



What Special Educators Should Know About MnMTSS

For MASE October 29, 2021

Who Is Here

- Today's Presenters
 - Jean Duffy, Ed.E.— Minnesota Department of Education, MnMTSS Coordinator
 - Kim Gibbons, Ph.D. -- Wisconsin Minnesota Comprehensive Center 10, Co-Director
 - Rob Richardson, Ph.D.— Wisconsin Minnesota Comprehensive Center 10, Writing Team Facilitator
- Today's Participants

Standup-Handup-Giveone-Getone

- From your experience,
 - What is going right with multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) in Mn?
 - What is needed to take MTSS to the next level in Mn?

Goals for Today:

- Provide an overview of MnMTSS project
 - Definition, Introduction, Framework
 - Implementation Roadmap
 - Relationship to SpEd: Conformity to recent CEC position statements on MTSS
- Listen to your feedback
 - What are the implications for special educators?
 - What opportunities can be leveraged?
 - What should be taken into consideration as we role this out?

Today's Agenda: 4 Quirries

- Why?
 - Context, background, and motivation
- How?
 - Scope, methodology and infrastructure
- What?
 - Content of MnMTSS
- Implications?
 - What MnMTSS has to do with Mn special education

Topic 1: Why?

Background and motivation for MnMTSS

Ten Minnesota Commitments to Equity

1. **Prioritize equity.**
2. **Start from within.**
3. **Measure what matters.**
4. **Go local.**
5. **Follow the money.**
6. **Start early.**
7. **Monitor implementation of standards.**
8. **Value people.**
9. **Improve conditions for learning.**
10. **Give students options.**



Defining the Context: Minnesota Before COVID-19

- Black students are **6.2 times more likely** than White students to be suspended (Granger, Waldman, & Eads, 2018).
- Minnesota's students of color (BIPOC) are frequently **required to take remedial courses in college** which are financially costly but do not result in credits toward college graduation (Minnesota Collective for Educational Equity, 2020).
- Minnesota **ranks close to last for graduation of students** with disabilities, and last among states for graduation rates of Black students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2018).

Defining the Context: During COVID-19

- In March of 2020, COVID-19 upended classrooms across the country while the pandemic's devastating effects were being felt in our nation's economy and loss of life.
- COVID-19's impacts have unevenly fallen, and preliminary data indicate that they appear to be deepening disparities in educational opportunity and achievement, many of them generations in the making.

If “every **SYSTEM** is perfectly designed to get the results it gets” (IHI & Batalden, 2015), then the **SYSTEM** that created these results needs to be changed.

Why and What?

~A framework for providing high-quality, research-based instruction and intervention to meet the needs of every student, using data to guide educational decisions to improve academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes (Burns et al., 2016).

~MTSS [frequently known as Response to Intervention (RtI)] has been found to have an exceptionally large effect size on student achievement (1.29 standard deviations; Hattie, 2018).

~MTSS is a data-based, continuous improvement framework that can be used for resource allocation and can be overlaid across curriculum content areas and educational contexts (McCart & Miller, 2019).

~MTSS **systems** are becoming increasingly common across the United States and are associated with efficient use of resources and positive student outcomes (Jimmerson, Burns, & VanDerheyden, 2016; McIntosh &

NEW Minnesota Multi-tiered System of Support

- CCSSO/CASEL Grant to build upon existing work and develop statewide MTSS guidance that supports the whole child
 - Work began in Summer 2020 and continues...
 - Technical assistance from the federally funded Wisconsin-Minnesota Comprehensive Center (WMCC) located in the University of Minnesota's Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI).

Topic 2: How?

The Scope, Methodology, and Infrastructure of the Project

What will be included in MDE Guidance on MnMTSS?

Completed: Phase I

- MnMTSS Definition
- MnMTSS Glossary *
- MnMTSS Framework

In Progress: Phase II

- Roadmap for Implementation
- **MnMTSS Professional Learning and Development Guidebook:** A description of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be acquired or enhanced in the routine operation of MnMTSS in schools and related community agencies.

