MTSS Handbook

Updated Spring 2022

CARE Team

Collaborative, Accountable, Results-Oriented, Engaged

Table of Contents

What is a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)?

A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a prevention framework that organizes building level resources to set each learner up for academic, social-emotional and/or behavioral success. MTSS looks at the whole child, allowing for the early identification of challenges and timely intervention for learners. Increasingly intense tiers (e.g., Tier I, Tier II, Tier III), sometimes referred to as levels of prevention, represent a continuum of supports.

The core of MTSS is data-based decision-making. This involves collecting data, monitoring a child's individual performance, and designing and implementing strategies and support so each child's needs are met.

In short, the following basic understandings/core components are present in the MTSS framework:

- Tier I represents universal instruction for all learners. This instruction is high-quality, differentiated, standards-based, and carried out by highly-qualified teachers who use evidence-based strategies.

- Tier II represents targeted instruction and/or support for some learners.

- Tier III represents individualized instruction and/or support for few learners.

- Tiers are not people or places, but represent types of instruction and/or support.

- Appropriate levels of intervention are layered so that learners still receive universal instruction while also receiving support and/or intervention.

- Interventions or strategies are based on research and current data.

- Learners with or without Individualized Education Plans can receive tiered intervention.

- Movement between instructional tiers is fluid; therefore, learners can move between tiers and levels of support as their needs change.

- School and district staff will regularly collaborate around a data collection system that includes assessments, universal screening, progress monitoring data, and teacher/staff observation.

- School sites implement school-wide and classroom level measures to support important social-emotional and learning outcomes.

MTSS Model

A problem-solving model is used for MTSS. At a universal level, it is used to determine curriculum, instructional approach, and resources aligned to learners' needs. At the learner level, it is used to determine discrepancies, as well as to plan, implement, and analyze any needed intervention. The process outlined below is used by the problem-solving team.

Problem Identification: Is there a problem? If so, what is it?
- Define area(s) of concern and prioritize.
- Review/collect baseline data on primary area(s) of concern.
- Note discrepancy between what is expected and what is occurring.

Problem Analysis: Why is it happening?
- Review data to generalize plausible hypotheses.
- Collect additional data as needed to refute or validate hypotheses.
- Select most validated and alterable hypotheses, and use this plan

Plan Development: What shall we do about it?
- Identify intervention strategies and procedures.
- Identify implementation logistics to ensure the plan is implemented with integrity.
- Identify Progress Monitoring logistics (e.g. who, what, when, where, how often).
- Write a standards-based measurable goal.
- Decide on decision-making rules (timeline for review, criteria for entry/exit, etc.) for plan evaluation.

Plan Evaluation: Did our plan work?
- Is progress being made toward the goal?
- Is the discrepancy decreasing between what is expected and what is occurring?
- Should the plan be maintained, can it be removed, or are changes needed?

CARE Team Norms
- An agenda will be created in advance of each meeting by the Principal, Instructional Coach, and Interventionist(s).
- Triangulation of learner data will guide the discussion around new referrals.
- Progress monitoring data and intervention outcomes will guide the discussion about learners currently receiving tiered support.

CARE Team Roles

The CARE team and roles are outlined below:

Roles by Tier	Tier 1	Tier 2/3
Classroom Teacher	● Contributes knowledge of grade, group, instruction, data, and planning ● Administers universal assessments ● Delivers core instruction ● Documents any concerns and shares concern with parent ● Provides Tier I intervention with approximately 6 weeks of data collection prior to referral ●Identifies specific missing or deficit skills based on data and provided direct instruction to target those skills	● Referring teacher contributes knowledge of learner, family, instruction, intervention, data, hypothesis, and planning ● Teacher carries out or assists in intervention plan and progress monitoring ● Interventionists or others who bring expertise may be invited as a team member as needed ● Continues to deliver core instruction with fidelity ●Identifies specific missing or deficit skills based on data and provides direction instruction to target those skills ●Create specific goals for learners, collaborating with CARE team
Psychologist	● Coordinate with instructional coaches, curriculum specialists, and grade-level teams to remain knowledgeable about universal instruction	● Attend necessary CARE team meetings and meetings for individual learners. ● Inform individual intervention design, data review, and decision making ● Provide individualized intervention for any learner
School Social Worker	● Coordinate with instructional coaches and grade-level teams to remain knowledgeable about universal instruction ● Improve Tier 1 SEL fidelity through modeling and coaching	● Attend necessary CARE team meetings and meetings for individual learners that are SEL focused ● Provide Social and Emotional Skill Groups ● Provide behavioral and social emotional intervention and support ● Organize and analyze social-emotional and behavioral data for groups and interventions ● SEL coaching for in-class support and intervention ● Inform individual behavioral intervention design, data review, and decision making ● Organize and document behavioral progress monitoring ● Provide individualized intervention for any learner
Building Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Dean	● Facilitate CARE Team meetings ● Establish adequate space for meetings ● Maintain group norms ● Communicates dates for universal screener and/or benchmark assessments ● Monitor for fidelity of Tier I core instruction	● Check for fidelity of Tier I instruction and Tier 2 interventions ● Establish adequate time and space for meetings with families ● Invite appropriate people to meetings ● Ensure parents are informed ● Ensure necessary supports for parents are scheduled, if needed (i.e. interpreter, translations) ● Maintain group norms in meetings ● Manage team roles in meetings

