



# Early Childhood: Guidance Document

## Multi-Tiered System of Support

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## Mississippi Department of Education

### Vision

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens.

### Goals

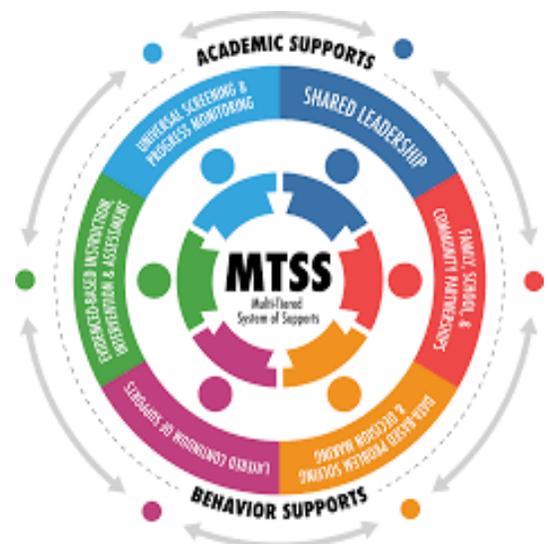


### What is MTSS?

The multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) is a framework for effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students (Mississippi Department of Education).

### MTSS Essential Elements

- Shared Leadership
- Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Layered Continuum of Supports
- Evidence-Based Instruction, Intervention, and Assessment Practices
- Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring
- Family, School, and Community Partnerships



## What is the Pyramid Model?

The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI). One of the primary goals of the Pyramid Model is to promote inclusive opportunities for children who have disabilities or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. Much like MTSS, the Pyramid Model is a data-based, decision-making framework. Mississippi uses the Pyramid Model as its MTSS framework for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in child-care centers, Head Start programs, school districts, and early learning collaboratives throughout the state.

## Component Essentials for Successful Implementation of the Pyramid Model

- Administrative Support and Commitment
- Behavior Support Team and Leadership Team
- Commitment from Program Staff
- Family Involvement in All Aspects
- Program-wide Expectations for Children's Behavior
- Strategies for Teaching Expectations and Acknowledging Children's Behavior
- Process for Addressing the Needs of Children with Ongoing Challenging Behavior
- Staff Training and Support Plan
- Data Collection and Use for Decision Making (Hemmeter et al., 2006)

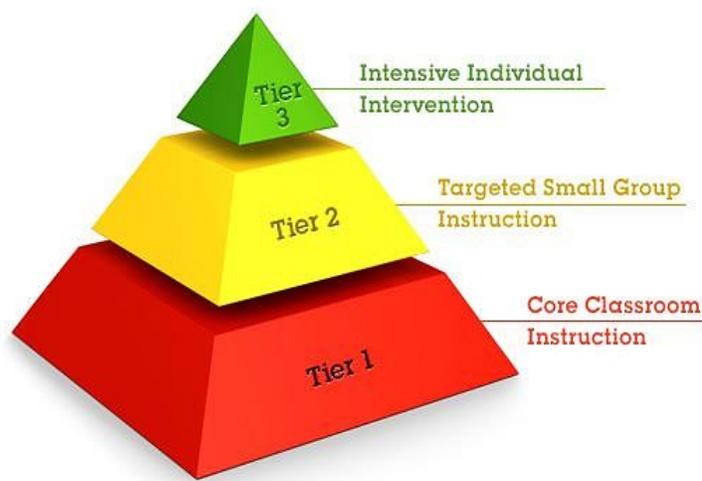


National Center for  
**Pyramid Model  
INNOVATIONS**

## Layered Continuum of Supports

### MTSS

This model is essential for all schools, to **organize, articulate** and **tier** the **strategies, accommodations,** and **interventions available** to **support** the **diverse needs** of **students** (MDE).



### Pyramid Model

The model is supported at the foundation by an effective workforce. The **foundation** for all the **practices** in the **Pyramid Model** is the **systems** and **policies** necessary to ensure a workforce able to adopt and sustain these evidence-based practices.



### Things to Remember!

1. Young children learn best when they are actively engaged with relevant, meaningful materials.
2. Young children learn best through social interaction.
3. Young children learn best when their emotional needs are met.
4. Young children learn best when their physical development is supported.

