

IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Multi-Tiered System of Supports: 2015-2016

SECONDARY Implementation Plan

# Iowa City Community School District

## Introduction

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### State Initiative

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a process where schools use data to identify academic and behavioral needs of students, match student needs with evidence-based instruction and interventions, and monitor student progress to improve educational outcomes. The Iowa Department of Education expects all local education agencies to utilize MTSS. The system of interventions, both academic and behavioral, operates with the philosophy of gradually providing more supports to students when they are not acquiring content.

*Universal, Targeted, and Intensive* are terms that the state of Iowa uses to refer to the tiered levels of MTSS. A general guideline is that the intensity of the instruction is typically aligned with the intensity of the assessment data needed. Definition of terms:

- *Universal instruction* – The course of study, instruction and assessment deemed critical for student success. Those students in universal level receive universal instruction that is aligned with the Iowa Core, the state adopted standards that outline what educators are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.
- *Targeted instruction* – Instruction characterized by an increased focus of instruction or support. Students in targeted level receive universal instruction plus small group, targeted, evidence based instruction.
- *Intensive instruction* – Instruction characterized by an additional increase in the focus of instruction or support. Students in the intensive level typically receive universal instruction plus individualized intensive evidence-based instruction.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are a set of strategies and systems used in the schools to create a culture of positive behaviors, reduce behavior disruptions and create appropriate environment to educate all students. This system is also supported by the Iowa Department of Education.

When students are a part of a whole system, one that is not fragmented, their achievement in both academics and behaviors increase.

Educators are expected to:

- differentiate instruction in core classroom settings,
- recognize when students need additional supports (from informal observations, from universal screeners, from routine class work),
- provide students additional supports in the general education setting, and
- monitor progress of students.

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## Effective Instruction

*Differentiated instruction*, a district practice aimed to deliver effective instruction, complements the components of MTSS. The guiding principles of differentiated instruction (quality curriculum, respectful tasks, ongoing assessment, building community, and flexible grouping) assist teachers as they differentiate the content, process, product and / or environment. Additionally, teachers differentiate instruction according to each student's readiness, interests, and learning profile.

Differentiating instruction is critical to the success of any classroom as it supports students of all abilities. The practice assists the teacher in meeting the needs of learners in any educational setting, but particularly during universal instructional time.

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## Background Information

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### CORE Content

Core content refers to *What* is taught; for academics, it includes facts, concepts, skills, generalizations and principles, and strategies. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Iowa Core Curriculum (ICC) are the mandated academic content to be taught to all students. This mandate is from the State of Iowa; the CCSS and ICC are required for any accredited local education agency (school district) in the state. Social skills and work habits are behavioral content expected to be taught to all students.

### Universal CORE Instruction

Universal core instruction refers to *How* students are taught the content. Universal core instruction addresses the methods teachers use when instructing students. How students are grouped is also a consideration; during core instruction, sometimes all students are taught as a whole and sometimes the students are placed in groups.

### Instructional Methods

- For all curricular areas, approved instructional methods include *direct and explicit instruction* that supports students *constructing meaning*.

*Direct and explicit instruction* provides students with opportunities to be given content information as well as models. Scaffolded (supportive) instruction begins as explicit and transitions to a gradual release of responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students. The ultimate goal is for students to create meaning from reading text or listening to the spoken word. Memorization of information is not the goal.

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## Three Tiers of Instruction

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### Supporting All Students

The *majority* of students learn curricular and behavioral content in the context of UNIVERSAL instruction. *Some* students require TARGETED instruction and a *few* students require INTENSIVE instruction.

#### UNIVERSAL INSTRUCTION: Tier 1

100% of students  
Whole & small group instruction  
Content from CCSS/ICC

#### TARGETED INSTRUCTION: Tier 2

5-15 % of students  
Small group instruction  
Targeted content from CCSS/ICC

#### INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION: Tier 3

1-5% of students  
Very small group or 1-1 instruction  
Focused content from CCSS/ICC

### UNIVERSAL CORE INSTRUCTION: Tier 1

During core universal instructional time, all students are instructed in the general education classroom. Academic content is the state and district approved curriculum, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Iowa Core Curriculum (ICC). Behavioral content are social skills that include behavioral expectations for classrooms and common areas, social problem solving skills, social interaction skills, communication skills focusing on listening and speaking. Classroom and school-wide behavioral expectations are to be taught and a classroom system for acknowledging positive behaviors is to be developed.