Interventionist (MTSS, EL, SPED)	● Coordinate with instructional coaches and grade-level teams to remain knowledgeable about universal instruction ● May provide push-in Tier I instructional support for 6-8 ● Brainstorm with teachers ideas for differentiation and supports to supplement core instruction.	● Attend necessary Tier 2/3 meetings ● Provides targeted push-in or pull-out support in area of academic need ● Progress monitors every 5-10 instructional days ● Inform and employ modifications, accommodations, and differentiation resulting in an individualized intervention
Instructional Coach	● Facilitate grade-level meetings to support teachers in strong Tier 1 instruction ● Help support teachers in designing classroom interventions. ● Organize and analyze any tier 1 academic data for use by the grade level team and CARE team ● Assist with on-site PD ●Organize and analyze benchmark data	● Offers support of classroom teacher to continue tier one booster/intervention ● Continues to support fidelity of implementation of core instruction ● Informs Tier 2/3 strategies with the staff member providing support ● Attend necessary Tier 2/3 Meetings
Parent or Guardian	● Teacher partners with the parent to provide information about core instruction and any needed interventions.	● Parent has awareness of Tier II intervention, receives updates regarding progress ● If moving to Tier III, parent will be notified ● Parent is informed of progress monthly
Related Staff	Staff members with content knowledge expertise related to the area of focus may be helpful at any level (i.e. EL for language acquisition, social worker, coach, SEL staff for behavior, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.)	

Collaborative	Expertise the multidisciplinary team offers.
Accountable	Data collection based on measures, metrics, and indicators that are easy to explain and understand.
Results Oriented	Practical application of information from data collection to intervention
Engaged	Next steps agreed upon and known to all team members within a reasonable time frame.

What is Response to Intervention?

Response to Intervention (RtI) processes focus on learners who are struggling and provide a vehicle for data-based decision making to strengthen their performances before problems increase in intensity. RtI refers to the practice of providing effective instruction and intervention across three tiers. Assessment, progress monitoring, and data-driven decision making are components of successful RtI implementation.

What are the Tiers?

Tier 1 is core instruction in the regular classroom and generally supports 85% of the learner population. All learners' receive effective, differentiated instruction provided by a classroom teacher using evidence-based core curriculum and positive behavioral management strategies. During Tier I, the teacher identifies learners who may need additional support using key indicators (difficulty mastering content, absenteeism, behavioral problems, signs of disengagement, etc.). Learners with at-risk factors may be given in-class boosters or short term intervention as a supplement to core instruction. If these typical supports are unsuccessful, the teacher asks the RtI team to review what additional support might help bring the child to acceptable levels of proficiency.

Tier 2 is a short-term support for learners identified as not responding to Tier I and generally meets the needs of 10-15% of the learner population. Tier 2 typically may involve academic pull-out support, one-on-one counseling, a behavioral contract, etc. Parents will be included when a child is referred for Tier 2 and progress monitoring occurs regularly. learners who respond well to Tier 2 support are returned to Tier 1. Learners who do not respond to the Tier 2 supports are reviewed for Tier 3.

Tier 3 involves the application of intensive, daily, individualized, evidence-based interventions which are designed to increase the rate of learner progress. A small percentage of learners, approximately 1-5% of the learner population, will need this level of support. Good progress after Tier 3 support results in the learner being returned to Tier 1 or Tier 2. Slow progress results in the learner continuing in Tier 3. No or minimal progress over time may result in the learner being referred for special education evaluation.

What are the RtI Processes and Procedures in District 37?

