



Early Literacy Guiding Document for MTSS Using the RTI Module in SIS



What is MTSS?

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom to identify students needing additional supports. MTSS is an early intervening support process where the goal is to improve student achievement and provide behavioral supports using research based interventions/programs matched to the instructional need and level of the student. The core of MTSS is the premise that ALL children can learn. In Pennsylvania, MTSS carries a dual meaning: first, it is a comprehensive, multi-tiered, standards aligned system to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. Second, MTSS is an alternative to the aptitude achievement discrepancy model for the identification of students. This strategy allows education professionals to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. Monitoring student response to a series of increasingly intense interventions assists in guiding instruction to prevent academic failure and provides data that may guide eligibility decisions for learning disabilities. In brief, MTSS is:

- A data-driven model to enable early identification and strategic
- interventions/ programs for students at academic or behavioral risk
- A multi-level instructional framework aimed at improving instruction for ALL students
- A shared, collaborative, decision-making process among professional educators

Currently, the RTI Module in SIS will only be used to create Tier 3 Plans. However, please review the Tier 1 and 2 information below to understand what should occur prior to creating a Tier 3 plan.

TIER 1

The best way to address MTSS-RtII at Tier 1 in the classroom setting is for teachers to develop and implement a lesson plan that addresses the various needs of all students. Students on Tier 1 receive core literacy instruction using the District's Scope and Sequence aligned to the PA Core Standards English Language Arts along with the Comprehensive Literacy Framework (CLF). The Comprehensive Literacy Framework focuses on the five essential components of reading instruction: Phonics, Phonemic Awareness, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension that are explicitly taught within a balanced literacy program.

Tier 1 represents teachers providing high-quality instruction in the classroom along with scaffolding supports to help students succeed. All students receive a standards-based core curriculum delivered with fidelity and differentiated instruction. The focus at Tier 1 is demonstration of core competencies, continued grade-level mastery with the objective of reading at least on their grade level. Strategies are used at Tier 1 to meet the needs of all students and to differentiate instruction. Examples of strategies are: daily guided reading, use of graphic organizers, interactive charts, alphabetic principle activities, etc.

TIER 2

Students who do not make adequate progress in Tier 1 that are struggling with content, foundational skills, scores in the Below Average percentile according to AIMSweb Plus and are within two reading levels below the grade appropriate reading level, would receive instruction using a Tier 2 research-based intervention program. Intervention programs may be administered in the classroom by the teacher or by a specialist. Explicit instruction and targeted support with supplemental materials that enhance but not supplant the core curriculum is the goal. The instruction should be engaging, integrated and offer multiple opportunities for student mastery. On-going progress monitoring through AIMSWEB and other progress monitoring tools related to targeted skills, is essential to adjust instruction and assess achievement.

TIER 3

Those students who are two or more reading levels below the grade appropriate reading level, as well as struggling with content and foundational skills that are not responding to Tier 2, and students who score in the Well Below Average Percentile in AIMSweb Plus must receive instruction using a Tier 3 research-based intervention program. The classroom teacher or a specialist must provide intense instruction using an intervention program provided individually at this tier. The intervention programs target academic-level mastery with acceleration into grade-level mastery. On-going progress monitoring is essential to adjust instruction and assess achievement.

How the Needs of Kindergarten Students Will Be Addressed Through MTSS-RtII

At the beginning of the school year kindergarten students are beginning their formal education. AIMSweb is administered three times a year: in the fall/beginning, winter/middle and spring/end. The results collected in the fall are used as baseline data to make instructional decisions.

Additional data must be used to make comparisons and provide instructional changes. Examples of additional data that can be collected are: Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2), Kindergarten Entry Inventory (KEI), teacher made assessments, classroom observations, anecdotal records, classroom work samples and end of unit assessments.

After the first marking period, if a student is not making adequate progress an action plan must be developed in order to address the student's areas of concerns. This plan should include progress monitoring, various methods of delivering differentiated instruction, instructional strategies, assessments and results of data collection that can be used to adjust instruction.

Prior to the AIMSweb winter screening, kindergarten students should not be placed in Tier 2 since there has not been enough data collected to make an analytical decision. Students identified after the AIMSweb winter mid-year screening that require strategic or intensive support may require an intervention program.

Before a kindergarten student is considered for Tier 3, instructional strategies at the Tier 2 level must be implemented and deemed not working as documented in the intervention plan. The MTSS-RtII school team will review the intervention plan to make the proper recommendation for placement in Tier 3 using a research-based intervention program. ***The homeroom teacher must always be a member of the MTSS-RtII school team.***

The target instructional reading level goal for kindergarten students from the beginning of September to November is Level A. Implementing good instruction using curricular resources that are aligned to the PA Core Standards English Language Arts, the District's Scope and Sequence along with the Comprehensive Literacy Framework will provide a core instructional program that will allow the teacher to meet the needs of their students.

