Building MTSS from the Ground (Tier1) Up: Practical Strategies and Impact Findings, Including a Significant Reduction of Discipline Referrals

Marcellina Melvin, MA, LPC, and Linda M. Rodriguez, Ed.D. | November 7, 2019
Overview

- Review the Alphabet of School Frameworks
- Core Components of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Practical Strategies
- Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)
THE ALPHABET OF SCHOOL FRAMEWORKS
The Alphabet of School Frameworks

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

- **Tier 3: Intensive**
  - Few: Individual evidence-based therapeutic interventions, crisis response, re-entry plan
  - 3-5%

- **Tier 2: Selected**
  - Some: Evidence-based classroom, small group, and individual interventions

- **Tier 1: Universal**
  - All: School-wide culturally responsive systems of support, social and emotional learning opportunities, behavioral health screening, referral process
  - 75-85%

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports**
  - 10-20%

- **Foundational Elements**
  - Strong and engaged leadership; evidence-based practices; data-driven problem solving and decision making; and student, family, and community engagement.
**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

A decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based, academic, and behavioral practices for improving important outcomes for all students.

PBIS focuses on prevention, not punishment.
Response to Intervention (RtI) is an instructional approach or framework that identifies students who have gaps in learning or behavior, and immediately provides them with increasingly intense levels of interventions until the gaps are closed.

RtI may have different meanings to general educators and special educators.
Response to Intervention (RtI)

The goal of an RtI framework is to intervene early – when students begin to struggle with learning – to prevent them from falling behind and developing learning difficulties. RtI has these key elements:

- Reliable, valid assessments administered to all students;
- Explicit, differentiated instruction for all students;
- Research-based interventions to target specific students’ needs;
- Ongoing professional development to support teachers and administrators.
Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)

ISF brings together MTSS and school mental health services in a framework that enhances all approaches, extends the array of mental health supports for students and families, and creates an overarching framework for implementing evidence-based practices through collaboration between schools and community providers.
CORE COMPONENTS OF MTSS
The Core Components of MTSS

- Team-Driven Shared Leadership
- Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Family, School, and Community Partnering
- Layered Continuum of Supports
- Evidenced-Based Practices
Team-Driven Shared Leadership

Teaming structures and expectations distribute responsibility and shared decision making across school, district, and community members (e.g., students, families, generalists, specialists, district administrators) to enhance coordination of training, coaching, resources, and implementation and evaluation of adult activities.
Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making

Stakeholder teams use a consistent process that is applied at multiple levels to analyze and evaluate relevant information for planning and implementing strategies that support and sustain improved students and system outcomes.
Families, schools, and communities collaborate as active partners in improving learner, classroom, school, district, and state outcomes.

- Welcoming All Families
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community
- Dual Capacity Building
Layered Continuum of Supports

A layered continuum of supports ensures that every student receives equitable academic and behavioral support that is culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate, through layers that increase in intensity from universal (every student) to targeted (some students) and intensive (few students).
Evidence-based practices are approaches to instruction, intervention, and assessment that have been proven to be effective through research, indicating improved outcomes for students.
LESSONS LEARNED
**Large Urban School: Pasadena ISD**

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>52,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Schools</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability Rating</td>
<td>“Met Standard”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficient (LEP)/Bilingual</td>
<td>30.3%/28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rate</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout Rate</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**District Goals:**

- Improve school safety
- Increase academic achievement
- Promote safe school culture/climate
- Support social, emotional, behavioral, physical, mental health of staff and students

**Cultural Diversity**

- Hispanic 82.9%
- African American 7.5%
- White 5.7%
- Asian 3.1%
- All Others 0.8%
A Historic View

1–5% — Tier 3: Individual Interventions

5–10% — Tier 2: Small Group Interventions

80–90% — Tier 1: Universal Interventions

1 Behavior Response Coordinator
Safe/Civil Foundations for Schoolwide PBIS
Safe/Civil CHAMPS for Classroom PBIS
SEL: Conscious Discipline Pre-K – 6th

3 Behavior Specialists
Tier 1: Universal Supports and Interventions

1. All students receive high quality, evidence-based instruction.

2. All students are expected to achieve at high levels and receive strong instruction.

3. All students benefit from school-wide common expectations for academics and behavior.

EXAMPLES:
- Bullying Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Drug Prevention
- Trauma-Informed Practices
- Mindfulness
- School-wide PBIS
- Classroom PBIS (CHAMPs)
- Social Emotional Learning
- Restorative Practices
Lessons Learned for Tier 1

• Obtain buy-in from school board, superintendent, and district cabinet using policy, research, and district data.