Upcoming MDE Guidance on MnMTSS

Spring 2022: Phase II Continued

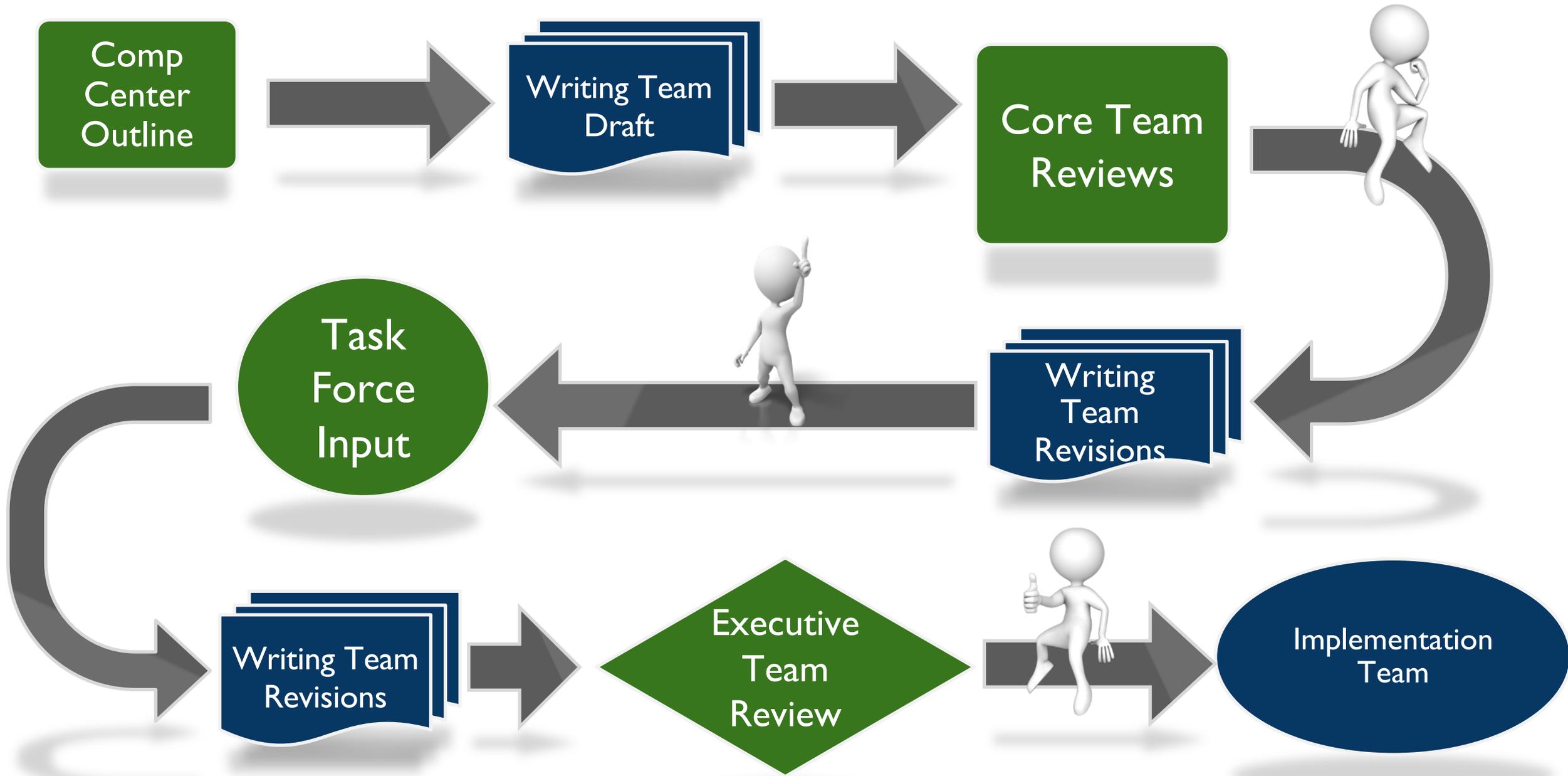
- **MnMTSS Teamwork Guidebook:** A description of teams and teaming operating at district, school, and community agency levels including procedures, routines, and forms that can be used to operate MnMTSS.
- **MnMTSS Policy Analysis Guidebook:** A description of how schools and related community agencies can examine and align policies and procedures to support implementation and operation of MnMTSS.