Core Instruction

Tier I Core Literacy Instruction

The core of District 37's literacy programming for learners in grades K-4 is Journeys Reading Program. This curriculum follows what research has found to be best practice in literacy instruction. Reading and Writing workshop nurtures literacy motivation by integrating choice and collaboration into literacy tasks; provides learners with opportunities to engage with texts across a wide range of genres; allows learners to develop their literacy skills with appropriately leveled texts; balances teacher and learner-led discussions; and promotes literacy independence by providing time to self-selected reading and writing. This instructional model also allows teachers to meet the needs of more learners due to the differentiation that occurs throughout the workshop.

Literacy Programming:
- Amplify K-8
- Being a Writer K-2
- Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum Prek-1
- Words Their Way K-4

Tier I Core Mathematics Instruction

District 37 uses the *i-Ready Mathematics* program for core instruction in kindergarten through fourth grade. This curriculum balances comprehensive assessment and instruction that empowers educators to make differentiated instruction available in every classroom. Learners are given an opportunity to question, explain, and persevere as they seek to solve problems that encourage abstract thought. The mini-lessons then give learners the opportunity to develop procedural fluency and to use clear, precise mathematical language. Teachers facilitate class discussion, lead number talks, organize flexible groups, provide hands-on tasks, and monitor growth.

Math Programming:
- i-Ready Mathematics Program 2-8
- i-Ready Mathematics Practice

Tier I Social-Emotional Learning

Gavin Central School implements Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS). PBIS is not a packaged curriculum or program. Rather, schools implement the core features of evidence-based, school-wide practices in a way that fits with the school's values: Be Safe. Be Responsible. Be Respectful.

With regards to school-wide practices, Gavin Central:
- Documents a shared vision and approach to supporting and responding to learners behavior in a mission or vision statement
- Establishes 3 positively-stated school wide expectations and defines them for each school setting (Be Safe. Be Respectful. Be Responsible.)
- Explicitly teaches school-wide expectations and other key social, emotion, and behavioral skills to set all learners up for success
- Establishes a continuum of recognition strategies to provide specific feedback and encourage contextually appropriate behavior
- Establishes a continuum of response strategies to provide specific feedback and encourage contextually appropriate behavior

Leader In Me, also approved by The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), is a supplementary resource available in the elementary school. Leader In Me is research-based, teacher-informed, and classroom-tested to promote the social-emotional development, safety, and well-being of children from Early Learning through Grade 4. The *Zones of Regulation,* a systematic, cognitive behavioral approach, may also be used to teach self-regulation.

SEL Programming:
- Leader In Me
- Zones of Regulation (specific learners)

Tier I Universal Screeners

Learners in grades K-8 will be universally screened three times per year. Assessments are designed to measure critical skills shown to be strong indicators of learning and performance. Screening results provide a benchmark against local and national criteria, and are one source of information to gauge a learner's level of proficiency.

Table 1: District approved universal screeners by grade-level

Grade	Universal Screener Instrument	Administration Frequency	Category
Kindergarten	KIDS	once/year	SEL & Academic Growth
Kinder-Grade 8	NWEA MAP Reading	three/year	Academic Growth
Kinder-Grade 4	Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System	three/year *Progress Monitoring as necessary	Academic Growth
Kinder-Grade 8	i-Ready Math	three/year	Academic Growth

Table 2: Additional District approved assessments

Grade	Universal Screener Instrument	Administration Frequency	Category
Kinder-4	ACCESS (EL)	once/year	EL Academic Growth
Grade 3-8	IAR ELA & Math	once/year	Academic Attainment

Literacy
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System
- Amplify Unit Assessments
- Grade-Level Standards
- Illinois Assessment of Readiness

Math
- i-Ready Diagnostic Assessment
- i-Ready Math Unit Assessments
- Grade-Level Standards
- Illinois Assessment of Readiness

Social-Emotional Learning
- Attendance (absences and tardies)
- Office Discipline Referrals
- Teacher Recommendations

Benchmarking from the Universal Screeners

The CARE team will review data from the Universal Screeners. The following data points will prompt the CARE team to triangulate data and determine whether a learner may benefit from tiered supports:
- Learners who are below the 20th percentile on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) or i-Ready Diagnostic
- Learners who did not meet grade-level standards on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness
- Learners who are receiving 2's (progressing) in three or more areas on the progress report
- Learners who fall below the 95% threshold for attendance or who have more than 10 absences
- Learners who have 3 or more office referrals resulting in a call home and/or school consequence

Tiers of Intervention

After Fall, Winter, and Spring benchmarking sessions, Gavin Central will apply the decision making rules to identify learners in tiers using established dashboards.

