Implementing a Multi-Tiered Framework for Instruction, Intervention, and Support

The purpose of this Reference Guide is to assist all schools in conceptualizing, designing, implementing, and monitoring school improvement efforts using a multi-tiered framework for instruction, intervention, and support as identified in Policy BUL-4827.1, Multi-Tiered Framework for Instruction, Intervention, and Support. This Reference Guide describes the purpose, background, and major components of a multi-tiered problem solving framework.

A Multi-Tiered Framework systematically guides the development of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction, intervention and support in the areas of academics, behavior, social-emotional, and attendance that is matched to student need and directed by student outcome data from multiple measures.

A Multi-Tiered Framework embraces evidenced-based instruction and the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy. It provides the structure within which all efforts of the school are aligned to ensure that the instructional, academic, and behavioral/social emotional needs of all students are the highest priority, including English Learners (ELs), Standard English Learners (SELs), Students with Disabilities (SWDs) and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students.
GUIDELINES:  The problem-solving process (Attachment A) is grounded in data-based decision making about instruction and intervention. Implementing a multi-tiered problem-solving process requires careful consideration and planning that is informed by student-centered data. These guidelines are crafted around a systems change model that is based on three essential components: consensus, infrastructure, and implementation.

I. Consensus Building

Consensus is the process of assisting staff to learn about why and what changes are needed in the area of academics, behavior, social-emotional, and attendance which includes attendance expectations. Concepts are communicated broadly to stakeholders and the foundational “whys” are taught, discussed, and embraced. Three areas to consider in building consensus include student need, beliefs, and knowledge.

A. Identify the need for change

1. Provide student data to staff that reflect the performance of students in the building, including the percent of students, by student or group, at or above proficiency and the percent of students who have changed proficiency levels. In addition, provide trend data showing the percent increase each year (past 3-5 years) of students who have moved to proficiency. These data will assist staff in developing consensus around what change is needed in order to achieve building and district goals.

B. Identify beliefs

1. Explore beliefs around equitable access for all students to high quality first teaching.
2. Examine beliefs and expectations of students as capable learners.
3. Build an understanding that the effectiveness of supplemental (Tier 2) and intensive (Tier 3) instructional supports is dependent on strong, effective core instruction (Tier 1).
4. Identify the belief patterns that teachers have regarding how to best educate students by giving the Beliefs Survey to all staff (see the Doing What Works in LAUSD website for access to this tool).
5. Discuss the data from the surveys to support the need for change and the belief that all students can learn.
GUIDELINES: C. Identify staff skills and practices that might be needed to support the change:

1. Provide information and articles about the multi-tiered problem solving process to all stakeholders (see the Doing What Works in LAUSD website).
2. Provide professional development to staff on the underpinnings of a data-based problem solving model (i.e., data-based decision making, multiple tiers of intervention, use of problem solving process, etc.)
3. Complete a self-assessment to determine the need for multi-tiered problem solving process in the school (one option is the Self-Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI, see Attachment B).
4. Provide professional development to support an understanding of the purpose of collecting data, what data is important to collect, and how frequently the data should be analyzed. Provide a process for data analysis.

II. Infrastructure Building

Infrastructure is comprised of those elements necessary to implement a multi-tiered framework of instruction, intervention, and support using a problem solving process. Structures and supports (e.g. data collection procedures, common language/common understanding of the problem-solving process, designated data days to evaluate instruction) are put in place to support, stabilize, and institutionalize evidence-based instruction and data-based decision making into the culture of the school.

A. Form a school-based leadership team to do early information gathering and sharing.

1. Identify members of the School-Based Leadership Team (SBLT). Members should include but are not limited to Principal/Assistant Principal, data coach (assigned role, not necessarily by title), general education teacher, special education teacher, facilitator, support staff (intervention teacher, psychologist, counselors, etc.)
2. Define roles of each member of the SBLT.
   a. Instructional leader responsible for building culture, communicating the vision, and supporting the infrastructure (i.e. administrator)
   b. Person with expertise in collecting, organizing, displaying, analyzing and interpreting data (i.e., teacher, data or Instructional coach, Title 1 Coordinator)
   c. Person who has knowledge and understanding of
GUIDELINES:

- standards-based instruction, curriculum, assessment, and strategies (i.e., teacher, instructional coach)
- Person who has knowledge and understanding of evidence-based interventions, methods, and curricula (i.e., intervention teacher, school psychologist, special education teacher)
- Person who establishes and maintains a supportive environment for problem solving and data-based decision making. This role is responsible for attending to the elements of change and identifying strategies for supporting staff throughout the transition (i.e., intervention teacher, instructional coach, data coach)

3. Ensure the leadership team has the skills and knowledge to support the implementation of a multi-tiered approach by working with the Local District RtI² personnel.

B. Align the various initiatives on campus, i.e. Single Plan for Student Achievement, small learning communities, professional learning communities, positive behavior support, reading block, new math adoption, etc. with an RtI² framework.

C. Analyze school level data to assist in prioritizing resources to support this effort. The following lines of inquiry will help in this endeavor.

