

MTSS-B Frequently Asked Questions



Answers to frequently asked questions and clarification of common misconceptions about NH MTSS-B.



Is MTSS-B another passing trend in education?

MTSS-B is based on long-standing, research-based frameworks such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), social-emotional learning (SEL), and school mental health models. NH schools have been implementing tiered prevention frameworks for years – and MTSS-B in its current form for almost a decade. The [System of Care for Children's Mental Health law](#) mandates statewide dissemination and use of MTSS-B as part of the larger children's system of care. The NH Education Department and other NH agencies offer coaching to help make implementation efforts practical and lasting.



Is MTSS-B a curriculum?

MTSS-B isn't a curriculum. It's a systematic decision-making process for identifying and responding to student social-emotional and behavioral needs. It's not a set of manualized interventions, though evidence-based practices are used across tiers. MTSS-B is designed for efficiency, using implementation science to coordinate existing school behavioral health efforts for more proactive and effective ways of working.



Is MTSS-B the same as PBIS?

MTSS-B relies on the tiered prevention framework of PBIS with the addition of research-based school mental health practices and SEL. Based on the Interconnected Systems Framework, MTSS-B emphasizes the needs underlying behavior, collaboration with community mental health partners, social-emotional learning, and relational and trauma-responsive supports for students.



How flexible is MTSS-B to our local needs?

MTSS-B is not a 'one size fits all' approach. It's an organic process and needs to be a collaborative effort to ensure buy-in and fit for your local context. MTSS-B involves approaching systems change in doable, incremental steps that consider your district and community culture. A first step will be to use local data to identify the specific needs of your students and community, and then your teams can assess how MTSS-B will help you meet those needs.



We're already doing RTI in our school – can we still do MTSS-B?

Most schools already have academic tiered frameworks in place. For example, Response to Intervention assesses all students to identify individualized needs, matches each student to evidence-based supports, and engages in monitoring and improvement cycles to adjust interventions as needed. MTSS-B takes the same approach and applies it to social-emotional and behavioral health needs. MTSS-B streamlines existing teaming so that ideally, academic and behavioral health staff sit on an integrated set of tiered teams.



Are we already doing MTSS-B if we have co-located mental health clinicians in our schools?

Collaboration with community mental health partners is a core component of high-quality MTSS-B. MTSS-B elevates this partnership by going above and beyond traditional co-located models of school mental health. To improve on siloed approaches to care, MTSS-B invites community mental health leadership and clinicians to sit on district- and school-level teams. Community mental health expertise is a critical part of data use, action planning, design of referral processes and services, crisis response, and care coordination.



Can we do MTSS-B if our school counselors are already overextended?

Many schools are feeling pressure in the face of growing student behavioral concerns and mental health needs. The immediacy of more intense needs can cloud the need for preventative systems that address student needs 'upstream,' before they interfere with learning. While sometimes hard to remember in the face of a behavioral crisis, preventative systems like MTSS-B really do work when implemented well – relieving pressure on Advanced Tier systems.



How expensive is MTSS-B?

It takes resources to implement MTSS-B well. High quality MTSS-B requires expert training and ongoing coaching, data infrastructure, and teacher and staff release time for team participation. A district-level administrative position to drive the work across schools is highly recommended. That said, funds invested in systems like MTSS-B can result in fiscal savings due to reduced suspensions and drop-out rates. The return on investment is worth it if commitment to high-quality implementation is in place.