



Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

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Creating & Expanding Innovative Micro-Schools: The High Rockies Community Story

**Julia Weston, Special Services Coordinator
Heritage Heights Academy**

Blue Bell
February 26, 2026 | 1:30-2:30PM
New Schools & Development



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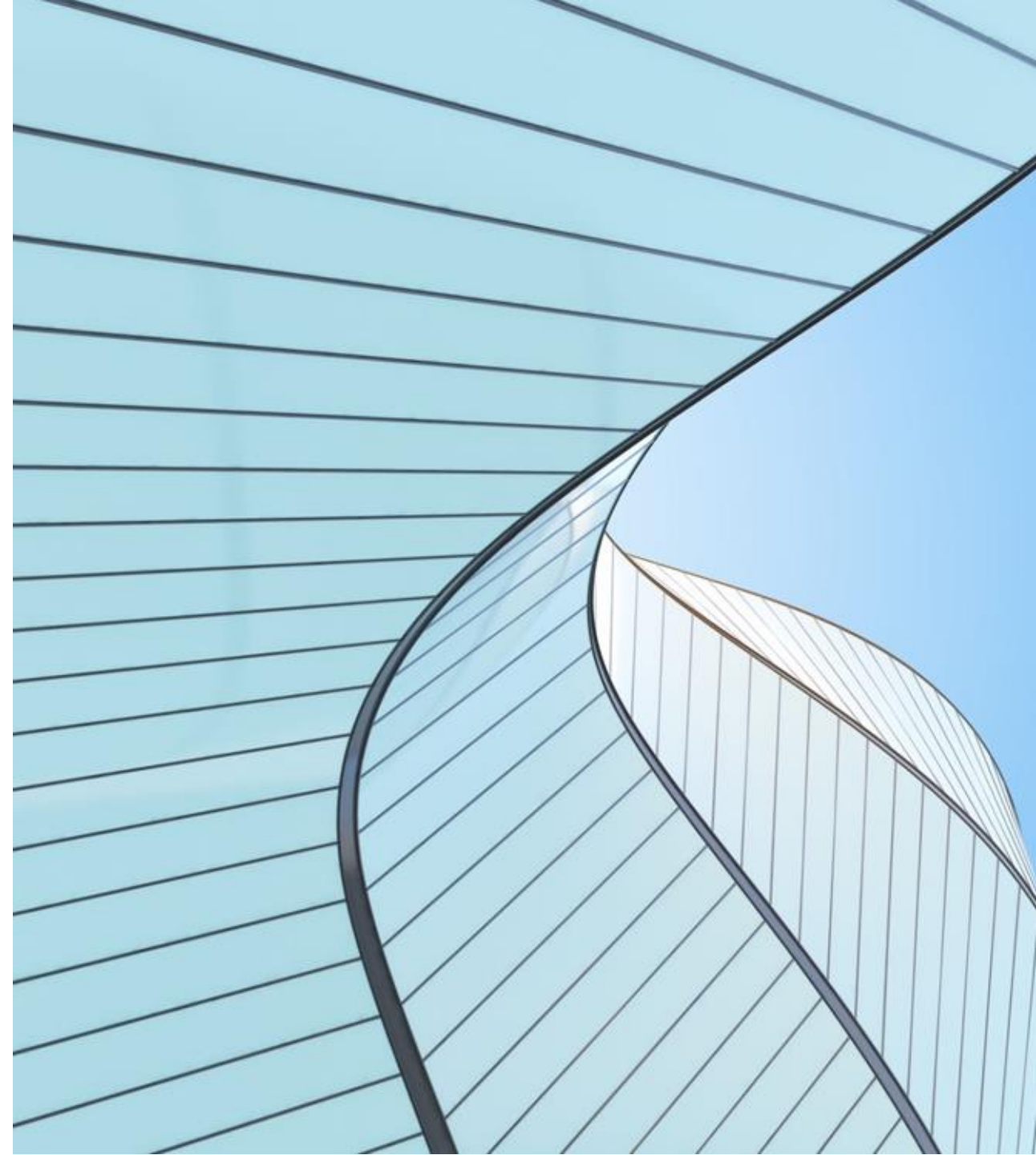
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Heritage Heights Academy
02/13/2026

Building a Sustainable MTSS Framework in a Core Knowledge School

The purpose of this presentation is to build a shared understanding of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and how it functions within a Core Knowledge school. Participants will explore how high quality instruction, targeted interventions, and intentional data use work together to ensure equitable access to learning and improve outcomes for all students.