Three Tier Instructional Model (MDE)	Tiers of the Pyramid Model (NCPMI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tier I:</b> Quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi standards. Tier 1 includes the whole group, small group, and one-on-one support as needed.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small groups may involve practicing new ideas, pre-teaching concepts (such as new vocabulary for dual language learners, remediation, and enrichment).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>High Quality Environments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inclusive early care and education environments</li> <li>○ Supportive home environments</li> </ul> <p><b>Nurturing and Responsive Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Essential to healthy social development</li> <li>○ Includes relationships with children, families, and team members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tier II:</b> Focused supplemental instruction. Tier II is delivered in small groups.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Content includes preplanned instructional opportunities to focus on specific, identified deficit areas based on multiple data points.</li> <li>○ Students are grouped according to matching deficit areas.</li> <li>○ Intervention at this level should occur 2-3 times per week.</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring is conducted biweekly.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Prevention</b> represents practices that are targeted social emotional strategies to prevent problems. The prevention level includes the provision of targeted support to children at risk of challenging behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Targeted Social Emotional Supports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explicit instruction and support</li> <li>○ Self-regulation, expressing and understanding emotions, developing social relationships and problem-solving</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tier III:</b> Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students. Tier III is for pairs or one-on-one instruction/intervention.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This tier is the most intensive level of intervention and should be conducted daily.</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring is conducted weekly.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Intervention comprises practices related to individualized intensive interventions.</b> The tertiary level of the Pyramid Model describes the need to provide individualized and intensive interventions to the small number of children with persistent challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Individualized Intensive Interventions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Family-centered, comprehensive interventions</li> <li>○ Assessment-based</li> <li>○ Skill-building</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## How do I implement MTSS with just pre-k children?

There are several factors that districts/collaboratives should consider when determining how to best implement MTSS with pre-k children:

- Number of campuses that have pre-k classes
- Whether these campuses are elementary school campuses
- The depth of knowledge each campus has with MTSS and/or Pyramid Model
- The ability of a current elementary MTSS team to include pre-k children
- Available resources to begin a pre-k only team

Typically, districts/collaboratives that only serve pre-k children at one or few of many campuses will include pre-k children in their already established MTSS team and procedures. Districts/collaboratives that serve pre-k children on multiple campuses usually form their own district/collaborative-wide pre-k MTSS team. The core procedures of MTSS for K-12 and those of the Pyramid Model are very similar if not the same. The main difference is in the interventions provided – as it's important to use developmentally appropriate practices. For example, elementary MTSS teams can add visuals to their CICO sheets and make sure the reading interventions chosen are designed for pre-k children rather than using them because kindergarten students do. Sometimes, it's difficult for an already established elementary MTSS team to take on pre-k children due to the number of additional students it would add to their already packed meetings. Each district/collaborative should make its own decision on the best way to structure the pre-k MTSS framework. Regardless of what a district/collaborative decides, the Pyramid Model's high-quality classroom practices and targeted social emotional supports should be utilized in the classroom organization, routines, and lessons.

Data collection is key! If a district/collaborative will be forming its own pre-k MTSS team, leaders should be sure to include someone on the team who understands how to collect and analyze data AND an avenue for data collection and analysis.

For more information on data as well as how to begin/improve a pre-k MTSS team, see this resource from NCPMI: [Pyramid Model Leadership Team Implementation Manual](#).

The following pages will examine important components for pre-k MTSS regardless of what type of team is formed.

**MTSS Tier I Team Responsibilities** - to ensure **ALL** students have access to high quality instruction.

1. Begin by reviewing initial Pre-K application and child documentation, solicit parent/guardian input regarding his/her child.



2. Make certain all teachers are providing high quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi’s Early Learning Standards and utilizing differentiated instruction (learning styles, multiple intelligences, interests, background knowledge, child ability, flexible grouping, etc.) to meet the needs of all learners. See page 9 of the [MTSS Documentation Packet](#), [What To Look For When Observing a Kindergarten or Pre-K Classroom](#) and Professional Growth System Early Childhood Look Fors and Coaching Stems.
  - Create a culture and climate that communicates the expectation that all learners will show progress.
3. Data Collection
  - a. Appropriate staff will conduct hearing, vision, and speech (articulation and language) screeners within the first forty-five (45) days of school.
  - b. Administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (MKAS) at the beginning and end of the school year.
  - c. Administer a Universal Screener at the beginning and end of the school year.
  - d. Utilize beginning of the year and quarterly assessments (screening assessment) aligned to Mississippi Early Learning Standards for 4-year-olds.
  - e. Utilize teacher classroom formative and summative assessment data.