Summer 2022: Phase III

- **MnMTSS at Work:** Descriptions of exemplar districts, schools, and related community agencies operating MnMTSS and the effects on students, educators, and communities.

Fall 2022: Phase IV

- **MnMTSS Data Management Systems:** A description of data definitions, data quality standards, routine and customized report options that support the operation of MnMTSS.
- **MnMTSS Program Evaluation Guide:** A description of principles, measures, and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of MnMTSS.



Guidance Document Development Process

Wisconsin Minnesota Comprehensive Center (WMCC)

Comp Center Team:

- Alan Coulter
- Kim Gibbons
- Daniel Knewitz
- Rob Richardson



MnMTSS Writing Team

- **Dennis Duffy:** MDE School Support Division
- **Jenny Wazalawik:** MDE Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment
- **Jean Duffy:** MDE MnMTSS Coordinator
- **Sarah Sirna:** Regional Centers of Excellence
- **Kim Gibbon:** WMCC
- **Rob Richardson:** WMCC
- **Alan Coulter:** WMCC
- **Dan Knewitz:** WMCC

MnMTSS Core Team

- **Bobbie Burnham:** Assistant Commissioner and Executive Sponsor
- **Jean Duffy:** MDE MnMTSS Coordinator
- **Toni Cox:** Regional Centers of Excellence
- **Greg Keith, Dennis Duffy:** MDE School Support Division
- **Jenny Wazalawik, Penny Houtz:** MDE Academic Standards, Instruction...
- **Heather Hirsch:** MDE School Climate Center
- **Danielle Hayden:** MDE Early Learning Services Division
- **Robyn Widley, Ellen Nacik:** MDE Special Education Division
- **Kim Gibbons, Rob Richardson, Alan Coulter, Dan Knewitz:** WMCC
- **Angela Mansfield, Kendra Olson:** COMPASS

Equity Centered MTSS Task Force: Organizations Represented

- Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD)
- Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR)
- Educators from several districts in Minnesota
- Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota (LDA of Minnesota)
- Regional Centers of Excellence
- Minnesota Children's Cabinet
- Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE)
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Minnesota Assessment Group (MAG)
- Minnesota Children's Cabinet
- Minnesota Department of Education
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Minnesota School Counselors Association (MSCA)
- Minnesota School Psychologists Association (MSPA)
- Minnesota School Social Workers Association (MSSWA)

MnMTSS Implementation Team

- **John Gimpl, Dennis Duffy, Greg Keith, Heather Hirsch:** School Support Division
- **Penny Houtz, Kendra Olson, Judi Iverson, Jenny Wazalawik, Leigh Nida:**
- **Michelle Nisk:** Education Access and Opportunity
- **TBD:** Early Learning Services
- **Jane Harstad:** Office of Indian Education
- **TBD:** Libraries School Health and Extended Learning
- **Vicki Weinberg, Ellen Nacik, Daniel Torres, Rebecca Nies:** Special Education
- **TBD:** Regional Centers of Excellence

Four Key Actions for SEA Teams to Support Implementation of MTSS (SISEP)

- **Provide Guidance**
 - Information, direction, policies, and procedures that advise implementation
 - Beneficial when SEA clearly defines MTSS
 - Adapted at the local level to fit values and norms
- **Standardize Resources and Materials**
 - Training materials, implementation guides, worked examples of action plans
 - Training events: on-site and virtual
- **Coordinate and Align Policies and Services**
 - Coordination of communication and expectations
 - Aligned to other mandates and services (grants and programs within MDE)
- **Invest in Local Implementation Capacity**
 - Assisting districts and regions with the development of teams
 - Leveraging existing state structures (RCEs, MSC, Ed Districts, Special Education Cooperatives)