Objectives for Today



1

Understand how MTSS aligns with the Core Knowledge Approach

2

Identify key components of an effective MTSS framework

3

Learn practical structures for data teams and progress monitoring

4

Explore how to align interventions with classroom instruction

5

Identify next steps for strengthening MTSS in their school



Agenda

- What MTSS is-and What it is not
- MTSS and Equity

- MTSS + Core Knowledge Alignment

- Implantation and next steps



- Tiered Supports Overview

- Data Teams and Decision Making

- Progress Monitoring and Next Steps

SPOTLIGHT



Julia Weston

Student Services Coordinator

Hi, I'm Julia Weston, Student Services Coordinator at Heritage Heights Academy. I was born and raised in Alaska, and after earning my Bachelors in Early Childhood/Elementary Education from the University of Wyoming and my Master's in Special Education, I began my teaching career in Arkansas before teaching in New Mexico, New Jersey, and Colorado. I'm now in my ninth year at HHA. I'm passionate about creating sustainable MTSS systems for schools across the region to better serve students, and I love supporting teachers with evidence-based practices.

In addition to my work at HHA, I lead **MTSS Consulting Solutions**, where I help schools and districts design, implement, and sustain effective MTSS frameworks. My vision is to empower schools to build strong, scalable systems that support every student academically, behaviorally, and socially, ensuring equitable access to high-quality instruction and interventions.

I'm married with three daughters, a dedicated gym rat and strength athlete, and I love staying active through running, exploring the mountains, camping, hiking, boating, water skiing, four-wheeling, and snowmobiling.

What is MTSS?

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a comprehensive, schoolwide framework designed to ensure all students receive the academic and behavioral support they need to succeed. MTSS integrates high-quality core instruction, targeted interventions, and ongoing progress monitoring to address student needs proactively. The system is organized into multiple tiers: **Tier 1** provides core instruction for all students, **Tier 2** offers targeted small-group supports for students who need additional help, and **Tier 3** delivers intensive, individualized interventions for students with the greatest needs. Decisions within MTSS are driven by data rather than assumptions, ensuring that supports are equitable, timely, and aligned with classroom instruction. By connecting leadership, systems, and instruction, MTSS promotes student growth, closes learning gaps, and strengthens schoolwide consistency and effectiveness.

Discussion Prompt:
Where do we currently see gaps in student support?

Targeted Interventions: Some students who need Tier 2 or Tier 3 support are not consistently identified or scheduled for interventions.

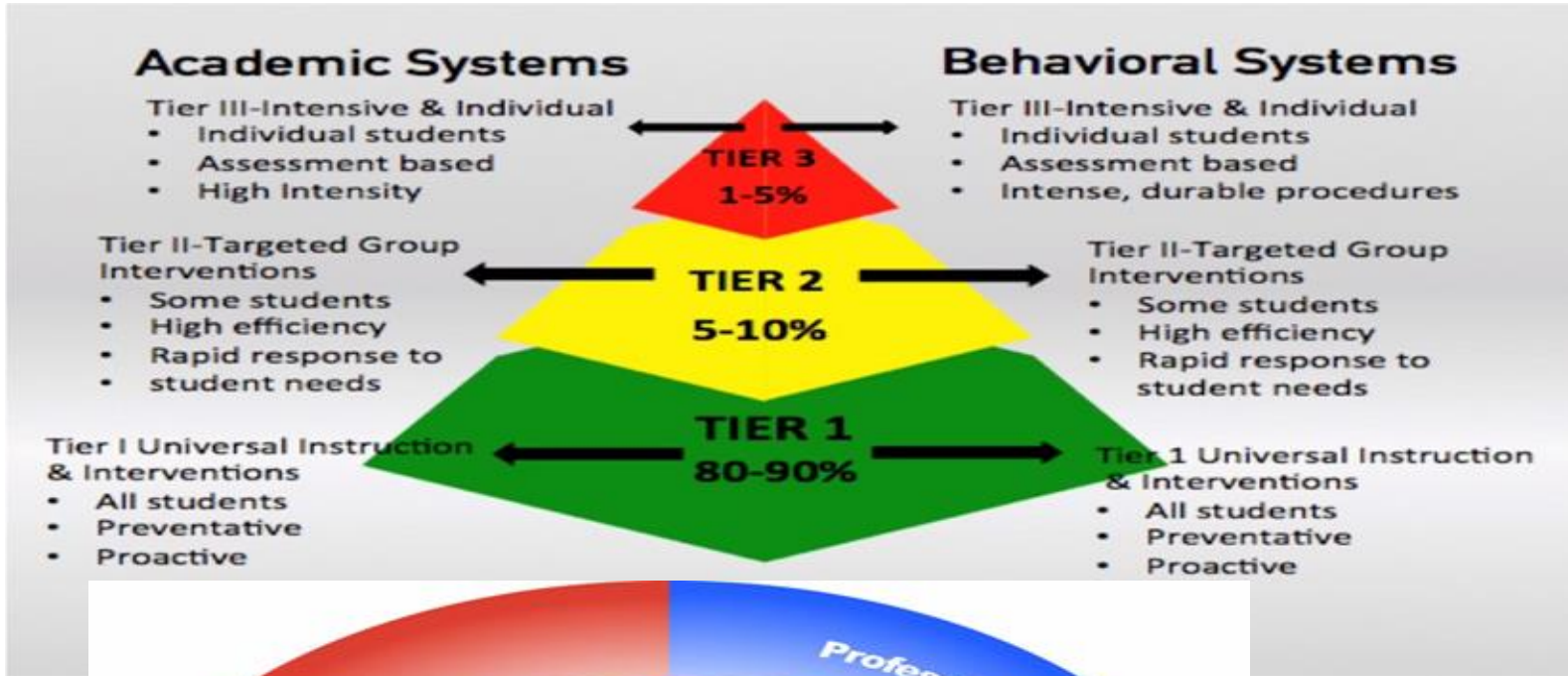
Progress Monitoring: Data collection and review are not always consistent across grade levels, making it difficult to track student growth in real time.