*If a learner is identified as an English Language Learner and meets criteria for Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports additional time, interventions will be provided. These learners can be within the EL program as well as the MTSS program, based on needs.

*If a learner is already in an intervention: include these new data points to their progress monitoring reports to use during the next scheduled CARE team meetings for the learner.

*If a learner is not in an intervention and data indicates s/he needs to be in one, engage in Tier 1 Step #1 of the CARE team process.

*If a learner displays non-academic behaviors where assistance is needed, complete the Central Request for Assistance [Form.](#)

Tier I Intervention

The following criteria should be met prior to initiating a referral to the CARE team.

❏ The learner receives Tier 1 instruction with fidelity.

  *With fidelity means that the instruction was given as intended by the developer (time allotted, frequency, instructional method, correct materials, etc).

 ❏ The learner participated regularly in a classroom intervention implemented with fidelity for approximately six weeks and was progress monitored at least bi-weekly. (Small group instruction 2-3 times/week)

❏ The learner's parents are made aware of the concern, and have been engaged in the support process occuring at the classroom level.

In rare cases a learner may be brought directly to the CARE team. Examples include:

 ❏ A learner moved into the district and is displaying significant needs.

 ❏ A learner is in frequent or constant emotional, mental health, or behavioral crisis that results in injury to self or others.

 ❏ The learner is being considered for an evaluation that would not lead to eligibility for a specific learning disability (e.g. considering other health impairment).

CARE Team Referral/Consideration of Tier II

To submit a referral to the CARE Team, the Gavin Central Request for Assistance form will be used by the teacher. The team will respond by doing the following:

❏ Review the learners' data, to include the progress monitoring data collected by the classroom teacher prior to the referral.

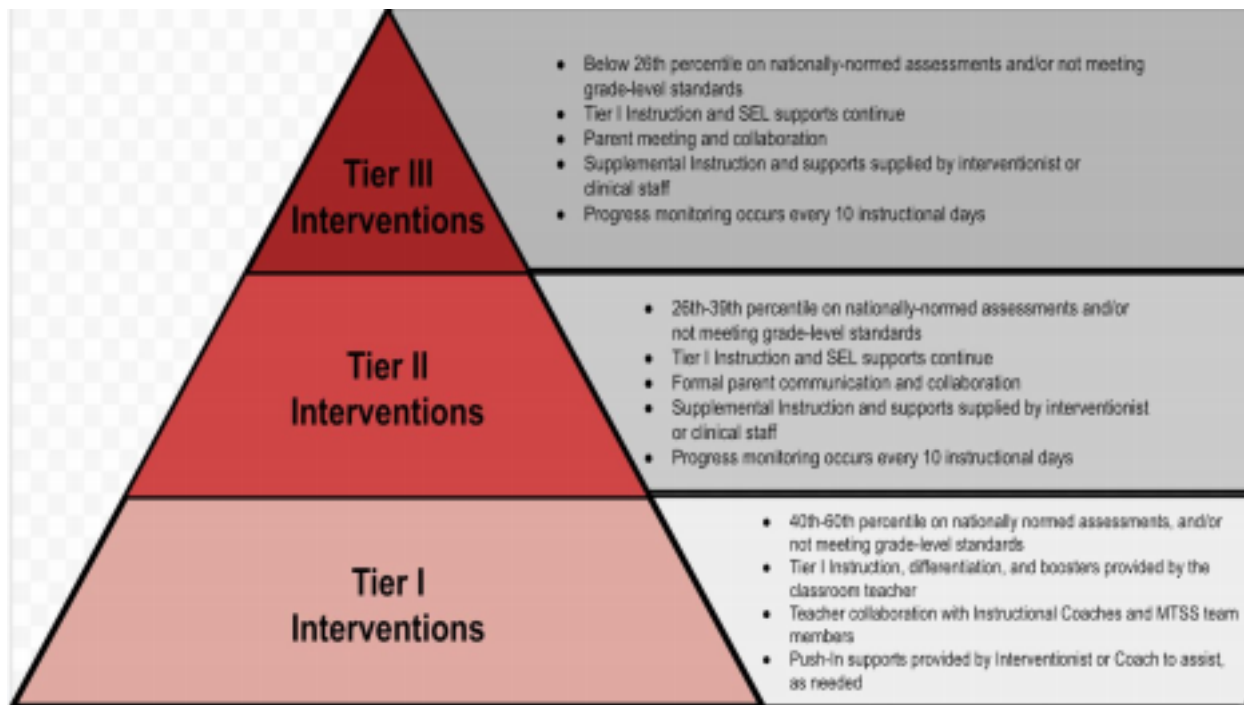❏ Brainstorm ideas for support based on the problem that has been presented.