Reason for MTSS failure

- Leadership fails to adequately plan and support implementation
- Stakeholders are not fully engaged early and often in planning and monitoring levels of implementation
- Underestimation of the level of readiness, basic competencies and extent of coaching and support required
- Inadequate intensity of instruction and intervention are delivered and do not produce the intended results
- Data systems are not integrated and designed to meet educator needs

MTSS (and ELA) Wilder Survey in Minnesota

1. Leadership and staff turnover
 - a. Priority decrease
 - b. Unrelenting demand for training and coaching
2. Use of data for decision making to improve core instruction is at lower levels of implementation than it is for improving supplemental and intensive supports

MnMTSS Project Goals

- **Enhance Capacity within MDE**
 - Build awareness and professional development as needed
 - Update MTSS references in programs, grants, documents, policies, funding streams - alignment and clarity of communication to schools/districts
- **Develop MnMTSS Guidance**
 - In progress
- **Support Statewide Implementation and Sustainability of MnMTSS in Districts and Schools in Minnesota**
 - Hire Coordinator, provide guidance, long range plan, common language, awarded grants

Revision to all guidance materials will come through:

- District and school users in COMPASS
- District and school recipients of the MnMTSS Grants
- National MTSS and Equity specialists
- RCE, MSC, MDE staff and other users
- Task Force
- Usability studies (Roadmap)

Topic 3: What?

