
Advocacy for MTSS Practices

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Session Objectives

Participants of this session will:

- Review recent data about Nebraska school psychologists' perceptions of MTSS implementation
- Learn about advocacy strategies for promoting MTSS related to:
 - Effective communication about MTSS
 - Effective leadership for MTSS
 - Use of data-based problem solving and decision making in MTSS
- Develop an action plan for your building or district with at least one action to move your MTSS process forward

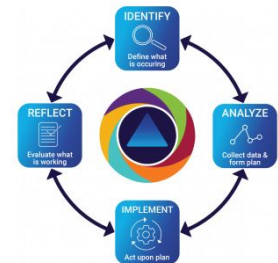
Nebraska's MTSS Framework

MTSS is a framework that promotes an integrated system connecting general education and special education, along with all components of teaching and learning, into a high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention system that is matched to a student's academic, social-emotional and behavior needs.

Six Essential Elements:

- **Shared Leadership**
- **Communication, Collaboration, and Partnerships**
- **Evidence-Based Instruction, Intervention and Assessment Practices**
- **Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation**
- **Layered Continuum of Supports**
- **Data Based Problem Solving and Decision Making**

<https://www.education.ne.gov/nemtss/>



Perception of Current Practices

- Survey developed from items on [MTSS Assurances document](#)
 - Open to all NSPA members Aug. 29-Sept. 13, 2019
 - Received 71 responses
 - 23% birth-PK
 - 86% K-5
 - 51% 6-8
 - 42% 9-12
 - 16% Alternative program
 - 73% serve 3 or fewer buildings
 - 25% serve entire district or more than 4 buildings
 - Scale 1-100 “Not implemented” -- “Implemented” -- “Implemented with Fidelity”
- (Respondents could select more than one choice, so total percentage is greater than 100)

Perception of Current Practices

Things that are going well:

- A universal screening process is used for decision-making purposes in the area of reading. This includes the use of an appropriate screening tool and progress monitoring frequency throughout the year (e.g., 3x per year).
 - Median 87 out of 100 (range 0-100)
- Interventions used within MTSS are evidence-based.
 - Median 63 out of 100 (range 0-100)

Perception of Current Practices

Areas that need some work:

- A universal screening process is used for decision-making purposes in the area of behavior. This includes the use of an appropriate screening tool and progress monitoring frequency throughout the year (e.g., 3x per year). (Mdn = 18; range 0-100)
- There is a systematic process utilized for staff to **communicate** issues or implementation barriers with **leadership** so it can be addressed/problem-solved in a timely manner. (Mdn = 42; range 0-99)
- Formal tools (e.g., appraisal processes, observations, surveys, etc.) are used as **fidelity measures** to evaluate the appropriate use of instruction within the core curriculum. (Mdn = 45; range 0-100)
- **Data based decision rules** within MTSS are used consistently to accurately identify student learning needs. (Mdn = 48; range 0-100)
- Parent involvement items

Perception of Current Practices (Summary)

- We are doing a really good job with reading screening (other areas could use some work)
- We are (mostly) using evidence-based interventions
- A LOT of variation in responses
 - MTSS isn't on the radar in some districts or SPs aren't aware or involved
- Good communication, leadership, and data-based decision making/problem solving are key elements, but we are not confident in their implementation
 - These are elements that school psychologists can impact!!!!

Types of Advocacy Needed for MTSS

Advocacy for your role

- Find a seat at the table by promoting your skills
- Kari Oyen can help with that!

Advocacy for the process

- Communication
- Leadership
- Data-based decision making



Communication

Survey says...

“There is a systematic process utilized for staff to communicate issues or implementation barriers with leadership so it can be addressed/problem-solved in a timely manner.”

Mdn = 42 (out of 100); Mean = 42.65; SD = 27.4; Range = 0-99

Good communication is critical to the success of MTSS:

*Getting started

**Sustaining efforts

***Addressing barriers



Communication, Collaboration & Partnerships

There must be school-wide awareness and knowledge of the framework and its purpose. Strong communication and partnership with families and communities contributes to students' success and should be strategically tied to specific school and family needs.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Communication: Use Your Skills

- Build relationships (empathy, genuineness, positive regard, active listening)
- Know your stakeholders (their level of knowledge, their priorities)
- Offer value and assistance
- Avoid turf battles
- Don't let past frustrations limit your vision
- Craft your message
 - Get their attention
 - Connect to a priority
 - Minimize suspicion
 - Engage discussion
 - Be easy to remember
 - Emphasize why it matters/relevance



It's hard for people to remember more than 3 things at a time

Communication: Check Your Team

MTSS teams that facilitate good communication should...