Alignment with Core Instruction: Some interventions are not fully aligned with the Core Knowledge curriculum, which can cause students to miss grade-level content.

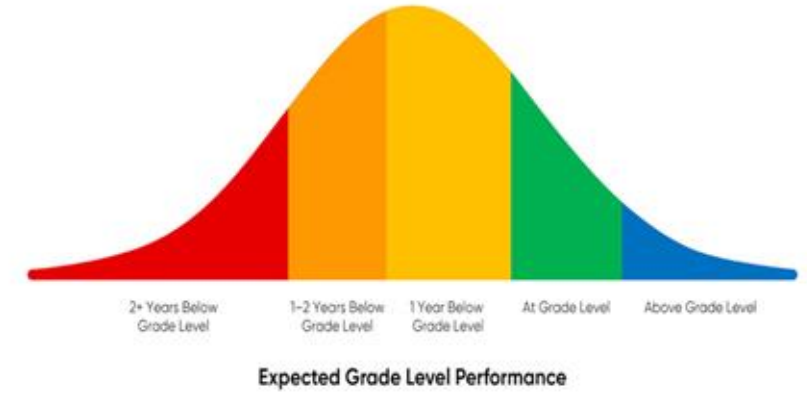
Access & Equity: Certain student groups—such as English learners or students with disabilities—may not receive equitable access to small-group or intensive supports.

Staffing and Scheduling: Limited interventionists or overlapping schedules sometimes prevent students from receiving the recommended frequency and duration of support.

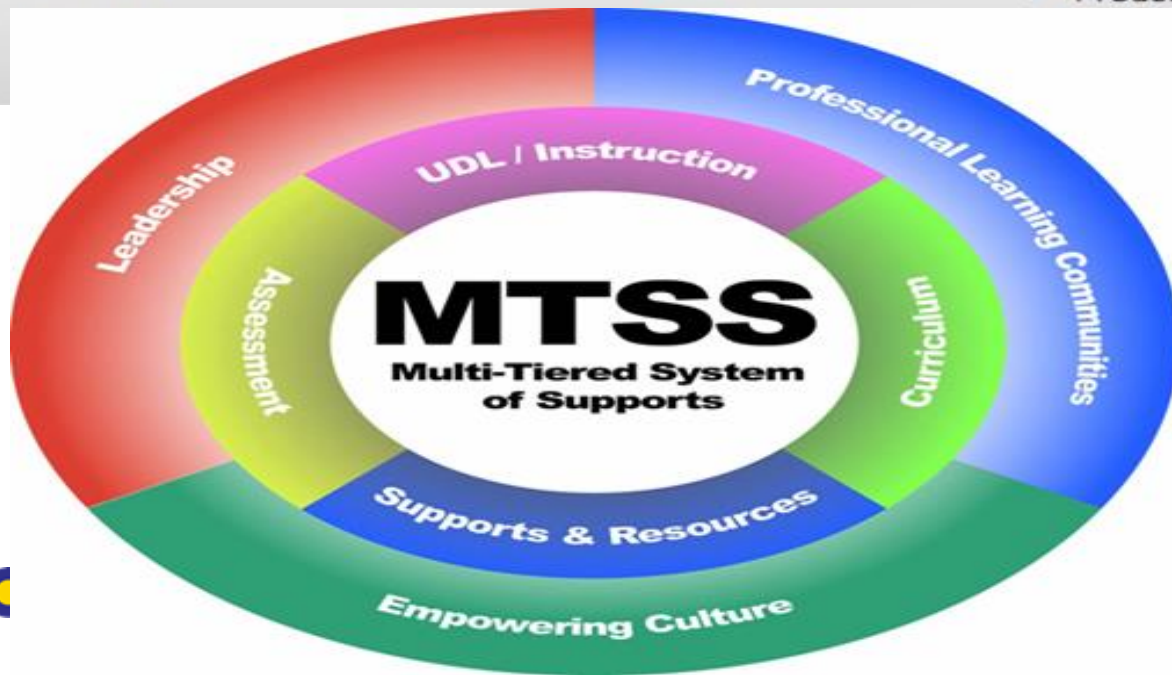
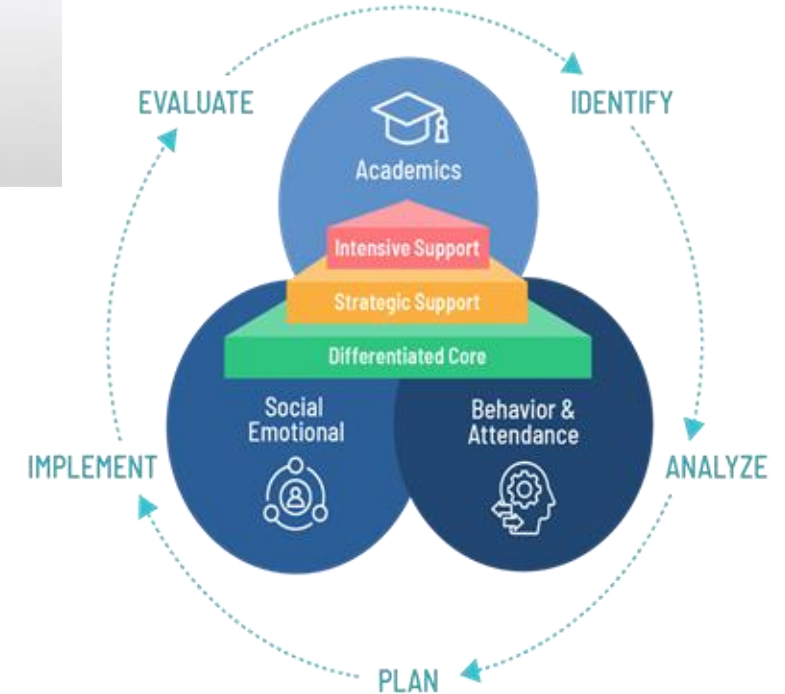
Different Ways to Look at the MTSS Pyramid