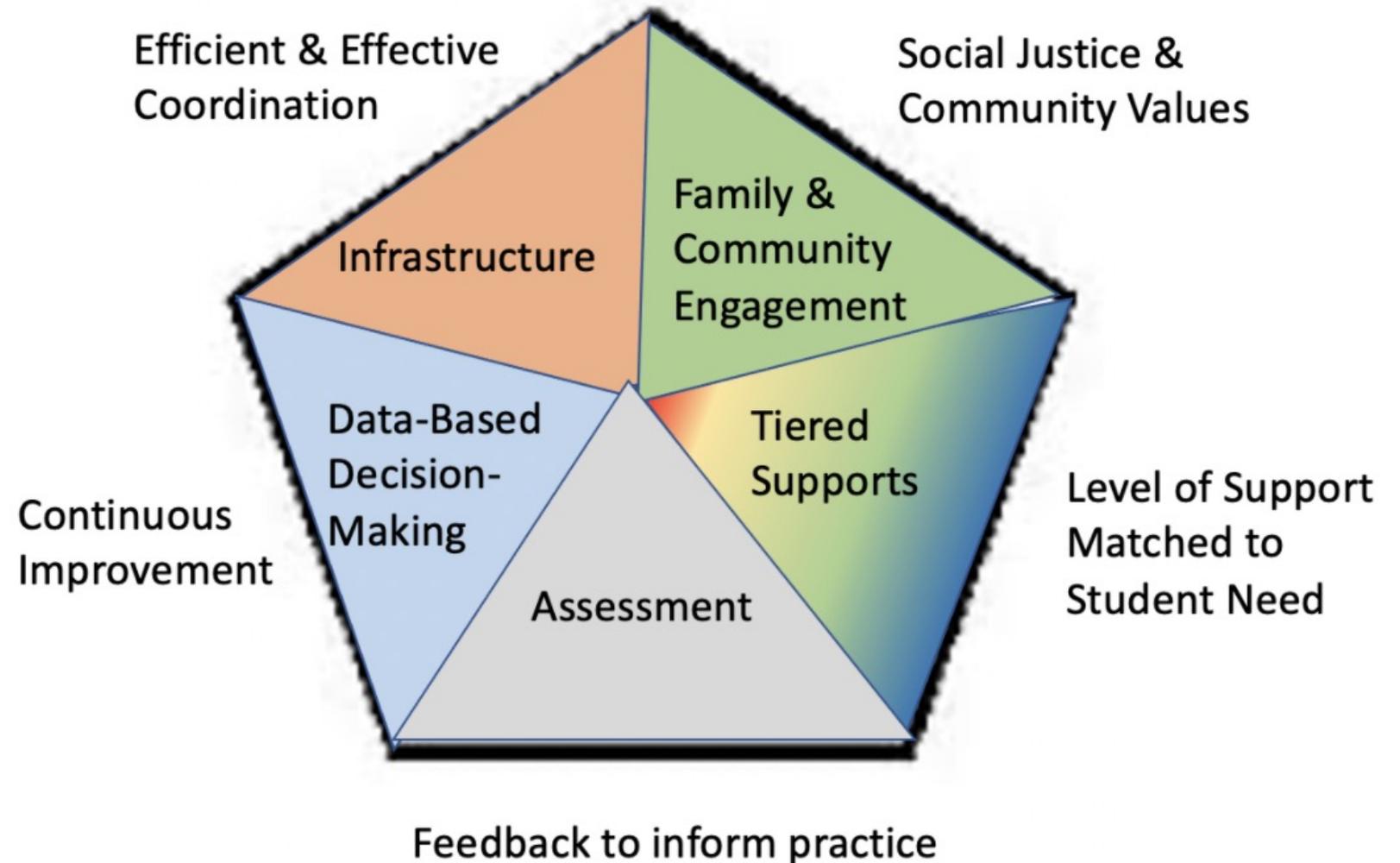
Content of MnMTSS

MnMTSS Definition

MnMTSS is a **systemic, continuous improvement** framework for ensuring positive social, emotional, behavioral, developmental, and academic outcomes for every student. MnMTSS provides access to layered tiers of **culturally and linguistically responsive**, evidence-based practices and relies on the understanding and belief that **every** student can learn and thrive. In addition, it engages an **anti-racist approach** to examining policies and practices and **ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunity**.

MnMTSS Framework

Organizational structures and operating processes to promote equity and positive outcomes



MnMTSS Roadmap

- Begins with district and school self-assessment on the five components and subcomponents.
 - This will have three levels – beginning with the most important subcomponents.
 - Will have three versions (district, EC/elementary, high school)
 - Out for 'expert' review currently
- Supports planning for improved implementation of the framework.
- Will meet the needs of districts and schools new to MTSS and those who have done this work for a long time.