• Identify or hire at least one district staff to coordinate school behavioral health systems, training, and services.

• Identify district-level power players and establish a District Leadership Team (DLT).

• Complete the PBIS Blueprint and Assessment to help identify strengths and needs, then set short- and long-term goals – including identifying funding sources – with the DLT. [https://www.pbis.org/blueprint/implementation-blueprint](https://www.pbis.org/blueprint/implementation-blueprint)
More Lessons Learned for Tier 1

• Establish campus Tier 1 teams who will drive school-wide implementation.

• Train Tier 1 teams on PBIS 12 Critical Elements and evidence-based programs (EBP).

• Select which EBPs the district will implement in all schools – schoolwide and in classrooms.

• Determine a Tier 1 systems fidelity measure and what data sources will be regularly reviewed to determine effectiveness.

https://www.pbis.org/blueprintguidestools/blueprint/evaluation-blueprint
PISD Tier 1: Universal Supports and Interventions

- Bully Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Drug Use Prevention
- Schoolwide PBIS
- Classroom PBIS: CHAMPs
- Social Emotional Learning (Pre-K – 6)
- Restorative Practice Circles (7 – 12)
- School Safety Drills + Active Shooter
- See Something/Say Something Program
- Counselors + Nurses at Every School
Tier 2: Targeted Supports and Interventions

1. Support students who are at risk for more serious behavioral problems.

2. Provide coping techniques and new skills to address behaviors.

3. Supports and interventions are meant to be efficient, accessed quickly, and able to facilitate quick improvement.

**EXAMPLES:**

- Small groups
  - Social Skills
  - Trauma Intervention
  - Emotional Regulation
- Behavior contracts
- Check In Check Out (CICO)
- Check & Connect or Mentoring
- Jobs
Lessons Learned for Tier 2

- Establish campus Tier 2 teams who will drive small group intervention implementation.
- Train Tier 2 teams on systems and evidence-based small group interventions.
- Select which EBPs the district will implement in all schools, based on student data and needs.
- Determine a Tier 2 systems fidelity measure and what data sources will be regularly reviewed to determine effectiveness.
PISD Tier 2: Targeted Supports and Interventions

- CICO, Mentoring, Groups (Social Skills, Trauma, Self-Regulation), RPC to Repair Harm, Threat Assessments, Referrals, District Behavioral Specialists
- Bully Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Drug Use Prevention
- Schoolwide PBIS
- Classroom PBIS: CHAMPS
- Social Emotional Learning (Pre-K–6)
- Restorative Practice Circles (7–12)
- School Safety Drills + Active Shooter
- See Something/Say Something Program
- Counselors + Nurses at Every School
Tier 3: Intensive Supports and Interventions

1. For students who need intensive interventions to succeed.

2. Most effective when positive universal and target support systems are in place.

3. Move beyond addressing large gaps in academic performance or complex behavioral challenges.

EXAMPLES:
- Functional behavioral assessments
- System of care model
- Individual treatment using evidence-based approaches
- Seamless referral to community-based services
- Telemedicine and telehealth
Lessons Learned for Tier 3

• Establish Tier 3 teams made up of district and campus experts.

• Train Tier 3 teams on systems and evidence-based practices that support individual student interventions and support plans when needed (FBAs, BIPs, Safety Plans, partnerships and communication with outside providers).

• Identify and establish MOU’s with outside providers who are able to provide evidenced based interventions.

• Ensure there is family and student buy-in regarding individual interventions.