Multi-Tiered System of Supports Functional Model



The MTSS Model



Why MTSS Matters

- Supports ALL Learners, not just those who struggle
 - Reduces learning gaps early
 - Promotes consistency and clarity for staff
- Creates equitable access to instruction and support
- Strengthens instructional outcomes in literacy and math

“MTSS promotes equity by ensuring that every student receives timely, data-informed supports tailored to their individual needs while maintaining access to rigorous, grade-level instruction.”



Moving Through the 3 Tiers of MTSS



MTSS Framework Overview

Tier 1- Core Instruction

- High quality, content-rich instruction for all
- Universal screening and formative assessment
- Differentiation within the classroom

Tier 1 Instruction Example:

In a 3rd-grade Core Knowledge literacy lesson, the teacher delivers a daily reading block for all students. During this time:

- The teacher explicitly teaches domain-specific vocabulary from the current Core Knowledge unit.
- Students participate in shared and guided reading, practicing comprehension strategies together.
- The class engages in whole-group discussions to deepen understanding of the text.
- Formative checks (exit tickets, quick quizzes, or oral questioning) are used to gauge understanding.
- Differentiation occurs within the classroom—students work in partners or small groups to reinforce concepts—but all students access grade-level content.

Tier 1: Core Knowledge Instruction

For ALL Students



Core Literacy & Math Block



MTSS Implementation Examples

Tier 1 (All Students) – Core Knowledge Instruction

After a unit assessment, the teacher notices several students struggled with domain vocabulary but mastered comprehension.

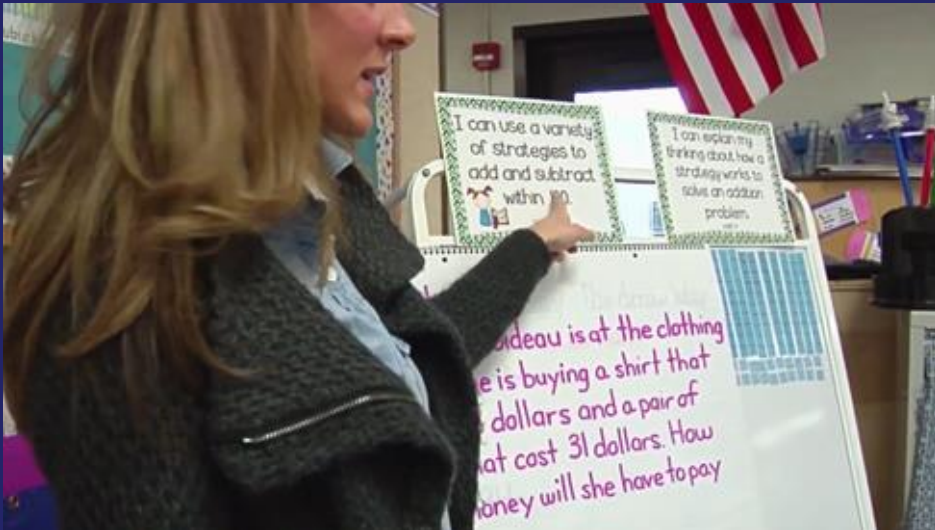
A 3rd-grade teacher delivers the Core Knowledge literacy block using explicit instruction, shared reading, and vocabulary from the domain.

Exit tickets and weekly quizzes are used to check understanding.