During academic core universal instructional time, the general education classroom teacher instructs all students. Core behavioral instruction time may be lead by classroom teachers, school counselors, specials teachers, administrators, and para-educators. For students needing additional support, the first action of the teacher is to differentiate within core universal instruction time. Differentiation is applicable to both academic and behavioral content.

Presentation of content during core instructional time may be either whole group or small group.

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## Action Steps and Decisions: Tier 2 and 3

### TARGETED and INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION

During targeted and intensive instructional time, a small number of students are served. The percentage of students served may range from one to 20 percent of students per grade level. For the purpose of this document, the small number of students receiving Targeted or Intensive instruction includes children in need of additional support to meet basic grade level expectations. The academic content is the state and district approved curriculum, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Iowa Core Curriculum (ICC); behavioral content is behavior based (connected to social skills, problem solving, social interaction, and communication skills). For Tier 3 behavioral instruction, the focus is on teaching replacement behavior that is based on the function of the problem behavior. Presentation of academic content during targeted and intensive instructional time is in small (or individual) groups. The general education classroom teacher and/or a special area teacher may provide instruction. Behavioral content for Tier 2 should take place in the general education environment; if a student is in a small pull-out group, efforts must be made to promote generalization to the general education setting.

A series of standard actions occur throughout the year to guide educators in the implementation of a Multi-Tier System of Supports. The action steps include educators asking questions to guide actions.

What students should receive Targeted or Intensive Instruction? Once a teacher or other district educator identifies a student as not meeting basic grade level expectations, he or she requests that further review of data and determination of additional supports be considered. Who should review the data? What criteria should be used? How to determine what content should be the focus of instruction? How will the additional instruction be delivered? All of these questions are valid and must be addressed.

### Organizational Procedures

- Group reviewing data and making selection decisions
  - Group: Student Support Team (SST) or Course MTSS/Professional Learning Community (PLC) Team
  - Function of Group: Review the four PLC questions for academics and behavior AND engage in conversations for the purpose of learning and data driven decision-making.
    - ❖ What do we want students to know? Review curricular content.
    - ❖ How do we know students are learning? Engage in data analysis.
    - ❖ What do we do if students have not learned? Identify research-based instructional interventions based on student data, and identify appropriate progress monitoring tools. Identify who writes the intervention plan and the information to be included in the plan (particularly who implements and progress monitors the plan).
    - ❖ What do we do if students already know? Identify ways to meet learner needs.

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- Meeting Time: These groups meet in grade levels on a weekly basis.
  - ❖ Every 4 to 6 weeks, review progress monitoring data for students currently receiving an intervention; discuss need to adjust instruction and/or groups as needed.
  - ❖ 3 times a year, review data (ex: grades, attendance, curricular assessments to monitor progress) focusing on convergence of data.

## Selection of Students

- Criteria are to be used when selecting students to receive additional support. By definition, students needing additional support are ones that have not met benchmarks on multiple measures.

### **ACADEMIC and BEHAVIOR TARGETED INSTRUCTION** 5 to 15%

- Identify the 5 to 15 percent of students in grade level populations that are in need of additional support with Targeted Instruction; if there are more than 5 to 15 percent in need of additional support, some may need intensive instruction; the remainder will receive support during Universal Instruction.

### **ACADEMIC and BEHAVIOR INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION** 1 to 5%

- Identify the 1 to 5 percent of students in grade level populations that are in extreme need of additional support with Intensive Instruction. Students needing intensive instruction will be in very small groups or 1-1 tutoring.
- In the event that more than 20% of the students in a course do not meet benchmarks on multiple measures, then analyze the assessment data and identify target concepts, processes and skills which are lacking; adjust core universal instruction for time and intensity to address the deficits.

## Focus of Additional Instruction

- Discuss and identify focus of instruction
  - Base decision on assessment data (for English/Language Arts and for math ... end of unit tests, mid-term and end-of-term grades; for behaviors ... classroom observations, attendance, and PBIS data).
  - Consider a) matching student need to intervention focus (addressing specific need) or b) general intervention (addressing multiple needs).
  - Consider overlap of focus in academics AND behaviors.