- Represent staff
- Have defined roles and responsibilities
 - Team leader, minutes taker, timekeeper, data specialist, behavior specialist, academic specialist, coach, facilitator, archivist, administrator
- Keep track of decisions and progress
- Have a regular meeting schedule
- Form an action plan
- Have a shared vision and mission
- Review data regularly

(Brown-Chidsey & Bickford, 2016)



Communication: Is Everyone Ready for Change?

Recognize that people go through stages of concern about an innovation:

| | Stage of Concern | Expression of Concern |
|--------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Unconcerned | I am not concerned about it. |
| | Informational | I would like to know more about it. |
| Self | Personal | How will using it affect me? |
| | Management | I seem to be spending all my time in getting material ready. |
| Task | Consequence | How is my use affecting kids? |
| | Collaboration | I am concerned about related what I am doing with what other users are doing |
| Impact | Refocusing | I have some ideas about something that would work even better |

Hall & Hord (2006)

Communication: Identify Stage of Concern & Intervene

- One legged conferences
 - 1-2 minute interactions to ascertain attitudes and concerns about innovation
- Open-ended concern statements
 - Provide an open ended statement....“When I think about MTSS I”
 - Score for language related to each stage
- [Stages of Concern questionnaire](#)
 - Measure of individuals’ stages based on responses to 35 questions
- Intervention matches stage:
 - Unconcerned, Informational: Information sharing, workshops, data sharing
 - Personal, Management: Address uncertainties, discuss available resources, ask how to help
 - Consequence, Collaboration, Refocusing: Reinforce efforts, get people together, time to collaborate

Hall & Hord (2006)

Leadership

Survey says...

“Leadership monitors MTSS implementation and utilizes a district problem-solving process that is identified and utilized for decision making across all levels.”

Mdn = 50 (out of 100); Mean = 50.13; SD = 27.29; Range = 0-100

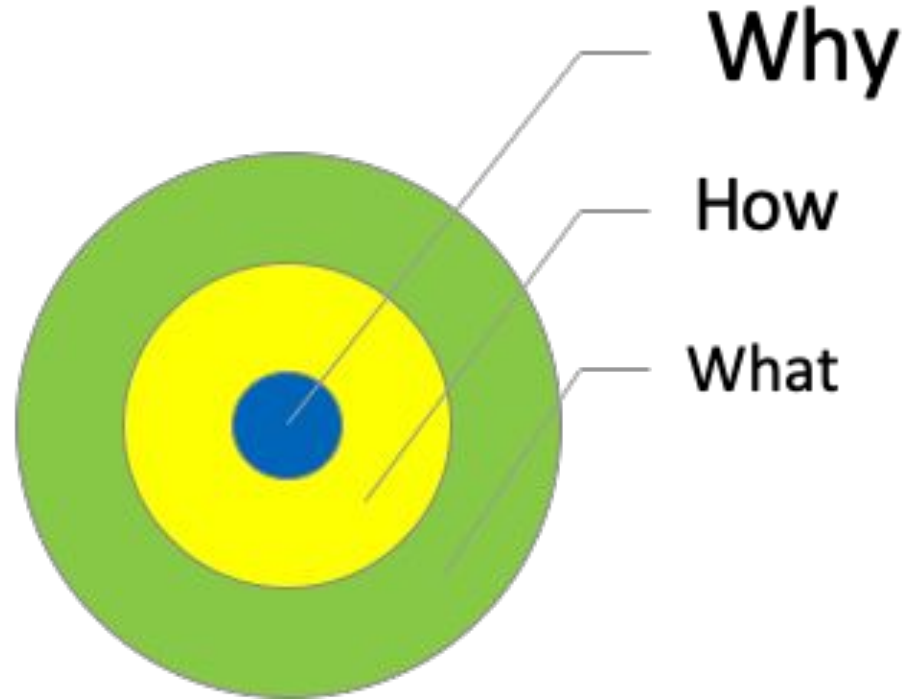


Shared Leadership

This must be a joint problem-solving effort. All stakeholders, including districts, schools, classroom and individual students, must work together to foster a culture of collaboration and shared leadership.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Start With Why...