❏ If recommendation is for the child to continue in Tier I with a revised support, team will assign someone to communicate with/assist classroom teacher.

❏ If recommendation is for the child to bump to a Tier II support, team will determine recommended logistics (who, when, where, how often, monitoring protocols). (Small group instruction 3-5 times/week)

When a child is not making the expected progress in Tier II, the team may recommend the need for consideration of a more intensive Tier III support. In these few cases, the team will:
❏ Contact the parents and gain permission to begin Tier 3 support.
❏ If a more intensive, daily intervention is needed, the team will document the individualized intervention plan.
❏ When in Tier III, follow-up meetings should occur every 6-8 weeks.

Tiered Literacy Supports

Tier I Intervention	Tier II Intervention	Tier III Intervention
Increased frequency of individual and/or small-group instruction using District 37's core instructional programming, *Journeys Reading Program* , *Words Their Way, Heggerty*	Additional Small-Group Word Study Additional Guided Reading Group (core group continues too) Additional skill-specific writing support	Leveled Literacy Intervention Many Tier III Interventions will be specific to the individual learner and are determined based on the progress monitoring data collected from the Tier I and Tier II Interventions.
Gavin 37 Reading Interventions		

Tiered Math Supports

Tier I Intervention	Tier II Intervention	Tier III Intervention
Increased frequency of individual and/or small-group instruction using District 37's core instructional programming, *i-Ready Mathematics Instruction*.	Additional skill/strategy specific small groups provided two to three times per week using *i-Ready Mathematics Instruction* and/or *Number Worlds.*	Skill/strategy specific small group provided daily using *Number Worlds.* Many Tier III Interventions will be specific to the individual learner and are determined based on the progress monitoring data collected from the Tier I and Tier II Interventions.

Tiered Social-Emotional Learning Supports
*CARE Team and Social Worker may be asked to provide ideas and support

Tier I Intervention	Tier II Intervention	Tier III Intervention
Increase and/or differentiation of current instructional SEL curriculum. Crisis Prevention Intervention De-escalation strategies Learner/Teacher Monitoring and Incentive Tool using 4:1 Positives to Correctives Peer Buddy and/ or Facilitated Recess Differentiated Movement Breaks Positive Behavior Expectations and Incentive Plan	Check In/ Check Out Individualized De-escalation Plan OT Movement Break Plan Leader In Me Small Group Instruction Zones of Regulation Small Group Instruction Social Thinking Small Group Instruction	More Intensive Small Group or 1:1 Instruction Many Tier III Interventions will be specific to the individual learner and are determined based on the progress monitoring data collected from the Tier I and Tier II Interventions.