### **Universal Screening**

Universal screening is a process in which academic and behavioral data are analyzed to determine whether a child is likely to meet, exceed, or not meet benchmarks. A screener is an assessment given as one part of the screening process, to establish a baseline from which

children are beginning, and to align the instructional starting point to child need(s). Screeners are typically a form of data collection designed to be quick and repeatable. Multiple types of data should be collected to assist in a complete universal screening process. Data from the universal screening process is used to make decisions about interventions. It is important that all pre-k children participate in the state kindergarten readiness assessment; use the [Mississippi Early Learning Standards Checklist](#) for each child; and use other sources of data such as curriculum assessments, district behavioral screeners, and developmental measures (MDE).

### Baseline Data

Baseline data should be gathered to determine a child's current performance of a targeted skill, prior to the implementation of Tier II interventions, to create an achievable goal. Ideally, at least 3 baseline data points should be collected to ensure a valid estimate of child's current proficiency of a targeted skill and anticipated rate of improvement.

4. Use the MTSS Pre-K-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Flowchart to help determine which children need support, in which area(s), and at what tier.

#### [MTSS Pre-K-12th Grade Flowchart](#)

- a. Discuss child academic, behavioral, social, and mental health concerns with school MTSS team or designated pre-k team.

## Checklist and Screeners

### Assessments

#### [Brigance Screens III Scoring Tool](#)

### Mississippi Early Learning Standards Checklist

#### **Administrator**

#### [What to Look for When Observing a Kindergarten and Pre-K Classroom](#)

#### **Parent/Guardian**

#### [What Parents Can Look for When Observing a Kindergarten and Pre-K Classroom](#)

#### **Student**

- [Developmental Checklist for Infants and Toddlers](#)
- [Developmental Checklist for Three-Year-Old Students](#)

- [Developmental Checklist for Four-Year-Old Students](#)
- [Developmental Checklist for Kindergarten Students](#)

**MTSS Tier II Team Responsibilities** - to provide targeted supplemental supports.

1. Identify children in need of Tier II interventions and supports based on a review of the data such as, universal screeners, academic documentation review, and/or behavior observations.



- a. Ensure children receiving special education services are not excluded from Tier II interventions and supports.

2. Notify parents/guardians when a child is referred to Tier II, explain the Tier process to them at the initial meeting, and be sure to keep them informed of all interventions and supports provided.
3. Provide evidence-based, focused, developmentally appropriate supplemental instruction (i.e., intervention and support) in the area(s) of concern: ELA, math, social - behavioral, skill(s).
4. Deliver high quality professional learning to all intervention implementers (i.e., teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals).

**Interventions**

- All interventions are required to be evidence-based.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Tier II interventions and supports in the classroom setting.
- Intervention frequency and duration in identified area/skill will be provided based on the intervention protocol established in the Tier II team meeting.

- The teacher will ensure progress monitoring data is collected based on the protocol determined in the Tier II team meeting prior to implementation of the intervention.

Intervention should be based on skills in identified deficit areas of each child on Tier II. These skills should be linked to [Mississippi's Early Learning Standards](#) based on the age and developmental level of the child.

### For example

- TII children who need ELA supports will most likely begin focused intervention on the following skill:
  - RF1d--Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name.
  - Begin with the letters in his/her name, extend to other letters in curriculum order.
- TII children who need math will most likely begin focused interventions with one of the following skills:
  - CC1--With prompting & support, count 1-10
  - CC 2--With prompting & support, recognize, name, & attempt writing 1-10
- TII children who need non-academic supports will most likely begin focused interventions with one of the following skills:
  - SE.SD.PK4.1a Communicate to seek out help with a difficult task, to find comfort, and to obtain security.
  - SE.SD.PK4.2a Engage in positive interactions and communications with classmates.
  - SE.SD.PK4.2c Ask permission to use items or materials of others.
  - SE.E. PK4.6a With prompting and support, progress from being upset to being calm (e.g., breathe deeply to regain self-control).

### Intervention Suggestions

- Homer (ELA, Math, SEL)
- Osmo (ELA, Math, SEL)
- IXL (ELA, Math)
- ABC Mouse (ELA, Math)
- Lexia (ELA)
- National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (SEL)

- Skillstreaming (SEL)
- Check-in Check-Out with Visuals (SEL)

