August 2023 Resource Toolkit

Integrating the Continuous Improvement Framework and the WA-MTSS Framework

Introduction

The Continuous Improvement Framework and WA- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (WA-MTSS) Framework are two strongly aligned and integrated frameworks for developing and applying evidence-based methods to supporting and improvement systems health that ultimately lead to successful outcomes for every student. This toolkit will tie resources and learning within continuous improvement and MTSS for use at the school, district, and ESD level through the lens of the Continuous Improvement Framework.

Continuous Improvement Framework

- Elevation of anti-racist and anti-bias practices.
- Identification, provision, and growth of equitable supports within learning communities.
- Development of strong leadership at all levels.
- Use of data inquiry/school improvement principles and processes.
- Focus on improving core instructional practices.
- Implementation within a multi-tiered system of supports.

WA-MTSS Framework
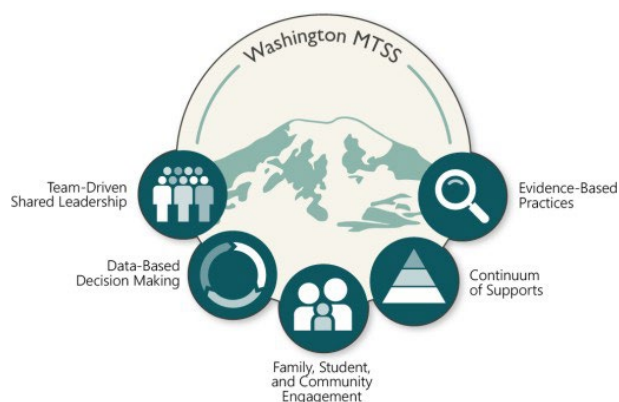
Elevation of Anti-Racist and Anti-Bias Practices

In order to ensure every student has equitable access to the instruction and supports they need to thrive; district and school teams need to:

- Identify and address biases and systemic barriers that drive inequitable access and disparate outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and students of color, students experiencing poverty, students receiving special education or English learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Collaborate with students, families, and community partners to leverage the unique cultural and linguistic assets of their communities in order to provide every student an inclusive and responsive learning environment.
- Deliver comprehensive supports that consistently meet every student's needs and accelerate student academic, social, emotional, and behavioral learning.

Resources
- [Equity Risk Ratio Calculator](#)

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Identification, Provision, and Growth of Equitable Supports Within Learning Communities through Family, Student, and Community Engagement

In addition to the needs outlined in the Elevation of Anti-Racist and Anti-Bias Practices section above, organizations also need to recognize that families are essential to student success. Family engagement occurs at the district, school, and classroom levels, and include building positive relationships, two-way communication, meaningful decision-making, equity access and representation, training and support options for family, and evaluation of family-school collaboration efforts.

Input from students is particularly valuable in assisting educators to adapt and scaffold learning opportunities for students from different cultures, multilingual learners, students who have experienced trauma, and others. System leaders should also emphasize and document ongoing incorporation of student voice in decisions about their own education and provide opportunities for choice and designing supports that fit their individual strengths and needs.

Engaging community partners is also critical for building comprehensive systems. Community partners can serve on leadership teams, establish consistent supports between schools and communities, establish common data measures across settings, and help ensure sufficient intensity of supports. They can develop meaningful partnership with families and community members to design supports that meet a range of student needs, particularly when those needs exceed the school's capacity to meet them alone.

Resources
Family and Community Engagement for Continuous Improvement
Flamboyan Family Engagement Rubric
Family-School Collaboration in MTSS
Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol

Development of Strong Leadership at All Levels through Team-Driven Shared Leadership

Sustained systems health and improvement is dependent on building the capacity of the organization to lead and support the system holistically. This is done by leadership teams who share the responsibility to support all adults in the school building by planning, coordinating, monitoring, and adjusting implementation activities. Leadership teams are responsible for building the capacity of the team to lead the work as well as providing ongoing training and support to staff, families, and community partners to implement as intended. Leadership teams should have broad representation and an established process to regularly solicit input and collect data from staff, students, families, and community partners that helps drive implementation decisions.

Resources

- [Structured Meeting Agendas](#)
- [National Center for Intensive Intervention Teams Graphic](#)
- [TIPS Framework 1/8: Team Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS) Overview](#)

Use of Data Inquiry/School Improvement Principles and Processes through Data-Based Decision Making

Teams at all levels of the system (district, school, grade) use data to inform decision-making. District and school teams use an agreed-upon process to guide their decision-making and continually improve supports. Teams use multiple sources of data to plan, deliver, and improve supports across the system. Teams can determine the root causes of problems and coordinate supports more effectively when they review academic, social, emotional, and behavioral data together. When possible, data should be disaggregated by grade level, race, eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, and enrollment in special education, Section 504, and English language services to identify disproportionality and inform improvements to ensure systems are supporting equitable outcomes for every student.

Resources

- [Comprehensive Needs Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [OSPI Data Inquiry Guide](#)

Focus on Improving Core Instructional Practices through Evidence-Based Practices and Continuum of Supports

To increase instructional impact, it is important that practices and interventions are grounded in evidence. The U.S. Department of Education (2016) defines "evidence-based" as activities, strategies, or interventions that have been proven to improve student outcomes. These evidence-based instruction, enrichment, and interventions are delivered along a continuum to meet the full spectrum of social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of all students. In a multi-tiered system of supports, tiers describe the intensity of support provided. Tiers do not define students.

Tier 1 is the foundation of support and should meet the needs of approximately 80% of the student population. Every student has equitable access to universal instruction and supports are:

- research-based and aligned to grade-level standards
- culturally and linguistically responsive
- universally designed (universally designed guidelines), and
- differentiated to meet their unique needs

When more than 20% of students need additional support, leadership teams should re-examine the tier 1 supports in place, as it is an indication that the current structure may be insufficient.

Tier 2 supports are an additional layer of targeted, evidence-based intervention programs that include:

- clearly defined entrance and exit criteria
- regular progress monitoring to assess response to intervention
- explicit instruction with increased opportunities to practice and receive specific, frequent feedback
- gradual release of control and support when students master skills, and
- increased communication with families to ensure consistency of support

Tier 3 supports are an additional layer of intensive, evidence-based intervention programs that have been individualized to meet the needs of students who demonstrate significant risk or do not respond to tier 2 interventions. Interventions may be intensified across seven domains (see the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity Overview for more detail):

- strength of the intervention program
- dosage of supports
- alignment to target skills and standards
- attention to transfer
- comprehensiveness
- behavioral support

Resources
- [OSPI Menus of Best Practices Strategies](#)
- [WSIPP Inventory of Evidence and Research-Based Practices](#)
- [What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- [Evidence for ESSA](#)

Implementation within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The implementation of improvement processes and activities within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a continuous ebb and flow of planning, implementing, evaluating, and decision-making around the elements of the systems and the practices being implemented to support and improve the system. It involves every element of the MTSS Framework and Continuous Improvement Framework to work together in a collective and collaborative manner to support the ongoing health and improvement of the learning system.