1. Is the core program, Tier 1, meeting the academic, social, and behavioral needs of at least 80% of the students?
2. What universal screening tools (tools used to identify learners at risk or those who may be showing early signs of struggling with learning, at least 3x per year) are built into the core program (Tier 1)?
3. If the core academic and/or behavioral program, Tier 1, is not meeting the needs of 80% of students, what might be the reason?
4. How will the needs identified in the core program, Tier 1, be addressed (i.e., what professional development might need to be provided and to whom)?
5. For which students is the core instruction sufficient or not sufficient? Why or why not?
6. What specific supplemental and intensive instructions are needed?
7. How will specific supplemental and intensive instruction be delivered?
8. Are the Tier 2 interventions currently in place meeting the needs of our students (e.g., 80% of the students participating in the Tier 2 intervention programs showing positive slopes or trends of growth based on ongoing progress monitoring?)
GUIDELINES:

9. How will it be determined which students need to move to a different level of instruction or intervention?

D. Identify assessment systems used to assist a seamless and fluid transition between tiers and to monitor a student’s response to intervention. A tiered system of assessments increases in frequency and intensity as greater instructional or behavioral need are revealed. Assessment is critical to providing a seamless transition through the tiers. Attachment C contains a list of suggested assessment tools for each tier of instruction and intervention.

E. Plan for the logistics of assessments and periodic data analysis.
   1. Determine the frequency of universal screening
   2. Calendar regular data analysis and dialogue days (one bank day per month, every six weeks, after grading periods, etc.).
   3. Organize a team structure for ongoing data-based decision making (grade-level teams, content alike, Professional Learning Communities, Small Learning Communities, Cost teams etc.).
   4. Calendar benchmark progress monitoring dates, 3-4 times per year.
   5. Meet in collaborative teams to examine school-wide data after each progress monitoring assessment.

III. Implementation

Implementation involves the active use of data to inform, develop, adapt, and evaluate instructional and intervention decisions. In a multi-tiered system, the intensity, time of instruction, and academic engaged time (AET) increases as the student demonstrates increased levels of need. AET is the number one predictor of student achievement.

A. Use the Problem-Solving Process to assist in designing and selecting modifications to core instruction (if necessary) as well as for designing and selecting strategies for improving academic, behavioral and/or social emotional performance of students who have not responded to effective first instruction and intervention. Problem solving allows the use of a decision making process that leads to the development of instruction and/or interventions that will have a high probability of success. The process integrates the use of data to guide
GUIDELINES: the development of effective interventions and to provide frequent monitoring of progress.

B. Develop adjustments to Tier 1 core instruction including the addition of instructional minutes and intensity as indicated by the data, i.e. extended instructional time and intensity, provision of ELD with integrity, culturally relevant instruction, access strategies, etc.

1. Use data to develop a master schedule that provides time for the provision of supplemental and intensive instruction based on data. Targeted intervention must be provided in addition to core not in replacement of the core.

2. Provide supplemental, Tier 2, and intensive, Tier 3, instruction.

3. Ensure that Tier 2 and 3 interventions are integrated with core instructional practices and materials to facilitate improved student performance in core instruction.

   a. Adjust instructional programs, Tier 1, 2, and 3, based on ongoing data analysis.
   b. Document the type and amount (minutes) of intervention provided in Tiers 2 and 3, based on need,
   c. Ensure that teachers have adequate skills to implement new instructional strategies with fidelity.
   d. Monitor the degree to which the school is implementing a problem solving process.

5. Collect, summarize, and share evaluation data with all stakeholders.
   a. Repeat the questions asked in Section II-C.

IV. Instructional Strategies and Supports
Evidence-based instructional strategies are at the heart of Tier 1, 2, and 3 instruction and intervention. Instructional strategies through the multi-tiered system must be culturally relevant and address behavioral expectations.

A. Tier 1: Core Instruction
Tier 1 instruction is about the provision of effective high quality evidence-based instructional strategies and curricula. Effective Tier 1 instruction must include:

- Use of PreK -12 state-adopted standards
- Differentiated instruction and services that provide access to the core for all students. This includes the use of access strategies: academic language development, instructional conversations, communal learning structures, and advanced graphic organizers as well as other evidence-based strategies to support all instruction.
GUIDELINES:

• A process for ensuring the integrity in the delivery of core instruction and intervention (i.e., classroom observations to observe the presence/absence of effective instructional strategies).

B. Tier 2: Strategic or Supplemental Instruction and Intervention
In addition to the standards-based curriculum that all students received in Tier 1, Tier 2 offers supplemental instruction. Supplemental instruction includes:
• Provision of higher levels of instructional intensity (more minutes and narrower focus of instruction) using strategic strategies aligned to the core curriculum. Strategies might include preteaching, reteaching, frontloading academic vocabulary, extended practice, focused behavioral intervention,
• Use of auxiliary materials associated with the core programs, (i.e., support guides, leveled books, etc.)
• Use of supplemental materials designed to provide targeted strategic intervention.
• Use instructional practices to ensure that auxiliary and supplemental materials are integrated with the content of core instruction.
• Provide support to provider of auxiliary and supplemental instruction to ensure integrity and fidelity in the delivery of that instruction.

C. Tier 3: Intensive Instruction and Intervention
Tier 3 instruction and intervention includes more explicit instruction with a very narrow focus specifically targeted to a specific instructional, behavioral or social emotional skill need. Intervention can be accelerated or remedial and is delivered in addition to Tier 1 and 2 instruction. Effective Tier 3 instruction and intervention should include increased individualization and smaller group size to include:
• Use of effective instructional strategies with high intensity, duration, and frequency.
• Use of District approved replacement programs at 4th grade and above (i.e., Language!, Read 180, Voyager, etc.)
• Use of instructional practices to ensure that intensive supports are integrated with the core content instruction
• Provision of professional development and ongoing support to providers of intensive instruction to ensure integrity in the delivery of that instruction.
GUIDELINES: The effective use of a Multi-Tiered Problem Solving Process will ensure the academic, behavioral and social/emotional success of all students within the Los Angeles Unified School District. Schools are strongly encouraged to begin and/or continue the process of using data to improve teaching and learning, develop multi-tiered layers of instruction and intervention supports based on student need and levels of intensity, and build the infrastructure needed to meet the needs of all students. Local District teams are available to support this work.

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