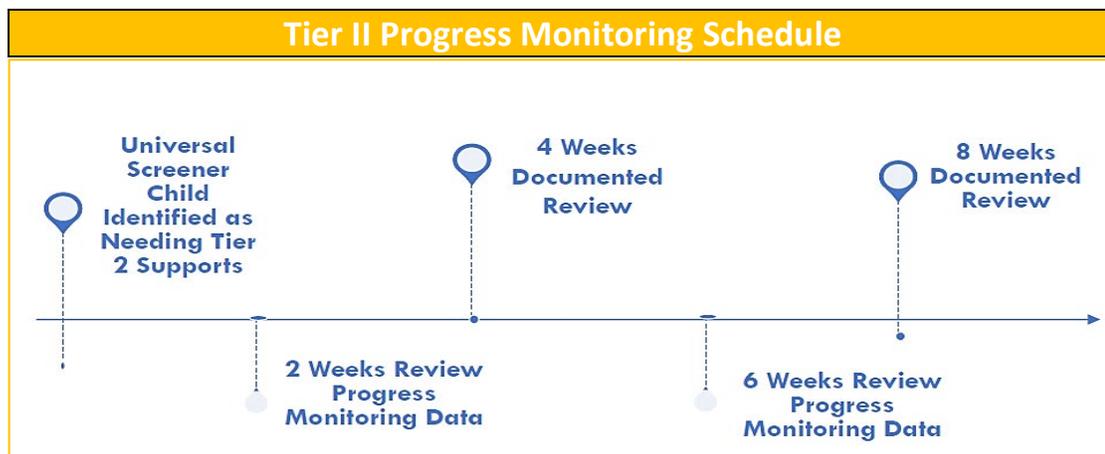
### Progress Monitoring

- Decision rules should be established to determine when a child's performance meets exit criteria. This will create an objective standard and help guide the decision when a child has made sufficient progress and no longer requires Tier II intervention.
- Formal progress monitoring data should be collected at least once every two (2) weeks.
- Data should be presented in graphical format (graph or chart) depicting the specific goal, determined prior to implementation of the intervention.
- **Examples of progress monitoring data**
  - Academic progress
  - Social emotional progress
  - Behavior Incident Report System
  - Office Discipline Referral (ODR)
- A documented review should occur at four (4) weeks and eight (8) weeks to determine the level of progress towards the goal.
  - **4-week review decisions**
    - ✓ Continue intervention if child is making progress.  
OR
    - ✓ Modify intervention if child is unsuccessful.
  - **8-week review**
    - ✓ Discontinue intervention if skill has been mastered.  
OR
    - ✓ Continue intervention with modifications.  
OR
    - ✓ Refer child to Tier III if child is still unsuccessful.

**Do I use ODRs? Check out this more developmentally appropriate alternative to ODRs and see if it's a good fit for you!**

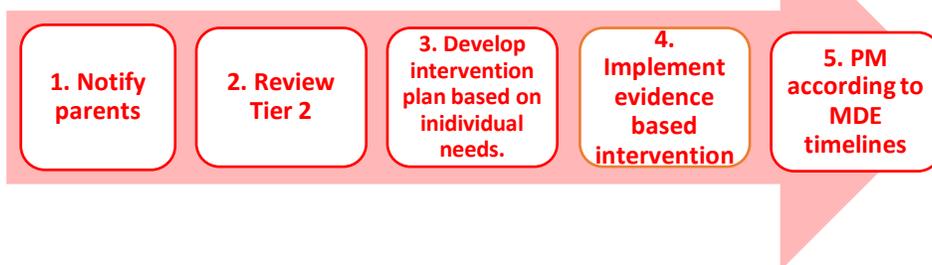
[The Behavior Incident Report System](#)  
(BIRS) provides early care and education programs and classrooms with a developmentally appropriate system to collect and analyze behavior incidents in their program.

- Intervention folders with the Pre-K Student Profile, Intervention Integrity Check form, evidence of interventions (developmentally appropriate work samples), and other relevant documentation should be kept on file by the teacher.



**MTSS Tier III Team Responsibilities (TST)** – to provide intensive interventions.

- Parents/Guardians should receive an invitation to a conference with the teacher (Pre-K coordinator and other relevant staff may also be invited.)



- Documentation (i.e., Tier II progress monitoring data, cumulative record review, behavior reports) should be included and reviewed as part of the Tier III process.
- The child is provided with intensive interventions specifically designed to meet his/her individual needs.
  - \*If behavior is the primary concern, a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) should be conducted, and a function-based Behavior Support Plan (BSP) should be developed.
- Implement evidence-based intervention.

5. Progress monitor according to MDE timelines.

### **Intervention**

- Intervention protocol (frequency and duration) will be determined by the team at the Tier III meeting based on gathered data (assessments, FBA, observations, etc.).
- Staff implementing individual plan should be involved in the development of the plan to ensure there is a contextual fit and provided professional learning opportunities to ensure the plan is implemented with fidelity.

