

Students

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) focuses on aligning initiatives and resources within an educational organization to address the needs of all students. It is an integrated, comprehensive framework for school districts that aligns academic, behavioral, and social-emotional learning in a fully integrated system of support for the benefit of all students. MTSS offers the potential to create systemic change through intentional integration of services and supports to quickly identify and meet the needs of all students.

MTSS, Response to Intervention (RtI), Academic Intervention Services (AIS), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are often spoken of synonymously, however MTSS is a framework for aligning resources and initiatives. MTSS is a method of organization that encompasses RtI, AIS, and PBIS, and systematically addresses support for all students. All New York State Response to Intervention mandates and requirements are fulfilled through the Lyncourt MTSS Plan. [8 NYCRR Section 100.2(ii)].

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tiered early prevention and intervention system, within the MTSS framework. RtI is designed to improve outcomes for all students. In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations, the District has established administrative practices and procedures for implementing district-wide initiatives that address an RtI process applicable to all students. For students suspected of having a potential learning disability, the District will provide appropriate RtI services pursuant to Commissioner's Regulations prior to a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for evaluation.

The New York State Education Department (SED) has released a guidance document to assist school districts in designing and implementing an effective RtI process, which includes, but is not limited to, information regarding regulatory requirements, quality indicators, staff development, tools to assist districts in selecting a specific model and procedures for the use of RtI data in determining if a student has a learning disability. This guidance document is available on the SED's official website.

The District has established procedures for identifying students with learning disabilities that use a research-based RtI process prior to, or as part of, an individual evaluation to determine whether a student has a learning disability. An RtI process is required for all students in grades kindergarten through grade 4 suspected of having a learning disability in the area of reading. RtI cannot be utilized as a strategy to delay or deny a timely initial evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Minimum Requirements of District's RtI Program

The District's RtI process will include the following minimum requirements:

- a) Scientific, research-based instruction in reading and mathematics provided to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel. Instruction in reading, per Commissioner's Regulations, means scientific, research-based reading programs that include

(Continued)

Students

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies;

- b) Universal Screenings will be provided to all students a minimum of three times per year (fall, winter, spring) and for newly enrolled students ten days from their first day of attendance, in order to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates;
- c) Scientific, research-based instruction matched to student need with increasingly intensive levels of targeted interventions for those students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards;
- d) Repeated assessments of student achievement which (progress monitoring assessments) should include curriculum-based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward age or grade level standards;
- e) The application of information about the student's response to intervention to make educational decisions about changes in goals [i.e., goals for all students, not just Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals], instruction and/or services and the decision to make a referral for special education programs and/or services; and will take place at district data meetings which include students' classroom teacher(s), special education providers, reading and math interventionists, English Language Learner teachers, and administration. At district data meetings, students' benchmark and progress monitoring assessment performance will be analyzed and discussed to determine if there is a need for or modification of academic and/or social-emotional intervention(s) in the general education classroom (Tier 1), small group academic and/or social-emotional interventions with a specialist or academic interventionist (Tier 2), or individualized, intensive instruction for improvement of prerequisite skills (Tier 3);
- f) Written notification to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about:
 - 1. The amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided as enumerated in Commissioner's Regulations;
 - 2. Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
 - 3. The parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services.

(Continued)

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)**Structure of RtI Program**Lyncourt Union Free School District Multi-Tiered System of Supports Plan Core Beliefs

- a) Students and Families are the purpose of our work at Lyncourt and why we do what we do.
- b) Lyncourt School has a direct influence on students. We are a place where substantial positive academic and social-emotional growth takes place.
- c) The Lyncourt Union Free School District is the organizer of intervention, for school-wide transformation. Improved student outcomes aren't possible without the support from the District.

The Six Critical Features of MTSS at Lyncourt

The six critical features of MTSS at Lyncourt are: 1) team-based leadership; 2) comprehensive universal screening; 3) tiered continuum of evidence-based practices; 4) continuous data-based progress monitoring and decision-making; 5) evaluation of implementation fidelity; and 6) ongoing professional development, including coaching with content expertise.