Teachers provide in-class differentiation (partner work, scaffolds, visuals) while all students engage in grade-level content.



Video Example of Tier 1 Classroom Instruction



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBqwf2rqeTo>



Tier 2- Target Supports

2 Tier 2: Targeted Small Group Instruction

- Addresses specific skill gaps for 5–15% of students
- Added to, not a replacement for, core instruction



Small Groups Targeted Instruction

Added to, not a replacement for, core instruction.

- Small Group, specific skill interventions
- Based on data from screenings and classroom performance.
- Progress monitoring regularly
- Time limited with a clear entry and exit

Tier 2 Instruction Example:

A small group of 4 students in 2nd grade is identified as struggling with decoding and fluency based on universal screening data. During the Tier 2 intervention block:

- The interventionist provides explicit, targeted phonics instruction aligned with the Core Knowledge literacy domain.
- Students practice decoding patterns and word lists in a small group (3–5 students).
- Instruction occurs 4 times per week for 20–30 minutes, supplementing the core classroom instruction.
- Progress monitoring is conducted weekly to track skill growth and adjust instruction as needed.

Example: A small group meets for targeted decoding practice tied to words from the current Core Knowledge domain.

Students receive 20–30 minutes of small-group intervention 3–4 times per week.

Interventions focus on specific skills (phonics, fluency, computation, writing structure).

Instruction aligns with Core Knowledge content so students continue accessing the core curriculum.



Video Example of Tier 2 Classroom Instruction



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYY5qQCQ9tg>

Tier 3- Intensive Supports

“Tier 3 is where instruction meets individual need with focus, frequency, and fidelity.”

01

Individualized interventions

One-on-one phonics instruction for students struggling with letter-sound correspondence

Customized manipulatives or visual supports for abstract concepts

02

Increased frequency and duration

One-on-one, 30–45 min, daily

Individual behavior coaching, 30 min, 3–4×/week

03

Ongoing Progress Monitoring

Weekly fluency/comprehension checks; adjust instruction as needed

Daily/weekly logs of target behaviors; modify supports based on data

04

May Involve collaboration with special service providers

- Administration
- Speech/Language
- OT/PT
- Academic Specialists



Tier 3 Instruction Example:

A 3rd-grade student continues to struggle with reading fluency and decoding despite Tier 2 support. During Tier 3 intervention:

- **The student receives one-on-one instruction with an interventionist.**
- **Lessons focus on intensive, individualized skill work, such as phonemic awareness, decoding strategies, and fluency drills.**
- **Instruction occurs daily for 30–45 minutes in addition to core classroom lessons.**
- **Progress monitoring is conducted weekly, with data reviewed by the MTSS team to guide adjustments.**
- **Interventions are tailored specifically to the student's needs, and strategies are updated based on response to instruction.**



Tier 3 provides highly intensive, individualized support to ensure students can access grade-level instruction and make meaningful growth.

Tier 3 (Few Students) – Intensive Individualized Support

Example:

A student receives one-on-one reading intervention focused on phonemic awareness and decoding, with weekly data reviewed by the MTSS team.

Students receive daily, longer-duration interventions (30–45 minutes).

Instruction is individualized and highly structured.

Progress is monitored weekly to guide instructional changes.

Data Teams in Action

- Grade-level teams meet every 4–6 weeks.
- Teams review universal screening, progress monitoring, and classroom data.
- Decisions are made about intervention placement, adjustments, or exit.

Example:

Data shows a student responding well to Tier 2 math support, so the team reduces frequency and monitors continued



Video Example of Tier 3 Classroom Instruction



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvBpKov7FQ4>



A Student Journey Through MTSS

Tier 1: Core Knowledge Instruction

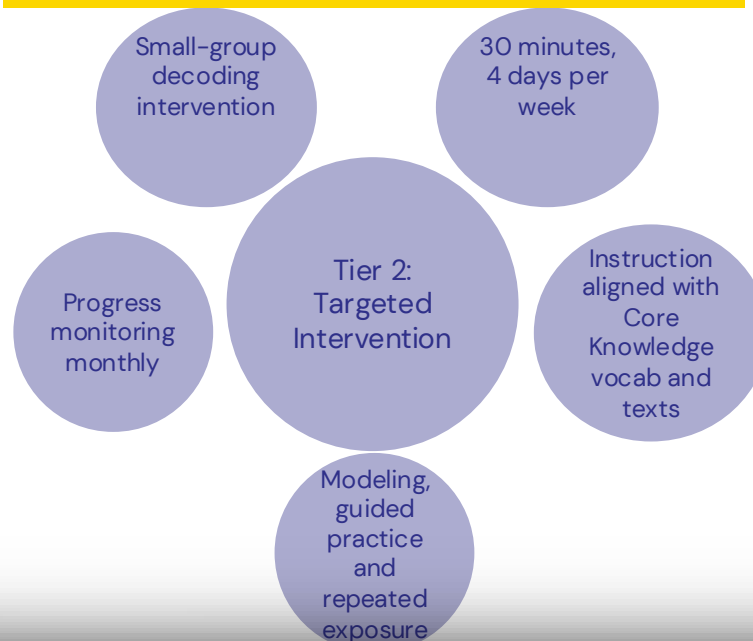
Maria is a 2nd-grade student receiving daily Core Knowledge literacy instruction. She participates in whole-group lessons, engages in domain-based discussions, and completes classroom assessments. Universal screening data shows Maria is slightly below benchmark in decoding, though she demonstrates strong listening comprehension and content knowledge.