Optimum
Implementation
MnMTSS

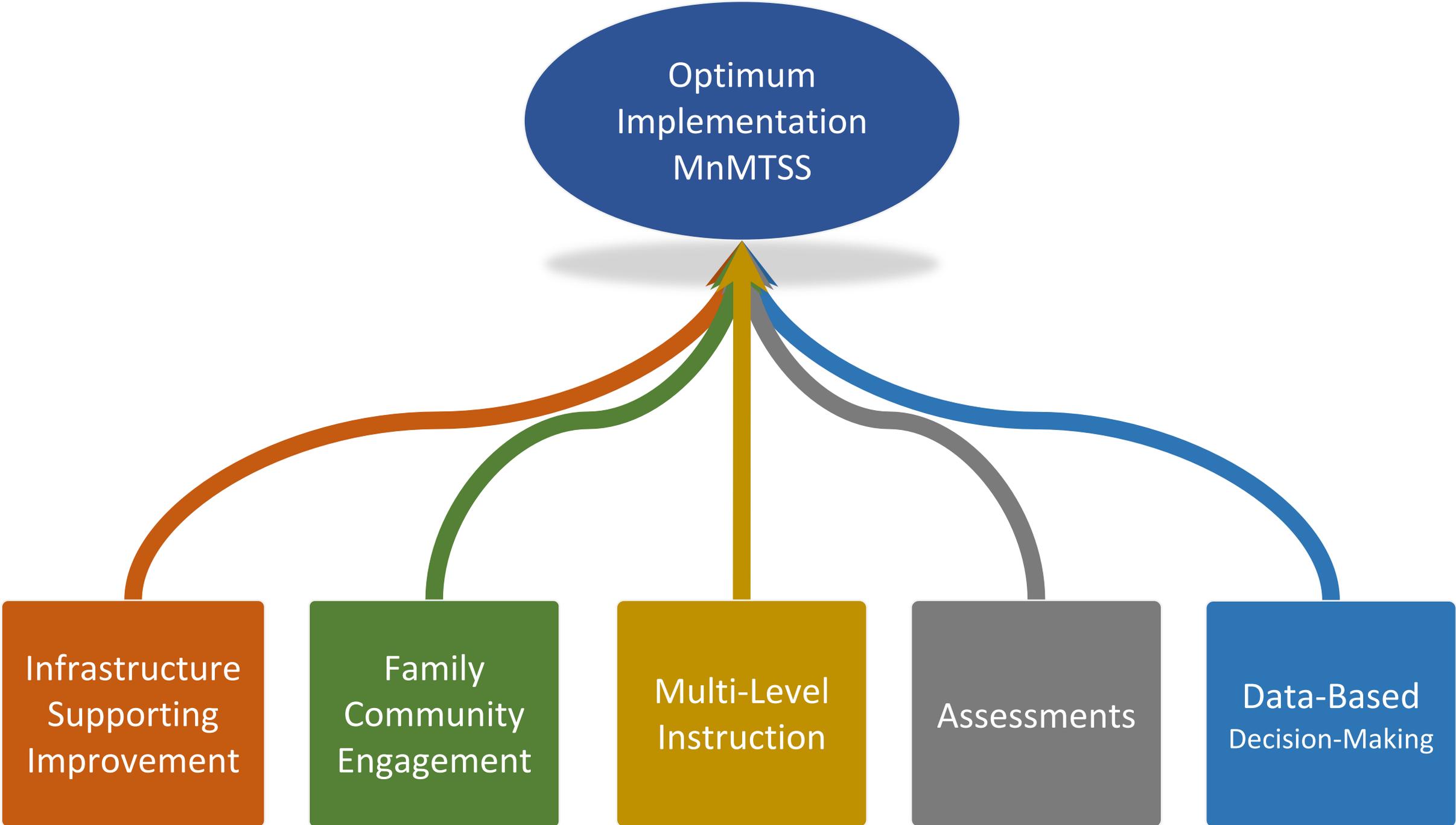
Infrastructure
Supporting
Improvement

Family
Community
Engagement

Multi-Level
Instruction

Assessments

Data-Based
Decision-Making



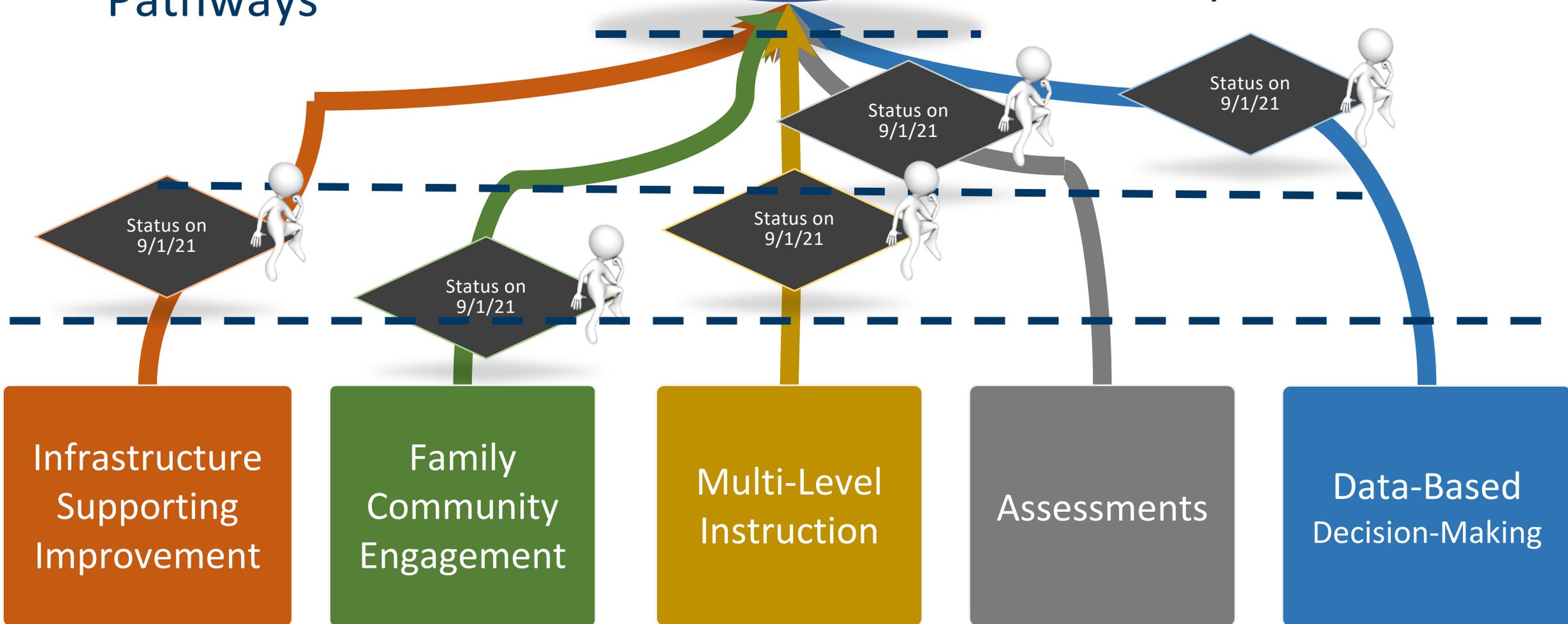
Self Evaluation of MnMTSS Implementation (SEMI)