- a) Team-based leadership

Our MTSS Plan establishes collaborative, team-based leadership teams composed of a cross-section of stakeholders, educators, administrators, support staff, and families. These teams work together to develop and implement targeted interventions, monitor student progress, and make data-informed decisions.

- b) Comprehensive universal screening

At Lyncourt, universal screening is a systematic process implemented prekindergarten through 8th grade. Universal screening is a proactive approach to supporting student success and promoting early intervention to prevent academic and social-emotional difficulties from escalating. By identifying students who may benefit from intervention early on, we can implement targeted strategies to address individual student needs and promote positive outcomes for all students. Key characteristics of the Lyncourt Union Free School District's universal screening include:

1. Comprehensive Assessment: Universal screening includes the administration of reading and math, norm-referenced assessments three times per year: fall, winter, and spring. The key academic skills and foundational areas of development are assessed for all students with specific exemptions for special populations. We refer to these as our *benchmark assessments*. For UPK 3- and 4-year-olds, early childhood assessments are administered during the three benchmark periods. Universal screening of social-emotional skills is conducted for all students during these same benchmark periods.

(Continued)

Students

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

2. **Systematic Administration:** Benchmark universal screenings are administered by the School-Wide Assessment Team (SWAT) during each benchmark period. This team is a cross-section of key staff across the building, including, reading and math interventionists, school counselor, school psychologist, ELL and special education teachers, and trained literacy paraprofessionals. The team is organized and facilitated by the district data coordinator. Assessments are administered consistently to all students, regardless of their perceived level of academic proficiency, to maintain the fidelity of the data. This ensures all students have an equal opportunity to receive early intervention or support services as needed, with specific exemptions allowed as defined by the leadership teams. The prekindergarten staff administers their screenings to all prekindergarten students. For social-emotional assessments, classroom teachers rate students for grades 1 through 5. Students in grades 6 through 8 complete a self-administered assessment.
 3. **Early Identification of Risk Factors:** The primary purpose of universal screening is to identify students who may be at risk for academic and/or social-emotional difficulties and may benefit from additional support or intervention. Norm-referenced benchmark assessments help teachers identify patterns of strengths and weaknesses across skill domains and provide early indicators of potential learning or social-emotional challenges.
 4. **Data-Informed Decision Making:** Screening results are used to inform our data-driven decision-making processes, including the identification of students in need of additional support based on norm-referenced percentile bands, the selection of appropriate research-based interventions or instructional strategies, and the allocation of resources to support student learning. Decision making happens collaboratively, in Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams, including academic benchmark C.A.R.E. team data meetings. Student performance is monitored by looking at the target 50th percentile band as a point of reference. Students who perform consistently below the 30th percentile are identified as "at-risk" for academic and social-emotional skill deficits.
 5. **Progress Monitoring:** Universal screening is often supplemented with ongoing progress monitoring to track student progress over time and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions or instructional support provided to students identified as at risk. Various systems are utilized for monitoring, including the AIMS Web system, Tier 1 academic curriculum formative and summative assessments, as well as assessments from specific academic interventions. Leadership team developed assessment tools may also be used. Students who consistently perform below the 30th percentile will be progress monitored on their specific skill gaps at a minimum of every two to three weeks.
- c) Tiered continuum of evidence-based practices

Evidence-based instruction refers to teaching practices, strategies, or interventions that have been rigorously researched, validated through empirical evidence, and demonstrated to be effective in

(Continued)

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

improving student learning outcomes. These practices are grounded in scientific research and are supported by empirical evidence gathered from well-designed studies, including experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, meta-analyses, and systematic reviews. The Lyncourt ESSA Tier Evidence-Based Reading Intervention Inventory is also available for more specific, targeted program decisions.