Benchmark and Progress Monitoring Protocols

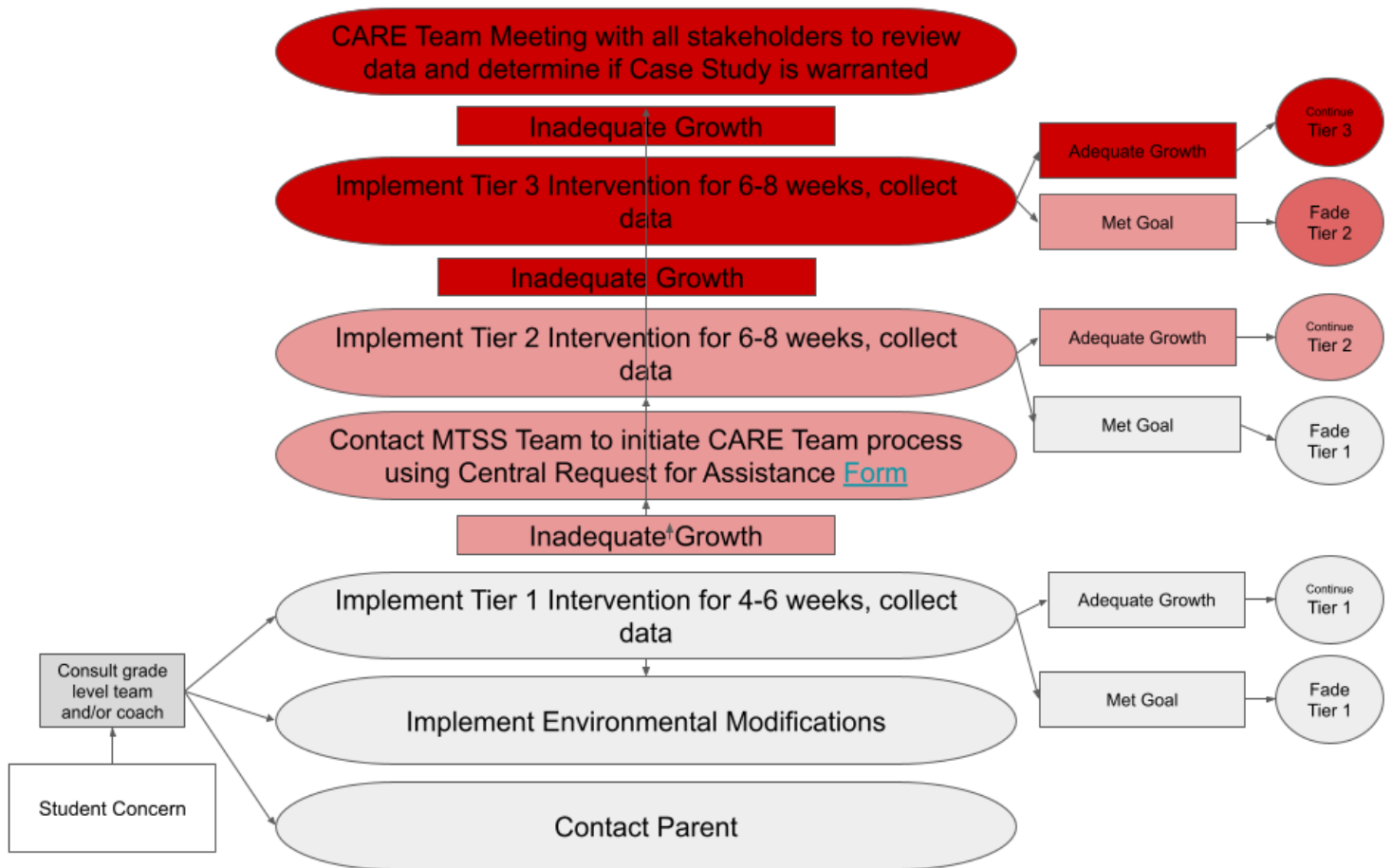*NWEA MAP / i-Ready Math*

What is expected?

Benchmarking for all learners receiving services in their <u>*academic goal area(s)*</u>. At a minimum, expect to do the following:

1. Collect <u>*at grade level*</u> baseline data **three times per year** (fall, winter, and spring).

What accommodations can be provided? NWEA MAP and i-Ready do not provide accommodations, but do allow certain ones for learners on Individual Education Plans. Note that the tests were normed without accommodations; therefore, the learner's score will be compared to norms and benchmarks that do not take the accommodation into account. The allowable accommodations, if written into an IEP, are as follows:

- Text Magnification
- Sound Amplification
- Extra Breaks
- Preferential Seating and Use of Quiet Space
- Proxy Responses
- Extended Time
- Learners with different needs or abilities may take the computer-based assessments on a tablet-type device to facilitate screen optimization.
- Calculators are not generally allowed on any assessment unless the learner is on an IEP with this accommodation.
- Pencil and Paper can be used to help work out the math problem

Initiating RTI/MTSS and Progressing through the Tiers

CARE Team Meeting with all stakeholders to review data and determine if Case Study is warranted

Inadequate Growth

Implement Tier 3 Intervention for 6-8 weeks, collect data

Adequate Growth → Continue Tier 3

Met Goal → Fade Tier 2

Inadequate Growth

Implement Tier 2 Intervention for 6-8 weeks, collect data

Adequate Growth → Continue Tier 2

Contact MTSS Team to initiate CARE Team process using Central Request for Assistance Form

Met Goal → Fade Tier 1

Inadequate Growth

Implement Tier 1 Intervention for 4-6 weeks, collect data

Adequate Growth → Continue Tier 1

Consult grade level team and/or coach

Implement Environmental Modifications

Met Goal → Fade Tier 1

Student Concern

Contact Parent

Decision Making Guidelines:
Tier 3: Below 20th percentile
Tier 2: 21st-39th percentile
Tier 1: 40th-99th percentile