• Determine a Tier 3 systems fidelity measure, what time frame, and data sources will be regularly reviewed to determine effectiveness.
PISD Tier 3: Intensive Supports and Interventions

- Bully Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Drug Use Prevention
- Schoolwide PBIS
- Classroom PBIS: CHAMPs
- Social Emotional Learning (Pre-K–6)
- Restorative Practice Circles (7–12)
- School Safety Drills + Active Shooter
- See Something/Say Something Program
- Counselors + Nurses at Every School

CICO, Mentoring, Groups (Social Skills, Trauma, Self-Regulation), RPC to Repair Harm, Threat Assessments, Referrals, District Behavioral Specialists

BIPS, Safety Plans, Referrals, Para Support, Wraparound Services, Re-Entry Circles
PISD: PBIS/MTSS for Behavior

- PBIS, Safety Plans, Referrals, Para Support, Wraparound Services, Re-Entry Circles
- CICO, Mentoring, Groups (Social Skills, Trauma, Self-Regulation), RPC to Repair Harm, Threat Assessments, Referrals, District Behavioral Specialists
- Bully Prevention
- Schoolwide PBIS
- Classroom PBIS: CHAMPs
- Social Emotional Learning (Pre-K–6)
- Restorative Practice Circles (7–12)
- School Safety Drills + Active Shooter
- Bully Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Drug Use Prevention
- See Something/Say Something Program
- Counselors + Nurses at Every School
INTERCONNECTED SYSTEMS FRAMEWORK
Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)

- **Schoolwide PBIS Implementation**: Maintain fidelity to the model.
- **Teaming**: School/community partners collaborate on systems teams.
- **Cross-Training and Planning**: All parties receive professional development, including learning about one another’s systems.
- **Family and Youth Engagement**: Include students and family members in teaming, decision making, interventions, and systems.
- **Schoolwide Data-Based Decision Making**: Decisions are driven by data.
- **Intervention Selection, Implementation, and Progress**: Select evidence-based practices based on need, implement them with fidelity, and monitor outcomes.
PISD’s ISF

Schoolwide PBIS Implementation Fidelity Tools

• Benchmark of Quality for Tier 1
• Tiered Fidelity Inventory for Tiers 2 & 3
• CHAMPs Rubric
• SEL Implementation Rubric for Teachers, Student SEL Survey

Teaming

• District Leadership Team (DLT)
• School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC)
• District Behavioral Response Team and LSSPs (school psychologists)
• Tier 1 Campus Team
• Tier 2 Intervention Team
• Tier 3 Multi-Disciplinary Team of Experts
PISD’s ISF

Cross-Training and Planning
PBIS, CHAMPS, SEL, restorative practices, mental health, trauma-informed care, mindfulness, kinesthetic learning, behavior intervention, safety plans, threat assessments, crisis response, aftermath care, etc.

Family and Youth Engagement
Parents and youth are members of site-based decision-making teams, PBIS teams, SHAC, PTO/PTA, campus and district advisory committees, and ad hoc committees like strategic planning.
PISD’s ISF

Schoolwide Data-Based Decision Making

Data sources include:

• Discipline and attendance reports;
• Pre/post screening measures;
• Referrals from students, parents, and/or staff;
• Grades, reports, and/or surveys from students, staff, parents, and local community service providers/partners.

Intervention Selection, Implementation, and Progress

Select evidence-based practices based on need, implement them with fidelity, and monitor outcomes.
Pasadena ISD Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

A Systems Approach

District Leadership Team (DLT)
PBIS Implementation Blueprint: Self Assessment & Action Planning

Behavior Response Team (BRT)

Advisory Team of District & Service Providers

Tier 3 Multi-Disciplinary Team

Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) for Tier 3

Tier 2 Intervention Assistance Team

Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) for Tier 2

Tier 1 PBIS Team

Benchmark of Quality (BoQ) for Tier 1

Pasadena's School Behavioral Health PBIS Multi-Tiered System of Support
Annual Professional Development Calendar

• Develop district professional development calendars at the same time you schedule academic calendars.