Key characteristics of evidence-based instruction include:

1. **Research Support:** Evidence-based instruction is supported by research findings from high-quality studies conducted in educational settings. This research provides empirical evidence of the effectiveness of specific instructional practices or interventions in improving student learning outcomes. This may include ESSA supported tiered programs.
2. **Alignment with Best Practices:** Evidence-based instruction aligns with established best practices in education, drawing upon principles of learning theory, cognitive science, and educational psychology.
3. **Customization to Student Needs:** Evidence-based instruction is tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, taking into account individual differences in students' level of knowledge, strengths, challenges, and backgrounds. Effective instructional practices are flexible and adaptable, allowing educators to differentiate instruction to address the unique needs of each student.
4. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Evidence-based instruction is informed by data and guided by ongoing assessment and evaluation. We use data to monitor student progress, identify areas of need, and make informed instructional decisions about which strategies or interventions are most appropriate for supporting student learning and closing achievement gaps.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Evidence-based instruction is characterized by a commitment to continuous improvement and professional growth.

The District will provide multiple tiers of increasingly intensive levels of targeted intervention and instruction for those students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards.

It is expected that use of the tiered level of instruction will be specific to each student's needs and will be an ongoing process, with students entering and exiting tiers of intervention according to the analysis of student performance data and progress monitoring.

(Continued)

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)Tier One Instruction

Tier One instruction is provided to all students in the general education setting. The use of scientific, research-based instruction in the areas of reading and math will be provided by the general education teacher and/or other qualified personnel as appropriate, and will emphasize proactive, preventative core instructional strategies in the classroom setting. Group and/or individualized instruction, assessment, and reinforcement activities will be provided as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.

The analysis of Tier One student performance data will be used to identify those students who need additional intervention at the Tier Two level of instruction.

Tier Two Instruction

In general, Tier Two instruction will consist of small group, targeted interventions for those students identified as being "at risk" and who fail to make adequate progress in the general education classroom. Tier Two instruction will include programs and intervention strategies designed to supplement Tier One interventions provided to all students in the general education setting.

Tier Two instruction may be provided by specialized staff such as reading and math teachers, tutors, speech therapists, school psychologists, and/or school counselors as determined by the C.A.R.E. Team.

At the conclusion of Tier Two instruction, the C.A.R.E. Team will review the student's progress and make a determination as to whether Tier Two interventions should be maintained, the student should be returned to the general education classroom if satisfactory progress is shown, or the student should be referred for Tier Three instruction.

Tier Three Instruction

Tier Three instruction is the provision of more intensive instructional interventions, tailored to the needs of the individual student, and is provided to those students who do not achieve adequate progress after receiving interventions at the Tier Two level. Tier Three instruction may include longer periods of intervention program and services than those provided in the first two Tiers based upon the significant needs of the student.

Tier Three instruction will be provided by those specialists, as determined by the C.A.R.E. Team, best qualified to address the individual student's targeted area(s) of need. If deemed appropriate by the Team, and in accordance with applicable law and regulation, a referral of the student may be made to the CSE.

(Continued)

Students

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

Progress monitoring on a continuous basis is an integral part of Tier Three and the student's response to the intervention process will determine the need or level of further intervention services and/or educational placement.

d) Continuous data-based progress monitoring and decision making

At Lyncourt, continuous data-based progress monitoring involves systematically collecting and analyzing data on students' academic and behavioral progress over time. This data allows us to make informed instructional decisions and to track students' progress accurately. This allows us to identify any areas where students are struggling and to have a systematic response to close learning gaps. These decisions are made collaboratively in PLC teams, both horizontally in grade levels and vertically in district data or C.A.R.E. team meetings.

The C.A.R.E. team is a professional learning community model dedicated to collaboration with all school staff. Our goal is to offer a systematic process for obtaining support, strategies, and interventions, in order to positively impact student achievement at Lyncourt School. In partnership with instructional, counseling, support, and administrative staff, we can meet our students' academic and behavioral needs by offering research-based interventions, monitoring student learning, and evaluating outcomes together.

