**Mental Health and Behavioral Program Supports – Tips and Strategies from a Tiered Approach**

**The Tiered System of Support: Examples and Overview**

The following tables provide a brief overview of the tiered levels of social-emotional support as provided within an MTSS framework.

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| **Tier I: Supports: All Students** | | |
| Who is involved? | **Students:**   * Appropriate for all students. * If less than approximately 80% of students are successful at this level, engage in Tier 1 problem solving. | **Staff:**   * Universal SEL curriculum is selected by an identified SEL team and/or school administrator. * Tier 1 supports may be delivered by classroom teachers, instructional assistants, or special education staff. * It is essential that staff members are provided the time and resources required to plan cohesive implementation. * It is recommended that all staff members be trained in or familiar with the selected SEL curriculum in order to reinforce skills and/or embed key concepts into interactions with students |
| When does it happen? | Universal SEL curriculum is ongoing and part of a larger PBIS system or school wide implementation plan (this could be Why Try?, Success for All, etc.). | |
| What are tools and resources we can use? Where can we go for ideas? | * Progress monitoring should be done based on local policies, procedures, and processes (this may include any program and/or grant requirements that are currently in place). Additionally, the selected SEL curriculum may have its own data collection points. * The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [(CASEL)](https://casel.org/) has several resources for program development, progress monitoring, and effectiveness. * CASEL also has developed the Effective Social Emotional Learning Programs Guide which summarizes objective information about a selected number of nationally available, multi-year programs in a clear, easy-to-read “consumer report” format. This guide is a helpful tool for schools in the process of selecting research-based, Tier 1 interventions and undergoing implementation. | |
| How do we progress monitor…what do we do? | * Data informs instruction, services, and supports…we should make all of our decisions based on the information we have. By doing this, we can make informed decisions and develop effective programs. * Identify both screening and benchmark assessments…[*Seven Steps for Choosing and Using SEL Assessments*](https://measuringsel.casel.org/pdf/Choosing-and-Using-SEL-Competency-Assessments_What-Schools-and-Districts-Need-to-Know.pdf) is a helpful checklist for schools when selecting SEL related assessments * Identify indicators/benchmarks to determine whether students are responding to the universal curriculum or are in need of more intensive, Tier 2 supports. | |
| Where does the support occur? | As a Tier I support, universal SEL curriculum is integrated within all classrooms school-wide. | |
| How does the support get rolled out? | * Specific guidelines regarding program identification, planning and implementation will depend on the unique characteristics of the individual school, however there are a number of resources to support schools through the planning and implementation process. * The [CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL](https://schoolguide.casel.org/) is an online platform that offers step-by-step guidance and field-tested tools to help school teams implement high-quality SEL. | |

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| **Tier II: Supports: Small Groups of Students** | | |
| Who is involved? | **Students:**   * Appropriate for targeted students in small groups. * Selection is based on data revealing that a student requires more than core, universal instruction, services and supports. * If more than approximately 15% of students are receiving support at this level, engage in Tier 1 level, systematic problem-solving. | **Staff:**   * Tier 2 supplemental supports may be delivered by classroom teachers, instructional assistants, or special education staff (which may include psychologist, counselors, or other mental health professionals). |
| When does it happen? | * Tier 2 supports should be utilized when benchmark or other data has revealed the need for a higher level of support than is provided through the universal Tier 1 SEL curriculum. * It is recommended that Tier 2 supports be provided for a predetermined period **(typically 6-8 weeks)** after which the student’s response is evaluated via benchmark assessment to determine if a higher or lower level of intervention is warranted. | |
| What are tools and resources we can use? Where can we go for ideas? | * Tier 2 supports utilize a variety of tools within Social Skills Groups or Small Group Counseling (via staff developed materials or purchased curriculum). * Interventions may focus on a number of topics, including: * Death, loss and grief * Divorce * Peer pressure * Building friendships * Depression * Anxiety * Stress Reduction * If appropriate based on needs, consider utilizing an extension of the existing Tier 1 SEL program in order to support generalization outside the small group setting. This may look like a more focused and intensive version of the universal support. | |
| How do we progress monitor…what do we do? | * **Data informs instruction, services, and supports.** * Identify both screening and benchmark assessments…[*Seven Steps for Choosing and Using SEL Assessments*](https://measuringsel.casel.org/pdf/Choosing-and-Using-SEL-Competency-Assessments_What-Schools-and-Districts-Need-to-Know.pdf) is a helpful checklist for schools when selecting SEL related assessments * Identify indicators and/or benchmarks to determine whether students are responding to the universal curriculum or are in need of more or less intensive (Tier I or III) supports. * Progress monitoring occurs more frequently than at the universal level to ensure that the intervention is appropriately meeting the student(s) need. | |
| Where does the support occur? | Within a small group or individual setting. | |
| How does the support get rolled out? | * Interventions and progress monitoring are targeted to specific areas of student need. Therefore, specific guidelines regarding program identification and implementation will depend on the needs of the student(s) served. | |