Action:

Her teacher provides in-class supports (modeling, guided practice, and repeated exposure to domain vocabulary) and monitors progress.

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions

After six weeks, progress-monitoring data shows Maria has not made sufficient growth in decoding. The data team places her in Tier 2 intervention.



Tier 3: Intensive Support

When data shows limited response, Maria transitions to Tier 3.

- Daily 1:1 intervention (45 minutes)
- Intensive phonemic awareness and decoding
- Weekly progress monitoring

Transition & Maintenance

As Maria shows growth, supports are gradually reduced. She transitions back to Tier 2, then exits intervention while continuing strong Tier 1 Core Knowledge instruction.

Tier 2 is flexible and layered—students may receive more than one targeted intervention based on data, while remaining fully engaged in Core Knowledge instruction.



Explanation:

Data teams are collaborative groups that use student data to drive decisions about instruction and interventions. They ensure supports are targeted, timely, and effective, and that MTSS moves from theory to practice. By reviewing universal screening results, progress monitoring, and classroom performance, data teams identify students who need additional support, select interventions, and adjust instruction based on evidence.

- A 3rd-grade data team meets weekly to review reading fluency scores from CBMs.
- They notice two students are not making expected progress in Tier 2 intervention groups.
- The team decides to increase the intervention frequency for one student and switch strategies for the other, while continuing to monitor weekly.
- They document the changes and share updates with classroom teachers to ensure consistency.



Data Teams– The Engine of MTSS

“Effective data teams make decisions visible, intentional, and student-centered.”

What Data Teams Do??

- Review Data
- Identify Students
- Select Interventions
- Adjust Instruction
- Monitor Progress
- Collaborate



Data teams review student data, identify needs, select interventions, monitor progress, and adjust instruction. They ensure supports are **targeted, timely, and effective**, keeping MTSS responsive and data-driven.

Who's at the Table?

- Classroom Teachers
- Interventionists: MTSS Coordinator(s)
- Student Services Coordinator / Administrator
- Special Education Staff (if applicable):



Classroom teachers, interventionists, MTSS coordinators, administrators, special education staff, and other specialists collaborate to review data and make **timely, data-driven decisions** to support student learning.

Progress Monitoring Systems & Tools

Purpose:

Progress monitoring tracks how students respond to instruction and interventions, ensuring supports are effective and adjusted as needed. It is an ongoing, data-driven process that guides MTSS decisions.

Curriculum-Based Measures (CBMs):

Quick, frequent assessments in reading, math, or writing to track skill growth.

Formative Assessments:

Classroom-level checks like quizzes, exit tickets, or observations.

Intervention-Specific Data:

Intervention-specific data measures a student's progress on the exact skill targeted in intervention, showing whether the intervention is working and guiding next steps.

Is the student responding to the support provided?

Behavioral Tracking Tools

Frequency counts, rating scales, check-in/check-out logs, or behavior tracking apps.

Digital Platforms: Programs like i-Ready, Star Assessments, or Accelerated Reader that provide regular data on student performance.

Consistent progress monitoring ensures interventions are responsive, evidence-based, and aligned with student needs.



Selecting Research- and Evidence-Based Interventions

Effective interventions are chosen to address specific student needs while supporting core instruction. Using research- and evidence-based strategies ensures that interventions are proven to improve outcomes.

Targeted: Focus on a specific skill or gap identified through data

Aligned: Matches classroom instruction and Core Knowledge standards

Evidence-Based: Supported by research demonstrating effectiveness

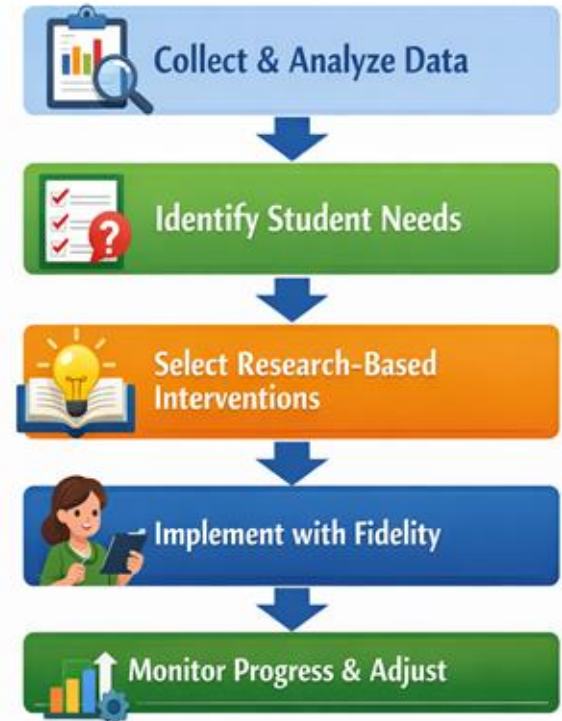
Fidelity: Delivered as intended with consistency

Progress-Monitored: Regularly tracked and adjusted based on student response

Selecting interventions carefully ensures that every student receives high-quality, effective support that addresses their unique learning needs.

