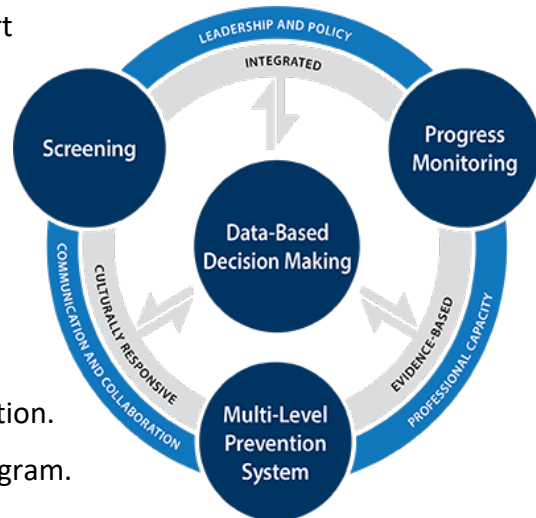


## Tips for Intensifying Instruction at Tier 1

A strong and comprehensive **Tier 1** is an essential part of an effective multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). By considering the [dimensions](#) that are most likely to impact instructional design and delivery, schools can evaluate and **intensify** the core to do the following:

- Meet the needs of a wide range of learners, including students with disabilities.
- Prevent and/or address academic/behavioral deficits that may require more intensive intervention.
- Sustain a healthy schoolwide core curriculum program.



## How can you intensify instruction at Tier 1?

### Increase Strength



- **Ensure** that Tier 1 is designed and delivered using [evidence-based practices](#) shown to improve desired outcomes.
- **Consider** how effective the core program is for students struggling in reading, math, writing, and/or behavior, and for the populations that you serve. Effect sizes above .25 indicate that an evidence-based practice has value in improving outcomes.
- **Supplement** with additional programs and/or materials that address foundational skill development.

### Increase Dosage



- **Build in time** for daily small-group instruction to occur as part of the core blocks for reading, math, and writing. [Research shows](#) that struggling students require 10–30 more practice opportunities.
- **Increase** opportunities for students to respond and receive meaningful [feedback](#).
- **Maximize** engagement by using prompts to elicit student responses, providing respectful redirection, using peer-assisted learning, and offering [tutoring programs](#).



### Consider Alignment

- **Review** unit and lesson plans alongside student assessment data to determine whether and when the instructional focus addresses student skill deficit areas.
- **Differentiate instruction** for students on, above, and/or below grade level by leveraging [centers](#) and [technology](#).
- **Incorporate** instruction in foundational skills from earlier grade-level standards into homogenous small-group instruction, when necessary.



### Support Transfer of Learned Skills

- **Help** students make connections between new and previously learned skills by offering frequent and varied opportunities to practice as well as helping students set and calibrate learning goals.
- **Reinforce** learning across content areas and settings (e.g., counting in gym class).
- **Involve families** in supporting [student learning at home](#).



### Improve Comprehensiveness

- When appropriate, use explicit instruction to overtly teach students new skills and concepts or skills and concepts with which they are struggling.
- Use a [checklist](#) to observe teachers (or have teachers self-observe) to determine the extent to which they are modeling, using simple and direct language, fading support, providing adequate practice and feedback opportunities, and incorporating systematic cumulative review.
- Supplement daily lesson plans to increase the intensity, as needed, by using scripted sample lesson supplements like the NCI [reading](#) and [math](#) resources.



### Enhance Behavioral and/or Academic Support

- **Teach** students self-regulation strategies and social and emotional skills.
- **Minimize** nonproductive behavior by providing “just right” learning opportunities that are not too difficult or too easy.
- **Align** evidence-based academic and behavior supports and strategies such as [respectful redirection](#), to address more complex learning needs.



### Offer Opportunities for Individualization

- Use [screening](#) data to understand which students may be at risk for poor learning outcomes and in greater need of more intensive supports (e.g., small-group instruction) at Tier 1.
- **Collect and understand** [progress monitoring](#) data for all students who may be at risk and/or receiving supplemental intervention.
- **Make regular adjustments** to instruction based on these data to ensure that students are learning what they have been taught as part of ongoing [data-based decision making](#).

### What are recommended next steps?

1. Work as a school leadership team to evaluate your Tier 1: Core Programming using Section 4 of the [Multi-Tiered System of Supports \(MTSS\) Fidelity of Implementation Rubric](#).
2. Examine your schoolwide screening data to determine the strengths and needs of your core program: Are most students responding to Tier 1 instruction within each grade?
3. Develop and implement a plan to improve areas of need.
4. Learn more about NCI's [Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity](#) and use the taxonomy tools to intensify intervention at your school.
5. Contact the [MTSS Center \(www.mtss4success.org\)](#) at the American Institutes for Research for support.

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