MTSS-B Advanced Tier (2/3) Decision Guidance

TIER 3

TIER 2

MTSS-B decision guidelines allow Advanced Tier Teams to quickly identify students who might benefit from additional interventions, efficiently match identified students to appropriate tiered supports, and know when to intensify or fade services. Use of decision guidelines increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the MTSS-B system, directing valuable behavioral health resources toward interventions most likely to address student needs. Adapted from the Center on PBIS, this tool offers decision thresholds for Advanced Tier referral, data points for progress monitoring, and considerations for modifying or graduating students from Advanced Tier supports and services.[1]

Referring students to Tiers 2 and 3

Data-based decision guidelines help teams determine when a student needs Advanced Tier supports and which supports are most appropriate. Consider the following referral thresholds as examples when establishing criteria for matching students to supports.

Sample Referral Thresholds

Indicator	Tier 2	Tier 3
Academic achievement	At-risk of failing in one or more subject areas	Failing in one or more subject areas with additional concerns
Attendance	5+ unexcused absences in a quarter	5+ unexcused absences in a quarter and evidence of additional concerns (middle/high school)
Social-emotional risk	Pro-social behavior skills are lagging and/or concern regarding possible behavioral health issue or available family support for student (student not in crisis)	Significant concern regarding behavioral health issue and/or available family support.
Behavior incidents	2-5 office-managed referrals or 1+ in-school or out-of-school suspensions	6+ office-managed referrals or 2+ in-school or out-of-school suspensions
Nurse visits [2]	3-5 non-routine nurse visits (emerging pattern)	6+ non-routine nurse visits (patterns of regular visits)
Student status	New students are enrolled in Check-In/Check-Out for 2-5 days to orient them to the school	Progress is below expected rate after 2-4 weeks (inform with other data indicators)

Progress monitoring & support modification

Once students begin receiving Advanced Tier services, teams should monitor progress and adjust supports as needed by reviewing student data and outcomes from different interventions, as well as progress towards any individualized student goals. Below are some examples of data that can be used for progress monitoring.

Suggested progress monitoring data

- Academic performance
- Attendance
- Discipline data (i.e., ODRs, detentions, suspensions)
- Rating scales (i.e., teacher ratings of behavior)
- Parent/caregiver or teacher feedback (i.e., reports, surveys, requests)
- Systematic direct observation
- Outcome measures for a specific intervention