• Coordinate trainings with other departments (curriculum and instruction, special education, counseling, RtI, school safety, police, etc.).

• Partner with other districts and organizations who can provide training your district needs (Education Service Centers, consultants like Kognito, TEA, SAMHSA, etc.).

• Select or develop trainings that are most time efficient and presented in a variety of learning modalities (e-courses, on-line courses, face to face, videos, distance learning, etc.)

• Offer trainings in summer, fall, and spring, when possible.

• Use Title I, II, and IV funds to contract consultants, pay extra duty pay for after hour workshops, and to pay for substitutes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of Training</th>
<th>Topics &amp; Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Conscious Discipline Weeklong Training</td>
<td>PBIS/MTSS Prevention Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>PISD Behavior Management E-Course</td>
<td>PBIS/MTSS Intervention Tier 2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Restorative Circles for Classrooms</td>
<td>Social Emotional Learning (SEL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Restorative Circles for Administrators</td>
<td>Restorative Practices (RP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>YMHFA</td>
<td>Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Tier 2 Systems and Team Training</td>
<td>Trauma Informed Care (TIC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Movement in the Classroom</td>
<td>Grief/Loss Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Suicide Prevention/Threat Assessments</td>
<td>Suicide Prevention/Threat Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>CBITS/Bounce Back On-line Training</td>
<td>Kinesthetic Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Grief/Loss Component Training for Counselors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>School Climate Conference/Tier 1 Team Trng.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>CHAMPS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Suicide Prevention/Threat Assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>YMHFA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>SEL Module Training-Composure/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>SEL Module Training-Empathy/Encouragement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>SEL Module Training-Positive Intent/Choices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>SEL Module Training-Consequences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>YMHFA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Restorative Circles for Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Restorative Chats for Administrators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Trauma Informed Training for Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Movement in the Classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Tier 2 Team Small Group Intervention Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>YMHFA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>CHAMPS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Grief/Loss Training for Staff (Awareness)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Restorative Circles for Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Restorative Circles for Administrators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>SEL for PK/K</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Tier 2 Team Systems Review and Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# PISD District Data Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Discipline Referrals</strong></td>
<td>33,444</td>
<td>30,526</td>
<td>26,197</td>
<td>20,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-school suspensions</strong></td>
<td>24,003</td>
<td>22,141</td>
<td>20,290</td>
<td>16,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Out of school suspensions</strong></td>
<td>5,165</td>
<td>5,093</td>
<td>5,204</td>
<td>3,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Referrals to Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (HCJPD)</strong></td>
<td>795</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Source: PISD’s Mizuni Data Reports; HCJPD Annual Reports*
Mental and Behavioral Health Roadmap and Toolkit for Schools: Project Overview

Background

• While schools are not mental health providers, they’re well positioned to prevent or minimize student’s mental health challenges.

• We have learned that in order for schools to accomplish this they need additional guidance and information.

Purpose: The Roadmap and Toolkit was developed to provides Texas schools and districts with:

– Information on research-driven, evidence-based practices and
– Practical guidance to more effectively assess and address student mental and behavioral health needs.

Format: This document has two sections – a Roadmap and a Toolkit
Roadmap Component

The Roadmap includes:

- Definitions;
- Research;
- Evidence-based practices;
- Issues impacting education and mental health;
- Alignment of education and mental health frameworks;
- Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS); and
- Implementation science.
Toolkit Component

The Toolkit includes practical information to support implementation of school-linked mental and behavioral health programming, with tools that address:

- Funding opportunities;
- State legislation;
- Trauma-informed care in schools;
- Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid;
- Staff self care;
- State and community providers, coalitions, and partnerships; and
- Telemedicine and telehealth.
The Toolkit also includes federal, state, local, and private funding opportunities that support the implementation of school-linked mental and behavioral health programming. Examples of federal funding include:

- U.S. Department of Education (Toolkit, page 93)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (Toolkit, page 101)
- Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) (Toolkit, page 102)
- Department of Justice (DOJ) (Toolkit, page 103)