Child Assessment-Response-Evaluation Team

- a) Child: Student-centered model
- b) Assessment: Data-driven process
- c) Response: Intervention that is evidence-based and grounded in science
- d) Evaluation: Continual review and analysis of data ensures we are meeting student needs
- e) Team: Professional learning community structure with a collaborative approach to decision-making

C.A.R.E. Team meetings are held with grade level teams after each benchmark period. Classroom and grade level data is analyzed to develop comprehensive Tier 1, 2, and 3 intervention plans to ensure student growth for all. When students do not respond to intervention plans developed at grade level meetings, teachers need a systematic process to follow to address learning gaps. At times, a referral to the C.A.R.E. Referral Team may be necessary. Below are flowcharts to explicitly outline this process.

e) Evaluation of implementation fidelity

At the Lyncourt Union Free School District, we are committed to providing all students with equitable access to high-quality education and support services. To ensure the successful implementation of our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) plan, we recognize the importance of evaluating implementation fidelity. It is crucial that each component of our MTSS plan is implemented with fidelity to maximize its effectiveness and impact on student outcomes.

(Continued)

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

To ensure thorough evaluation of implementation fidelity for our MTSS plan, we utilize a variety of data sources and methods, including but not limited to:

1. **Observations:** The Administrative Team regularly observes MTSS practices in action to assess adherence to established protocols and procedures.
2. **Surveys and Feedback:** We gather feedback from teachers, administrators, support staff, students, and families to gauge perceptions of MTSS implementation and identify areas for improvement.
3. **Data Analysis:** We analyze quantitative data, such as student progress monitoring data and attendance records, to measure the effectiveness of MTSS interventions and identify trends over time. Data sources include: SIRS Reports (NYS Student Information Report System), School Tool Reports, AIMS Web benchmark and progress monitoring data, BIMAS reports, the New York State 3-8 Testing Program, NYSESLAT and Regents outcomes, as well as individual intervention program assessments and student surveys.
4. **Documentation Review:** We review documentation, such as intervention plans and meeting minutes, to ensure that MTSS processes are being followed consistently and accurately.

Through ongoing evaluation of implementation fidelity, we strive to continuously improve our MTSS practices and ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed academically, behaviorally, and socially. We are committed to fostering a culture of collaboration, reflection, and data-driven decision-making to support the success of every student in our District.

f) **Ongoing professional development and coaching**

An effective and responsive Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) plan is essential to ensure all students receive the appropriate level of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support needed to succeed. Central to the effectiveness of MTSS is the role of educators in delivering high-quality instruction and interventions. Professional development plays a critical role in empowering educators to successfully implement the Lyncourt UFSD MTSS framework with fidelity.

Ongoing professional development ensures that staff have the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to identify student needs, design targeted interventions, and assess their impact. As MTSS involves a data-driven, collaborative approach to addressing diverse student needs, continuous learning for teachers, counselors, and support staff is essential. When educators are equipped with current best practices, evidence-based strategies, and a deep understanding of the MTSS process, they are better able to support student success and foster a positive, inclusive school environment.

(Continued)

Students

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) PROCESS (Cont'd.)

This plan highlights the importance of professional development as a cornerstone for achieving the full potential of MTSS, ensuring that all staff are prepared to implement interventions effectively, adapt strategies as needed, and maintain a focus on the holistic development of every student. The professional development committee meets with the administration at the end of the school year and reflects on student performance, teacher feedback, and district initiatives to collaborate on and the District Professional Development Plan for the upcoming school year.

34 CFR Sections 300.309 and 300.311

Education Law Sections 3208, 4002, 4401, 4401-a, and 4410

8 NYCRR Sections 100.2(ii), 200.2(b)(7), 200.4(a), 200.4(j)(3)(i), and 200.4(j)(5)(i)(g)

Adopted: 8/12/25