Data drives every step — from identifying student needs to selecting interventions and adjusting instruction for maximum impact.

MTSS Intervention Process



Data drives each step, from identifying needs to adjusting for impact.

MTSS and Core Knowledge Alignment

Core Knowledge Emphasizes:

- ➔ Coherent, content rich instruction
- ➔ Vertical Alignment
- ➔ Shared academic language

MTSS Strengthens this by:

- ➔ Protecting Tier 1 instruction
- ➔ Providing targeted supports without removing core content
- ➔ Using data to ensure mastery



Implementation of MTSS in a Core Knowledge School

MTSS ensures all students receive tiered, evidence-based supports while keeping access to Core Knowledge rich, sequenced curriculum. Tier 1 delivers high-quality instruction for all, while Tier 2 and Tier 3 provide targeted or intensive support. Data teams and progress monitoring ensure interventions are responsive, equitable, and effective, helping schools close learning gaps and maintain academic rigor.

built into the school day- Not Added On

MTSS works best when it's

Tier 1 – Core Knowledge
Instruction (All Students)

Tier 2 – Targeted Supports
(Some Students)

Tier 3 – Intensive Supports (Few
Students)

High-quality, content-rich instruction for everyone

Small-group interventions for students struggling with specific skills

Individualized, one-on-one interventions for students with significant needs

Provides the sequenced, rigorous foundation of Core Knowledge

Aligned with Core Knowledge content so students don't miss grade-level learning

Focused on skill gaps while maintaining access to core instruction

MTSS Roles & Leadership Structure



**Student Services
Coordinator
Leadership &
Oversight**

- Sets vision and expectations
- Ensures equity, compliance, and alignment
- Oversees MTSS and student services



**MTSS
Coordinator(s)
Systems &
Coordination**

- Facilitate data teams
- Coordinate Tier 1–3 supports
- Monitor progress and fidelity



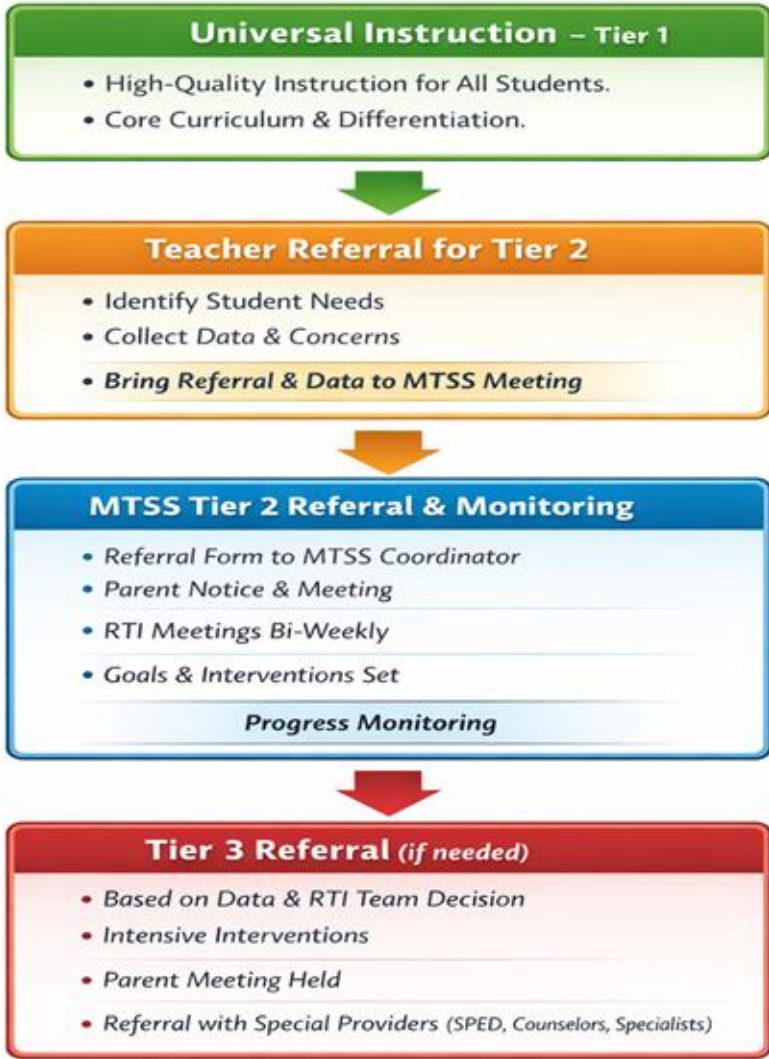
**Interventionist(s)
Direct Instruction**