At the end of January, after the AIMSweb Plus winter screening, if a student is still on an independent Pre Reading (PR) level based on the DRA, strategic intervention will be needed. The MTSS-RtII school team will develop an intervention plan to determine what research-based intervention program is appropriate for targeted strategic instruction. Ongoing progress monitoring must take place in order to adjust instruction and establish if the student is making improvement.

At the end of March, if a student is still on an instructional reading Level A, the MTSS-RtII school team will reevaluate the student's plan to determine what the next steps are for the student to move to Tier 3. Intensive instruction at Tier 3 will include increased time spent in the research-based intervention program, supplemental formal assessments will be administered and frequent progress monitoring must be implemented to increase the student's reading level. Intensive instruction must take place since kindergarten students are expected to be on an instructional reading Level D at the end of the school year in June.

PLEASE NOTE! If a parent makes a request for a special education evaluation, follow the district's process available through the Office of Specialized Services. The team should implement Tier 2 supports in the form of a research based program in order to collect data that would either support specialized goals (if eligible) or the need to phase the student back to Tier 1 supports. This data should be used to address the parent's claim.

Goals for Instructional Reading Levels in Kindergarten Aligned to MTSS-RtII Tiers

KINDERGARTEN	1st Term (November)	2nd Term (January)	3rd Term (March)	4th Term (June)
Target Level (Proficient) MTSS-RtII Tier 1	A and above	B and above	C and above	D and above
Strategic Intervention Needed MTSS-RtII Tier 2	PR	A	B	B, C
Intensive Intervention Needed MTSS-RtII Tier 3		PR	A and below	A and below

Shaded boxes indicate the target level for grade.

For those students not reading on an Instructional Level A, use the Pre-Reading (PR) level.

Students in Tiers 2 & 3 will receive literacy instruction in Tier 1 as well as targeted strategic support for Tier 2 and intensive support for Tier 3.

Communication

It is essential that communication be made between the kindergarten teacher and the receiving 1st grade teacher for the following school year. All MTSS-RtII action plans along with assessments, data reports, and additional documentation must be handed off to the receiving teacher. This will ensure a smooth transition for both the teacher and students the following year.

An exception to this policy is: When a child enters kindergarten from an Early Intervention Program such as Elwyn with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or in some cases a revised Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) as the team is still working to develop an IEP, you must follow that plan. Consult with the special education team at your school to develop a proper literacy and MTSS-RtII plan for the student.

Understanding Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for English Learners (ELs)

For ELs, instruction and content lessons must take into account students' English Language Proficiency (ELP) WIDA ACCESS/Screeners levels. ESOL instruction, according to the PA Basic Education Circular (BEC) on Educating English Learners "is driven by language, but it draws from general education content" (2017), and is not considered an intervention. "Rigorous implementation of RTI includes a combination of high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction; assessment; and evidence-based intervention" (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010).

Universal Screeners and English Learners

English Learners **should not** be compared to non-English Learners when using aimsweb Plus benchmark scores but instead should be compared to their “true peers”, ELs of similar linguistic background, English proficiency level, experience, culture, educational background, and time of entry into an ESOL program.

Tier 1 = Core Instruction

Core instruction for ELs is instruction based on the PA Common Core Standards and scaffolded according to students’ language proficiency levels in all subject areas. ESOL instruction is not considered an intervention.

Effective instruction for ELs considers and builds on students’ cultural knowledge, home language, background, life experiences, and linguistic proficiencies. It also involves **shared ownership** by classroom teachers and ESOL teachers.

Monitoring English Learner Progress

ESOL teachers **must** collaborate with classroom teachers to monitor the progress of English Learners. ELs are developing English proficiency and should always be measured against their “true peers” rather than students who are not English Learners.

Student Name	Date Entered District	Initial ESOL Level	Time in ESOL Prgm	Current ACCESS Levels (Scale Scores)				Limited Formal Schooling? (Y/N)	AIMSweb Benchmark Scores			DRAII Level				
				Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking		F	W	Spr	F	W	Spr		

Tier 2

When an EL falls behind his or her “true peers”, a problem-solving protocol (an example worksheet can be found below) should be initiated by the classroom teacher and ESOL teacher collaboratively in order to determine potential barriers. The problem-solving protocol **must** be a collaborative effort between the classroom teacher and ESL teacher.