## Personnel Options for Delivery of Additional Instruction

- *Classroom teachers* provide Targeted or Intensive instruction. For academic support, the Targeted or Intensive instruction will occur during the established classroom period. Small or whole group instructional time may be adjusted. Teachers need to work collaboratively with like grade course teachers to share in delivery of supplemental instruction.

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- *Additional teaching staff in the building* (such as intervention specialists) may provide Targeted or Intensive academic instruction if they have appropriate certification; the building administration (principal) determines such assignments.
- Because students who do not meet course expectations need highly qualified teachers, the District does not approve para-educators, volunteers, or support staff in delivering academic instruction identified in supplemental plans. They may help students, but these are not considered Targeted or Intensive instructional interventions.
- *Classroom teachers, specials teachers, support staff, behavior coaches, and/or counselors* provide support for Targeted or Intensive behavioral instruction. For Tier 3 behavioral interventions, School Family Advocates and/or other community resources may also be utilized.

## Documentation Requirements

Once a student or students are identified as needing Targeted or Intensive Instruction, information will be recorded on a district *Plan for Intervention*.

## Approved Curricular Materials

As a district, certain curricular programs and materials have been approved for all three tiers of instruction. The programs and materials have been review by a district committee and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and Iowa Core Curriculum and are consistent with district instructional methods.

- For Core Instruction:
  - English/language arts: Adopted core instructional materials for the given course
  - Mathematic: Adopted core instructional materials for the given course
  - Behaviors: PBIS resources (including coaches and trainers)
- For Targeted and Intensive Instruction

## Approved Assessments for Placement and Progress Monitoring

The same assessment instruments are used throughout the district for placement and for progress monitoring. The instruments to be used are listed below.

- For Core, Targeted or Intensive Instruction
  - English/language arts: assessments within the published core instructional materials (formative), *Iowa Assessments* (summative),
  - Mathematics: assessments within the published core instructional materials (formative), *Iowa Assessments* (summative)
  - Behaviors: Data from classroom observations, from parent/teacher conferences, and from office referrals

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## Infrastructure and Approved Instructional Time Options for Targeted and Intervention Instruction

The structure of the school day and the number of minutes of instruction assigned to curricular areas (by grade levels) plays a role in how Core, Targeted and Intensive instruction can be delivered. The ability to share students across teachers and classrooms for small groups assists in this process.

## Approved Instructors for Targeted and Intervention Instruction

The general education classroom teacher is responsible for delivery of Core content in the Core instructional setting to all students.

For Targeted and Intensive instruction, general education classroom teachers and instructional design strategies provide Targeted and Intensive instruction. When possible, teachers with additional training in the curricular or behavior area of need should be the individuals delivering additional supports.

- Volunteers, practicum students, support staff (associates, custodians, secretaries) are not appropriate individuals to teach students needing additional academic and/or behavior content. While these individuals may be appropriate for providing practice (under the direction of a teacher) with a student, they are not appropriate for direct instruction in the Targeted or Intensive setting. In some instances, when training is provided, para-educators are appropriate providers for behavioral interventions.

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## Monitoring Implementation of Universal, Targeted, and Intensive Instruction

Monitoring the implementation of Core, Targeted, and Intensive instruction is the joint responsibility of the principals as well as teachers.

Principals are responsible for

- informing teachers of their roles and responsibilities,
- convening meetings for review of student achievement data,
- periodically observing classrooms for implementation of three tiers of instruction,
- analyzing building data for patterns and trends of student achievement,
- monitoring teacher effectiveness, and
- providing coaching and professional development.

Teachers are responsible for

- collecting screening and achievement data,
- teaching core content in the core instruction setting and when appropriate in the Targeted and Intensive setting,
- monitoring progress in all settings, and particularly in Tier 2 and 3 on district documents,
- collaborating with fellow teachers as well as other educators in the building (principal, special teachers, instructional design strategists) to track progress of students in Tier 2 and 3,
- maintaining up-to-date records on individual students (in the form of Intervention Plans and Power School), and
- sharing information with parents.