- Deliver Tier 2 & Tier 3 interventions
- Collect progress-monitoring data
- Collaborate with classroom teachers

Flow Chart of MTSS at Heritage Heights Academy



MTSS Process Flow

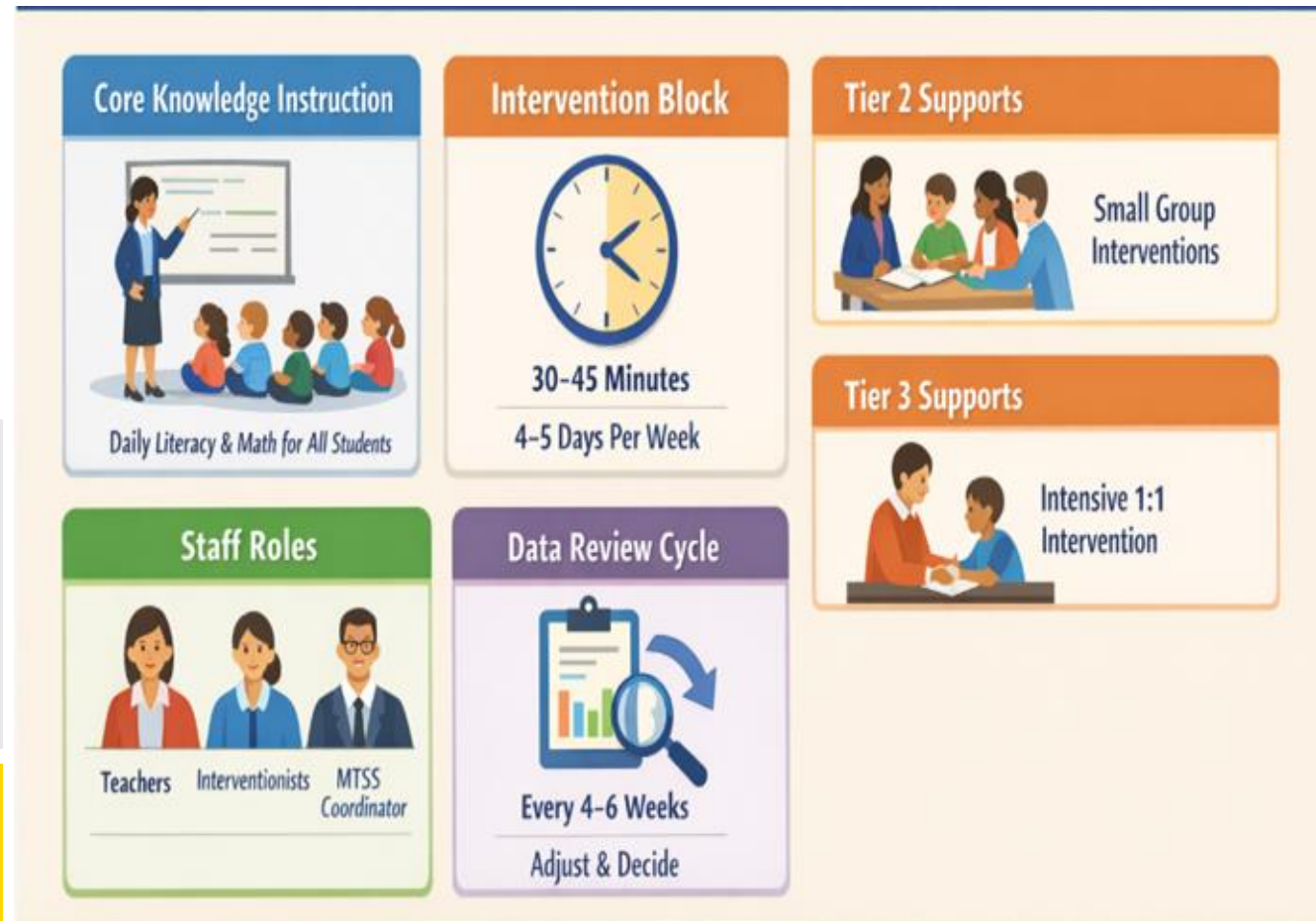


Scheduling & Structure Example

Students receive support without missing Core Knowledge instruction.

Roles are clearly defined (teachers teach Tier 1, interventionists support Tier 2/3, MTSS coordinator oversees fidelity)

Intervention blocks are built into the master schedule.



Reflection and Action Planning

Wrap-Up Questions?

How does MTSS strengthen, not replace, high-quality Core Knowledge instruction?

How do our current practices promote equity and access for all learners?

What is one MTSS strength at our school?

What is one area for growth?

How consistently are MTSS structures implemented across grade levels and classrooms?

MTSS Consulting Solutions, LLC

Thank you for learning with me!

For questions, MTSS program development, implementation, training and coaching services reach out:



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