Tier 2 supports for ELs may include but are not limited to:

- More time in Tier 1 core instruction. Tier 2 interventions should not replace ESOL core instruction. Different materials may be used with the goal of meeting grade-level standards
- Small group instruction (3-5) students
- Instruction must continue to be scaffolded taking into consideration students’ language proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds

Tier 3

ELs who have received Tier 2 research-based interventions without demonstrating significant gains require a team-based problem solving approach. Such an approach should address the following questions including but not limited to:

- Have Tier 2 interventions supplemented core ESOL instruction (without replacing it)?

- Were appropriate scaffolds utilized to deliver instruction within the SDP Comprehensive Literacy Framework?
- Were Tier 2 interventions implemented with fidelity following a plan designed collaboratively by the classroom teacher and ESOL teacher?

When Using the RTI Module in SIS

Please follow the steppers provided by the IT Office, but keep the following in mind with regard to Tier 3 K-3 Early Literacy:

RTI Contact Log

When contacting parents regarding the team’s proposed Tier 3 MTSS supports for K-3 Early Literacy, be sure to discuss the following and include it in the Contact Log:

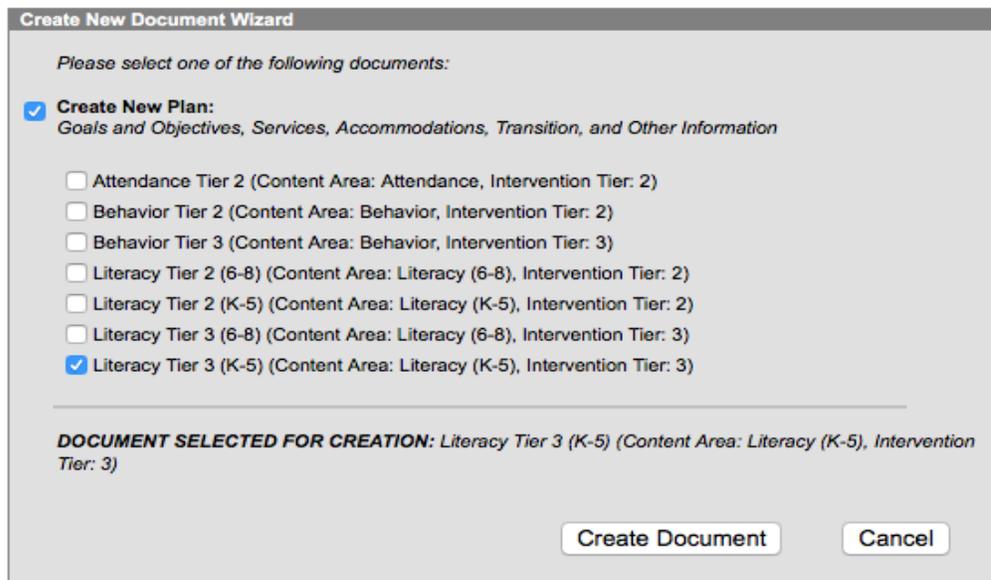
- The timeline for plan implementation and analysis
- The plan for changing the intensity from tier 2 supports
- Who will provide the intervention(s)
- When and where will the interventions be provided to the student

Creating a Team for Support

The following team members are valuable partners on a tier 3 K-3 Literacy Plan

- Classroom teacher
- Parent
- Specialist in the area of early literacy

Literacy Improvement Plan



PLEASE NOTE: You are **only creating Tier 3 plans** for K-3 Early Literacy based on the AIMSWEB measures that the district is currently monitoring:

- For K: Letter Name Fluency
- For 1st: Nonsense Word Fluency
- For 2nd and 3rd- Oral Reading Fluency

In addition to AIMSWEB, teachers can also look at DRA 2 scores as a second formative assessment to determine tier 3 eligibility.

Universal Screener Score

You are entering the Tier 1 Target score for the tests of Early Literacy that you are administering.

Why? Because this would indicate a student that is progressing in the core curriculum.

Base Score

This is the score that the student earned in the **most recent AIMSWEB benchmark**. Refer to the AIMSWEB Plus cut scores to determine the RTI tier that the student should be placed in based on national norms.

Goal Score

This is the minimum growth target to phase the student back into Tier 2.

Please note, as the child is working in their plan, the target scores for the rest of the student population are moving forward each benchmark period. The goal is to ensure that we are growing student progress and phasing back tiers as progress is made. The norm (this Goal score) will now be higher for tier 2 given the time that has passed in the academic year.

Therefore this Goal score will appear higher than the original Universal Screener Score. Look at **AIMSWEB** for the report criteria set up under the assessment that you are administering to determine the Universal Screener Score and the Goal Score.