School Psychologists & MTSS (Maki et al., 2019)

- School psychologists feel that they need more time and/or a reduced caseload to make systems change happen.
- School psychologists are seeking more training to make the crucial aspects of tiered interventions occur.
- School psychologists recommend that other school psychologists implementing systems change be planful and realistic.
- School psychologists view collaboration and communication through all strata of the school to be crucial to systems change.
- School psychologists find the support provided by their cohort colleagues and coaches helpful in fostering systems change.

School Psychologists & MTSS (Maki et al., 2019)

- School psychologists find utility in structured, guiding resources when implementing a comprehensive model
- School psychologists have increased their knowledge and skills in implementing tiered interventions and data-based decision making.
- School psychologists find that implementing systems change has brought about a plethora of emotions, notably pride and confidence
- School psychologists view themselves as uniquely poised to lead systems change given their skill set, and they feel that leadership should be shared among the entire school community.

Adaptive Leadership Strategies (Heifetz et al., 2009)

1. Getting on the balcony
2. Identifying the adaptive challenge
3. Regulating distress
4. Maintaining disciplined attention
5. Giving the work world back
6. Protecting all voices

The Advantage (Lencioni, 2012)



Data-based Problem Solving

Survey says...

“Data based decision rules within MTSS are used consistently to accurately identify student learning needs.”

Mdn = 48 (out of 100); Mean = 44.15; SD = 28.58; Range = 0-100

“Problem-solving and planning teams utilize data and relevant research (i.e., best practices) when making decisions regarding student performance.”

Mdn = 51 (out of 100); Mean = 57.31; SD = 23.39; Range = 0-100



Data-Based Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

Data and research must guide decision-making at all support levels. Teams examine data using a consistent decision-making and problem-solving process to build, implement, evaluate and refine the framework and guide instructional and intervention decisions.

[LEARN MORE](#)

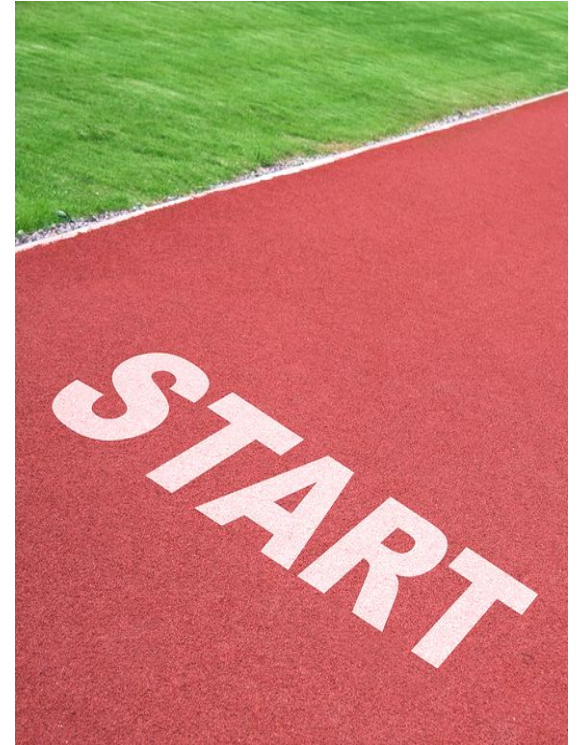
Data-Based Problem Solving:

Advocating for data-based decision-making

ESSA requires the development of accountability systems that include indicators of academic achievement, EL proficiency, high school graduation rates, and school quality. Multiple data sources must be used to measure student performance.

Know your current situation:

- Engage your team and Take stock of data
- [NeMTSS Intervention Inventory](#)
- [NeMTSS Assessment Data Summary](#)



Taking Stock of Data: Getting to the Starting Line

- Are there multiple assessments being used for the same purpose? If so, are there any measures that can be eliminated?
- Are there assessments being used without evidence of reliability and validity?
- Are additional assessments needed? If so, in what area(s) and what types?
- How could the data management coordination be improved?
- How could the communication of assessment results be improved?