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| **Tier III: Supports: Individual Students** | |
| Who is involved? | **Students:**   * Appropriate for individual students in general education with intensive needs and/or students with IEPs and ERMHS. * Selection is **based on data** revealing that a student requires more than universal and supplemental instruction, services and supports in order to access the educational setting.   **Special Education Students:**   * It is recommended that Tier 3 support in areas of social and emotional development be addressed by an ERMHS related service, as deemed appropriate following a targeted ERMHS assessment. * If the student requires intensified support yet ERMHS are not currently indicated in the IEP, assessment for ERMHS ***is*** ***recommended***.   **General Education Students:**   * If a student requires ongoing intensified support in order to access his or her educational setting**, it is recommended that school staff convene a meeting to determine whether a suspected disability exists warranting assessment for special education eligibility and services.** * If more than approximately 5% of students are receiving support at this level, engage in Tier 1 and Tier 2 level, systematic problem solving. * It is recommended that intensified individualized services be provided by an appropriately credentialed mental health provider for a specified period of time. |
| When does it happen? | * Tier 3 supports should be utilized when benchmark or other data has revealed the need for a higher level of support than is provided through the Tier 1 or 2 SEL curriculum.   **Students with IEPs:**   * ERMHS services are determined by the IEP based on results of an ERMHS assessment. * It is recommended that ERMHS services be continued annually in order to support ERMHS goals included in the IEP.   **Students without IEPs:**   * **It is recommended that Tier 3 supports be provided and closely monitored for a predetermined period of time (typically 6-8 weeks) after which the student’s response is evaluated via benchmark assessment to determine if a higher or lower level of intervention or assessment is warranted.** |
| What are tools and resources we can use? Where can we go for ideas? | * Tier 3 or ERMHS supports may utilize a variety of tools as determined by the service provider based on area(s) of student need.   **Students with IEPs:**   * ERMHS goals and services are selected as determined by the IEP team based on ERMHS assessment results.   **Students without IEPs:**   * Interventions are selected and implemented based on benchmark assessment results and/or other measures of performance (i.e. attendance data, behavioral data, student self-report). |
| How do we progress monitor…what do we do? | * Data informs instruction, services, and supports.   **Students with IEPs:**   * Progress monitoring on ERMHS goals must occur as agreed upon by the IEP team.   **Students without IEPs:**   * Identify both screening and benchmark assessments…[*Seven Steps for Choosing and Using SEL Assessments*](https://measuringsel.casel.org/pdf/Choosing-and-Using-SEL-Competency-Assessments_What-Schools-and-Districts-Need-to-Know.pdf) is a helpful checklist for schools when selecting SEL related assessments * Identify indicators and/or benchmarks to determine whether students are responding to the intervention or are in need of more or less intensive supports. * It is recommended that progress monitoring occur frequently to ensure maximum acceleration of student progress. |
| Where does the support occur? | Within an individual or small group setting. |
| How does the support get rolled out? | * Tier 3 interventions and progress monitoring practices are individualized. Therefore, specific guidelines regarding service methodology, program identification and implementation are dependent the needs of the student(s). |