If the student is on the cusp of tier 3 from tier 2 here are some suggestions for determining next steps:

- Work with the Multi- Disciplinary Team (MDT) to review strategies intensified to tier 2 level that would work for this student
- Review and discuss potential external causes for the student's lack of progress and attempt to address those areas in order to get a true tier reading at the next AIMSWEB assessment
- Increase center-based learning opportunities to strictly literacy based centers. This allows the homeroom teacher to increase small group instruction time for an approximately 20-30 minute added interval of intervention (i.e. Phonics Center, Sight Word Center, Fluency Center, Comprehension Center, Vocabulary Center)

When you use the Intervention drop down the list of interventions will not be available here. When you click the Intervention drop down, you are selecting "Academic Support Plan K-5".

Goal Score Comments are where you are selecting your team's choice of a district approved research based intervention for Tier 3 Literacy K-3. When you click the icon over this section, you will see the district's approved list of interventions.

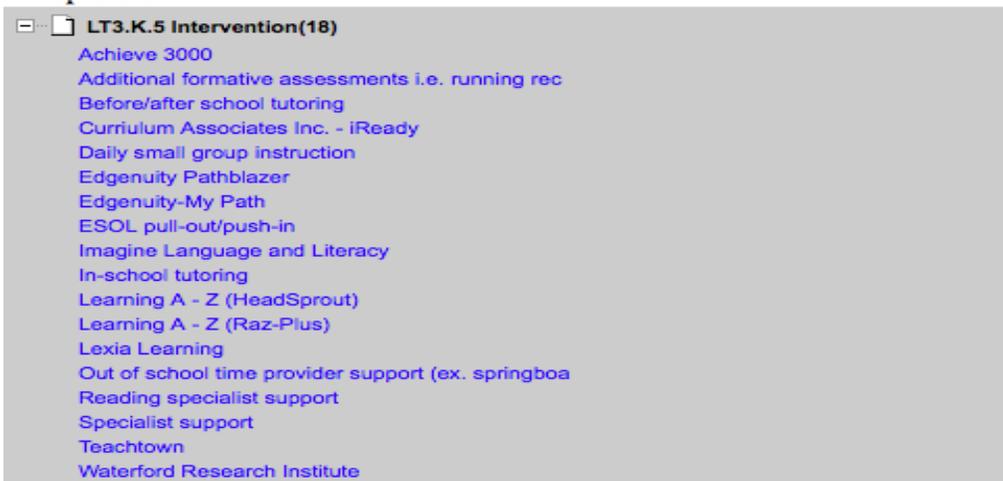
****REMINDER**** You can access the district's approved list of interventions on the Office of Curriculum and Assessment website.

Target Minutes/# of Frequency/ Session Frequency

On the district's approved list of interventions, found on the OCIA website, you will see the prescribed frequency and duration for each Tier 3 level K-3 Literacy intervention. Use the list to add the frequency and duration information into the plan and begin implementing it as

prescribed. Please note, that at the tier 3 level, intervention at the most intensive level should be occurring 5 days a week.

Template Bank



How to Modify a Plan

Please note, creation of a new plan is not needed should the current plan only need modifications. Utilize the stepper to modify the existing plan.

Entering Progress Monitoring Data

***MAKE SURE THE PLAN IS FINALIZED AND LOCKED!**

All of your progress monitoring data for tier 3 K-3 Literacy should be AIMSWEB data points. Ideally we would want to keep to the seasonal AIMSWEB administration windows, however an AIMSWEB probe can be administered at any time and used as a paper pencil based progress monitoring tool.

Finalizing/Closing Plans

It is recommended that you commit 20-30 school days to implementing a Tier 3 K-3 Literacy intervention plan. Intervention programs will also indicate the suggested frequency and duration of the program when administered at the tier 3 level. Please remember, only the case manager should be closing plans.

References

National Center on Response to Intervention. (2010). *Essential components of RTI—A closer look at response to intervention*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Response to Intervention. Retrieved from: <http://www.rti4success.org/resource/essential-components-rti-closer-lookresponse-intervention>

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2017). *Basic Education Circular: Educating English Learners*. Retrieved from [http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Codes%20and%20Regulations/Basic%20Education%20Circulars/PA%20Code/Educating%20English%20Learners%20\(EL\).pdf](http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Codes%20and%20Regulations/Basic%20Education%20Circulars/PA%20Code/Educating%20English%20Learners%20(EL).pdf)

*An example problem-solving protocol can be found here: http://rti.dadeschools.net/pdfs/Rtl_Guide/Ch4-four_step_problem_solving_model.pdf