Intervention should be based on skills in identified deficit areas of each child on Tier III. These skills should be linked to [Mississippi's Early Learning Standards](#) based on the age and developmental level of the child. Most children will continue with interventions of the skill and standard examples listed in the Tier II section above.

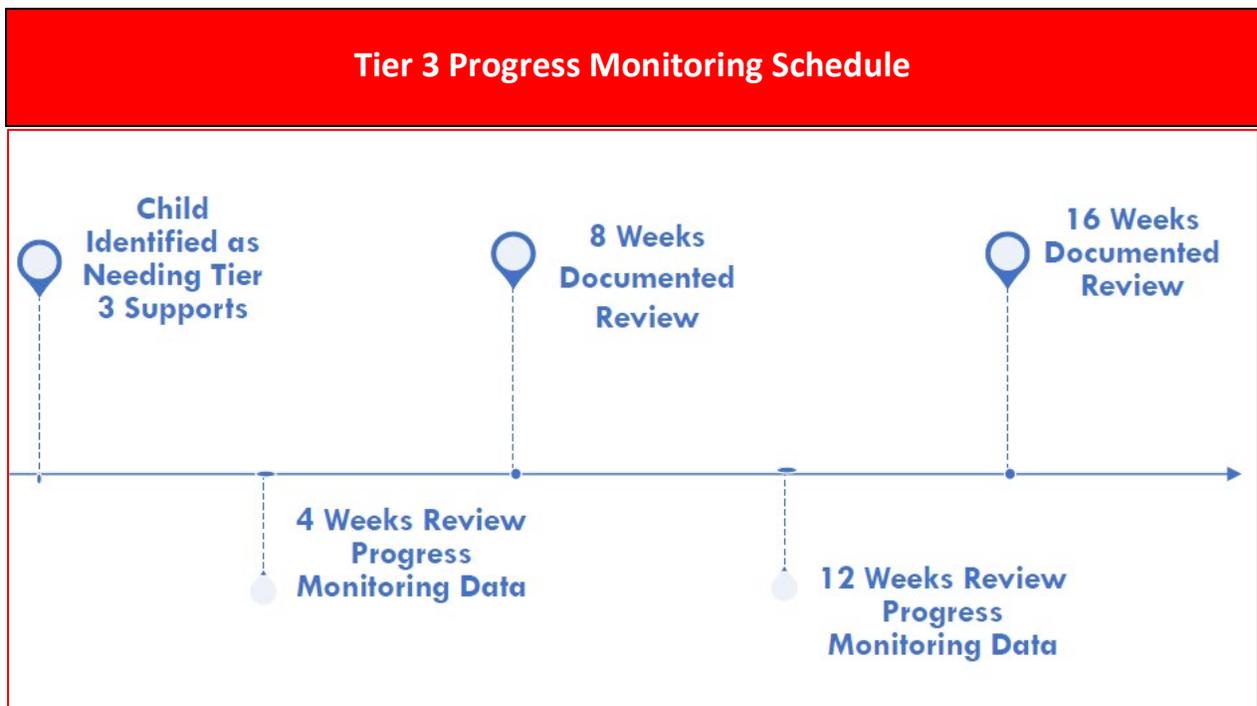
### **Progress Monitoring**

- Decision rules should be established to determine when a child's performance meets exit criteria. This will create an objective standard and help guide the decision when a child has made sufficient progress and no longer requires Tier III intervention.
- Formal progress monitoring data should be collected every week.
- Data should be presented in graphical format (graph or chart) depicting the specific goal, determined prior to implementation of the intervention.
- **Examples of Progress Monitoring Data**
  - Academic progress
  - Social emotional progress
  - Behavior Incident Report System
  - Office Discipline Referral (ODR)

A documented review should occur at eight (8) weeks and sixteen (16) weeks to determine the level of progress towards the established goal.

- **8-week review decisions**
  - ✓ Continuum intervention if child is making progress.
  - OR
  - ✓ Modify intervention if child is unsuccessful.

- **16-week review**
  - ✓ Discontinue intervention if skill has been mastered.
  - OR
  - ✓ Continue intervention with modifications.
  - OR
  - ✓ Refer child for a comprehensive evaluation to determine special education eligibility.



### Resources

[Brigance Screens III Scoring Tool](#)

[Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning](#)

[Mississippi Department of Education Early Childhood](#)

[Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Infants through Four-Year-Old Children](#)

[National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)

[Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool](#)