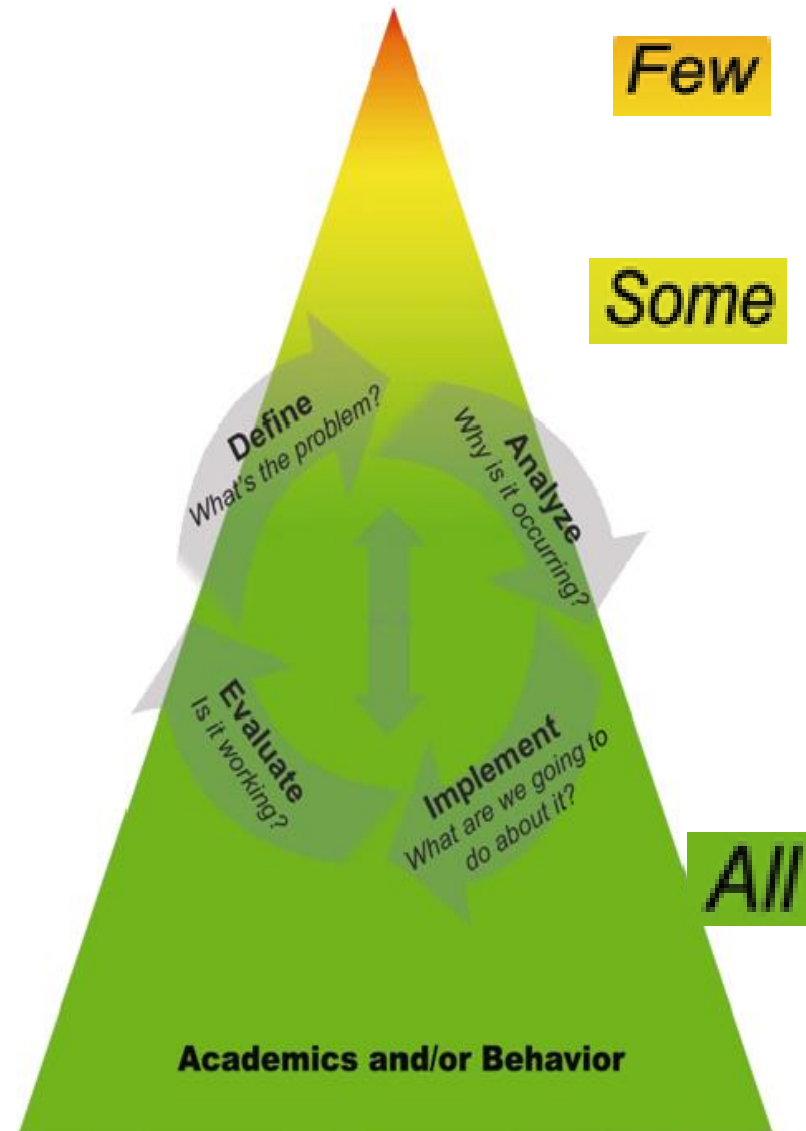
RtI and PBIS are MTSS — multi-tiered systems of support.

MTSS is considered a comprehensive approach to meeting the academic and behavior needs of students.

- Provides support for ALL learners — struggling and advanced.
- Works to ensure practices, policies and programs are aligned.
- Has a strong goal of PREVENTION.



# MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS) & THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS



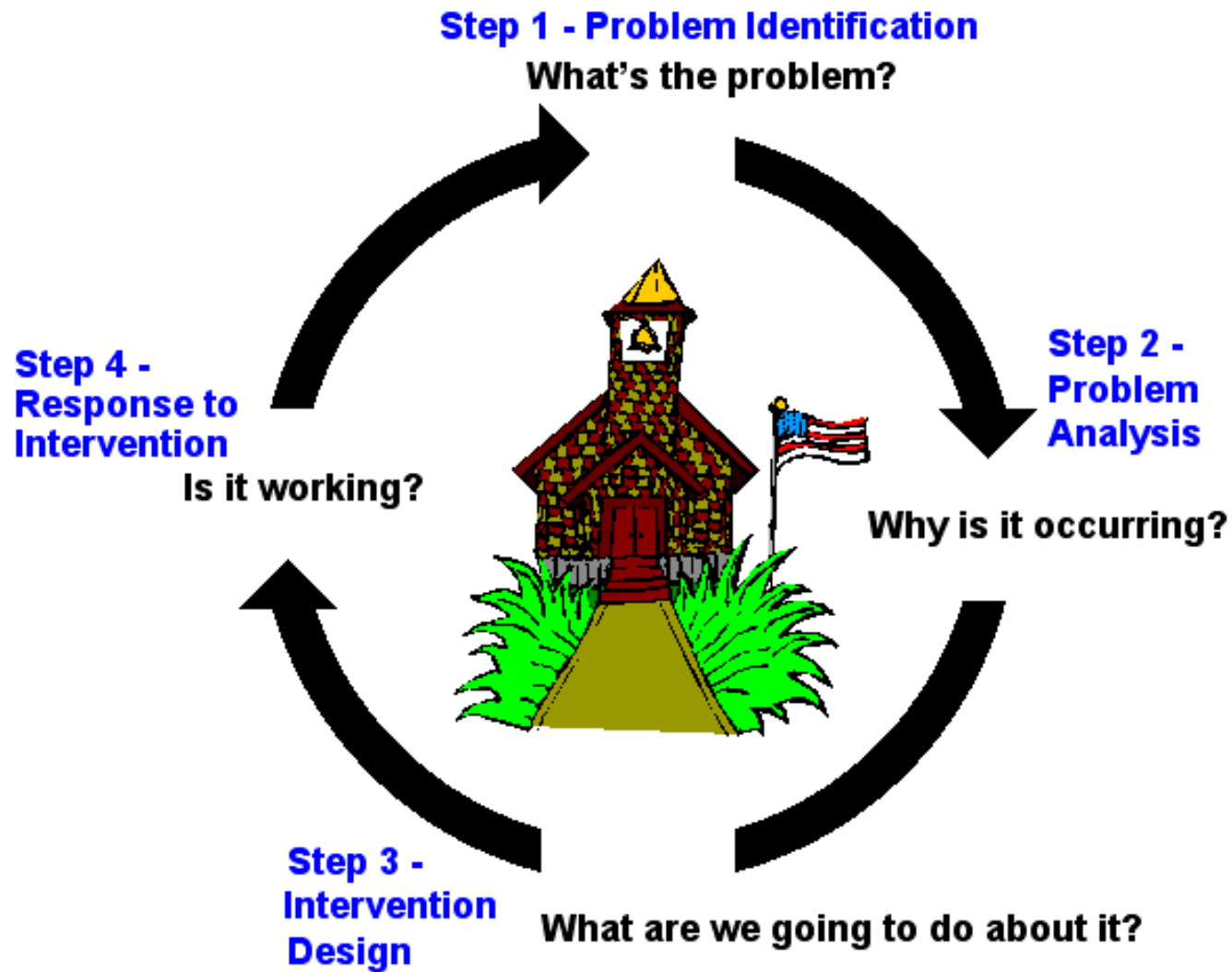
# WHAT ARE THE 3 TIERS OF MTSS?

Tier 1 – High quality teaching and behavior support for all students in the school

Tier 2 – Additional interventions for students who need more help on specific skills

Tier 3 – Interventions designed to address the unique needs of an individual student

# PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS



# THE BIG “BIG” IDEA OF MTSS

1. Deciding what is important for students to know
2. Teaching what is important for students to know
3. Keeping track of how students are doing
4. Making changes according to the results collected

*Dave Tilly, Iowa 2005*



# WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE SYSTEM?

For the school to provide effective teaching that fits the needs of each student.

For the school to make sure the classroom environment is the best possible for every student.

To help all students meet grade level standards.

To use student data to identify students who may be struggling.

To “add to” general education instruction, not “replace” with something different.

To provide interventions (“help”) as a natural, ongoing part of education that doesn’t wait until the student is struggling.

# SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

“Reforming our schools to deliver a world-class education is a shared responsibility...to support innovative approaches to teaching and learning; to bring lasting change to our lowest-performing schools; and to investigate and evaluate what works...”

— *A Blueprint for Reform:  
The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*

## **ADVANTAGES OF MTSS**

- **Provides instructional and behavioral assistance in a timely fashion (e.g., not a wait to fail model)**
- **Helps to ensure a student's poor academic performance is not due to:**
  - **poor instruction**
  - **inappropriate curriculum**
  - **lack of expectations**
- **Informs teachers and improves behavior and/or instruction because data are collected and closely linked to interventions.**

# WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

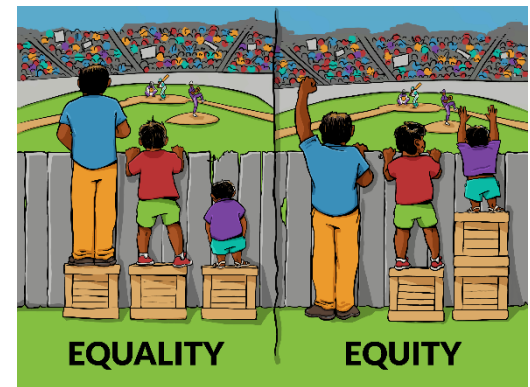
- An overarching framework that guides improvement processes and planning
- An integrated systemic approach that includes early identification and rapid response to the needs of all students
- The establishment of positive, proactive environments as the norm
- The creation of strong, resourceful, empowered districts, schools, and staff

# INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Based on data from progress monitoring of the student's goals.

Not a one size fits all – very individualized.

Remember – Fair isn't always equal.



We are aiming for “equity” – providing every student the support and resources needed to meet the expectations that have been established for ALL students.

Tell me and I  
**forget.** Teach me  
and I **remember.**  
Involve me and I  
**learn.**

- Benjamin Franklin

*“Every student can learn,  
just not on the same day,  
or the same way.”*

*George Evans*