Know Your Current Situation: Gather Perceptual Data

- NeMTSS Self-Assessment
- NeMTSS Assurances

“Schools where students have greater access to **high-quality content and instruction** and are **deeply engaged** prioritize a high level of both support and accountability for teachers through weekly observations and debriefs, and **regular data meetings** with administrators”

The Opportunity Myth www.opportunitymyth.tntp.org



Data-Based Problem Solving

Advocating for decision-making that includes relevant research

- Evidence-Based Practices
- Program Comparison Chart

Universal screening should answer the following:

- *Who are the students that require an intensification of core instruction?*
- *What supports are needed for each of those students in regard to type and intensity?*

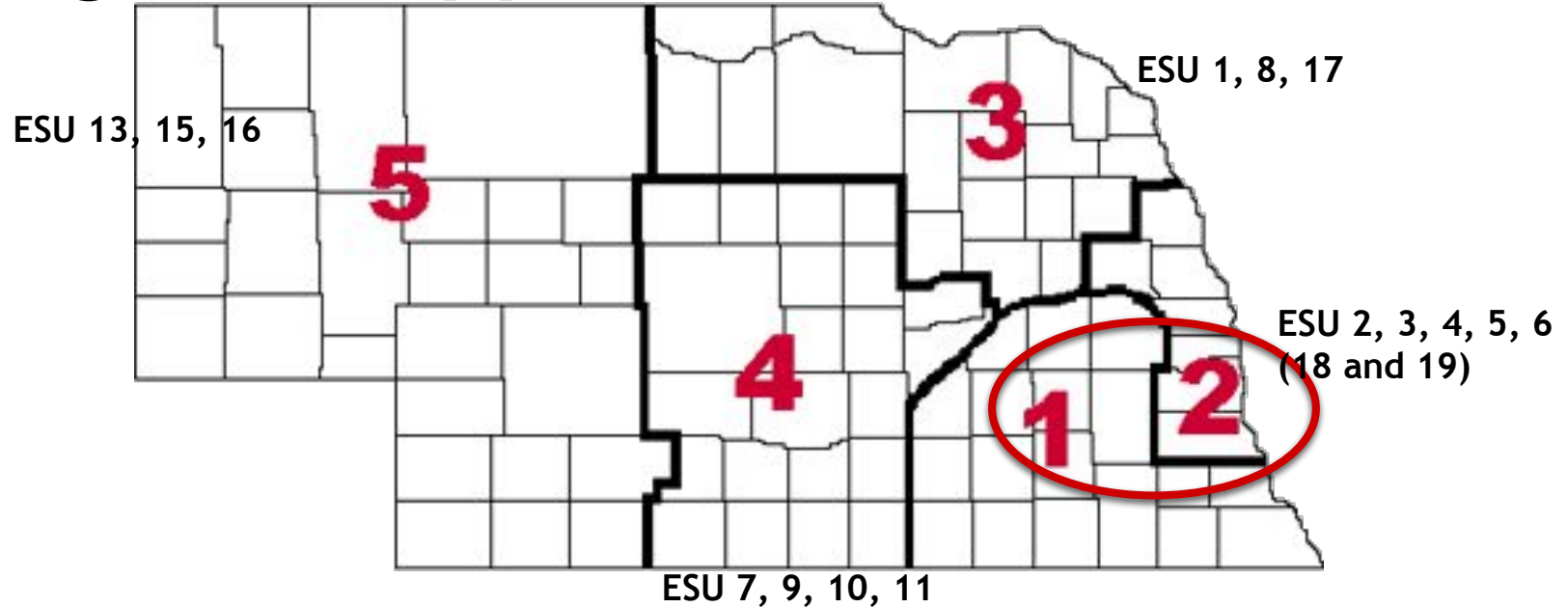
Decision Rules should clearly identify students who are not responding to core instruction ([NeMTSS Framework Document](#))

Action Planning

What are one or two action items you plan to accomplish following this session?

- Work with your district team (if here)
- Work with others in your ESU (if here)
- If alone, jot down one or two ideas to take back to your district/team

Regional Support Model



[NeMTSS Organizational Chart](#)

Questions?

Feel free to contact us for more information!

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