One District's Progress on 5 Interdependent Pathways

MnMTSS Self-Assessment Progress Towards Full Implementation

Optimum Implementation MnMTSS



Connection to COMPASS?

Literacy



Math



School Climate and
Mental Health



MnMTSS

Student Success

Data and Assessment Literacy

Evidence-Based Practices



CEC Position Statements on MTSS

Draft 9/27/2021

Multi-Tiered System of Supports: The Unique Role of Special Education and Special Educators

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) recognizes the positive influence that a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework can have on improving the education of all children, the roles of special educators, and the special education system, by providing a structure to organize practices based on data, evidence and research. MTSS is a districtwide and schoolwide prevention framework that uses data to continuously improve instructional practices, create and maintain positive learning environments, and select and implement evidence based curriculum and practices to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all students. The MTSS framework includes leadership by a team of knowledgeable and skilled stakeholders across disciplines at both the district and school levels.

Educators of students with exceptionalities play an integral role in the MTSS framework. To that end, CEC believes that any MTSS framework must include nonnegotiable guarantees related to exceptional education and the key role of exceptional educators. It is the position of CEC that an MTSS framework must include the following components:

Alignment Summary

CEC Position Statement on MTSS (2021 Draft under review)	MnMTSS
Leadership: SpEducators involved across tiers in district and building leadership teams. Families of SWD involved in decision-making	X
Comprehensive Assessment System: Technically adequate universal screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic assessment	X
Data-Based Decision Making: Screening, progress monitoring and diagnostic assessment to match student to intervention, data-based intensification, families as partners.	X
Multi-tiered prevention and problem-solving process: services of various levels of intensity matched to student need	X
Data-Based Evaluation: Evaluation of academic and social emotional programs and practices, fidelity measures,	X
Professional Knowledge and Skills: Training professionals for the roles and responsibilities that they are assigned and making sure that all have appropriate expertise.	X
Commitment to Program Development: Improving systems based on data.	X
Resources: Providing educators with adequate resources to be successful.	X

CEC Position on Potential Mis-Uses of MTSS

- MTSS should not be used to delay evaluation for eligibility
- Progress monitoring data should be used as part of special education evaluation but shouldn't be the sole piece for special education

MnMTSS and SpEd Eligibility

- MnMTSS is designed to be an organizing framework for educational decision-making
- However, it **does not** presently contain any guidance surrounding special education eligibility decisions. That would come with guidance from MDE special education rules and regulations.

Topic 4: Implications

What does MnMTSS mean for Special Educators?



Reflection and Feedback

Break out groups

- In small groups discuss:
 1. What opportunities do you see in the MnMTSS role out if we get this right?
 2. What are the primary obstacles getting this in place in your school district?
 3. What role(s) would you like to see your special education program play in MnMTSS?



Thank you!

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