[1] Horner, R., Flannery, B., Nese, R., Chaparro, E., Conley, K., & Todd, A. (2021). Tiered Decision Guidelines for Social, Behavioral, and Academic Behavior: Guidance for Establishing Data-Based Teams Across the Tiers (2021). Center on PBIS, University of Oregon. www.pbis.org
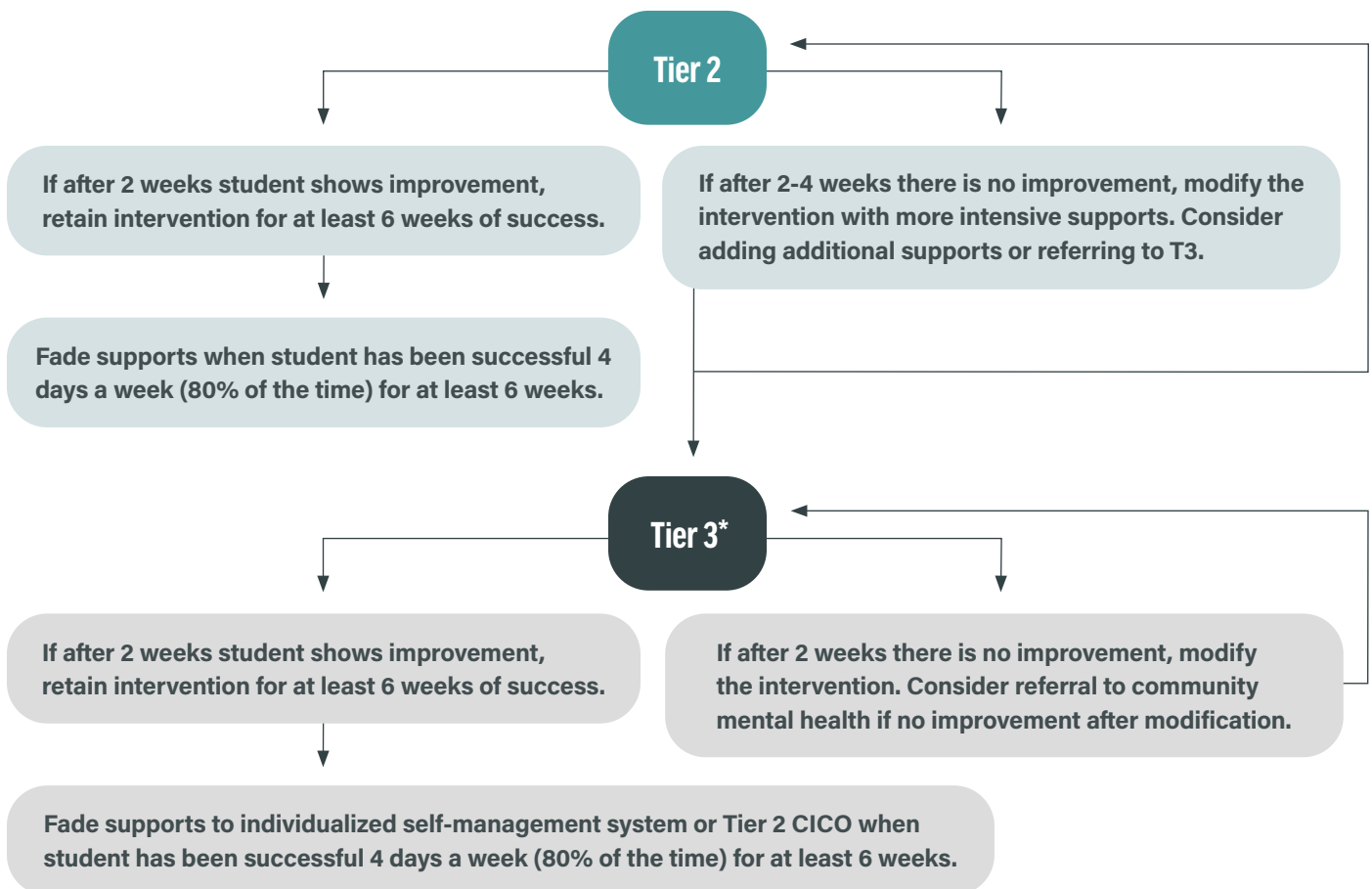
[2] Lenderman, K. (2021). Screening and Decision Rules (2021). Division of Teaching and Learning, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education. https://osse.dc.gov/

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Timing of data review for progress monitoring will vary by intervention and supports will likely need to be adjusted over time. Advanced Tier teams should develop procedures for when and how to monitor and modify individual student supports at a frequency that is both sensitive enough to capture change in student functioning/behavior and feasible for the local school setting. National recommendations vary from hourly (for very intensive supports) to monthly (for less intensive supports). Ultimately, teams should decide what is appropriate and feasible.

Intervention	Suggestions for progress monitoring and support modification
Check-In/Check-Out (CICO)	Evaluate bi-weekly. If a student is consistently meeting 80% of their daily goal (as evidenced by their Daily Progress Report) begin fading support, as indicated by the intervention manual. If a student does not meet bi-weekly progress goals, modify CICO or consider other interventions.
Tier 2 groups	Most evidence-based groups are time-limited; follow established guidelines for progress monitoring if provided in the group manual. If not provided, evaluate using school-developed measures of progress every 2-4 weeks until end date of group, or adjust accordingly depending on duration of group. Alternatively, if a group is ongoing, evaluate student progress bi-weekly to determine if adjustments or additional supports are needed.
Tier 3 school-based behavioral health services	Work with the student and family to collaboratively set behavioral health goals and evaluate progress toward the goals using agreed-upon measures at least bi-weekly. Fade supports when student has met goals and/or developed successful coping strategies and feels comfortable implementing them.

Advanced Tier teams can also consider a process for modifying supports as students make progress toward goals or outcomes identified in their support plans. Consider the following guidelines as examples:

Tier 2

If after 2 weeks student shows improvement, retain intervention for at least 6 weeks of success.

If after 2-4 weeks there is no improvement, modify the intervention with more intensive supports. Consider adding additional supports or referring to T3.

Fade supports when student has been successful 4 days a week (80% of the time) for at least 6 weeks.

Tier 3*

If after 2 weeks student shows improvement, retain intervention for at least 6 weeks of success.

If after 2 weeks there is no improvement, modify the intervention. Consider referral to community mental health if no improvement after modification.

Fade supports to individualized self-management system or Tier 2 CICO when student has been successful 4 days a week (80% of the time) for at least 6 weeks.

* An individualized student support team and plan should be established for students receiving Tier 3 services.

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