



Multi-tiered System of Supports

To: Board of Education – Instruction Work Group
From: Caroline Racine Gilles, Director of MTSS
Date: April 4, 2016
RE: Intervention Strategy Update

I. Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on MMSD's strategy for literacy tiers of support, to highlight a targeted acceleration strategy implemented with intensive elementary schools this year, and to re-cap the major findings from two secondary program reviews along with next steps.

II. Background Information

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) department is working strategically with many departments to help improve overall outcomes for students through a tiered approach to support. Critical to an effective MTSS system is high quality first teaching and a robust, guaranteed and viable curriculum. Efforts must be placed squarely in this arena as the effectiveness of our interventions and supports hinge on the effectiveness of our Tier I. To this end, we have a multi-pronged approach to MTSS implementation. Increasing our capacity to implement and sustain literacy supports and intervention is one focus within the context of larger MTSS implementation. Given our student outcome data, we work in two main areas: prevention and intervention. Our ultimate goal is to prevent skill deficits from occurring in the first place (e.g., catching students before they fail), while simultaneously providing intervention for those students who already have skill deficits. Therefore, our efforts must rest in supplementing our core instruction in the early grades, while having a relentless focus on catching up our middle and high school students. This briefing sheet will detail our strategies and efforts in both areas.

III. Scaling Up : Tiers of Literacy Supports – A Multi-Year Process

Our current achievement data is not a result of the past two or three years, but rather an accumulation of many years where the gap has continued to widen. Therefore, our strategy for intervention must be one for the long term. Below presents where we have been, where we are, and where we are going related to literacy interventions.

School Year 2014-15 ~ Reflective Summary (BOE Update 5/5/15)

- Closing the achievement gap in literacy is about high quality core instruction
- Intervention materials inconsistent across schools
- Disconnection between Tier I and other tiers
- Lack of web-based supplemental core, acceleration, and intervention supports
- Need for additional supports to schools in the areas of data-based decision making and documentation

School Year 2015-16 Current Strategy ~ Core curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

- Consistent guidance around the literacy block across all schools
- Ensure consistent access to intervention materials
- Targeted acceleration strategies for “Intensive Elementary Schools”
 - K-2 Grade Release - Foundational Skills
 - Lexia Core 5 - web-based supplemental core resource
- Program evaluation of Read 180 and System 44 for purpose of informing implementation efforts
- Coaching and fidelity of implementation
- Initial use of district-wide documentation system

School Year 2016-17 Future Strategy ~ Core curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

- Differentiation and intensification of core instruction to meet the needs of all learners (e.g., students who need more challenge and students who need to acquire skills)



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- Using data to determine type of intervention (classwide, small group) needed
- Increase reliable decision making at middle and high school levels for tier 2 and tier 3 interventions
- Consistent use of district documentation system
- Internal use of intervention dashboard to assess effectiveness (growth) of strategies over time
- Guidance to schools around allocation, scheduling, & resources needed to implement interventions
- Guidance to secondary schools around facilitators of effective intervention classes (credit & non-credit bearing)

IV. Highlight: Targeted Acceleration Strategy for Intensive Elementary Schools

Lexia Core5 Big Ideas

- Web-based tool to support foundational skill acquisition
- Supplemental to Core instruction - fits within the literacy block or can be used in addition to this time period
- Promotes home-school collaboration through materials/resources
- Instructional branching - differentiates levels of support after initial placement
- “Assessment without Testing” - increases academic engaged time

How it works

- Students work independently
- Teachers look at progress on a consistent basis (e.g., daily, weekly, biweekly)
- Teachers explicitly teach skills when necessary
- Incorporate independent paper-pencil work (e.g., Lexia Skill Builders) to reinforce generalization and maintenance of newly learned skills

Current Usage

- 13 Intensive schools implementing
- An additional 6 schools purchased out of their own local funding
- When students meet their recommended minutes alone, their risk of being off track at the end of the school year decreases significantly
- Meeting minutes and explicitly teaching skills when students are flagged produces exponential growth
- As of March 1st, percent of students above or on-track for EOY benchmark increased by 31 percentage points and percent of students who were off track decreased by 24 percentage points.
- If we look at all students regardless of meeting minutes, percent of students above or on-track for EOY benchmark increased by 20 percentage points and percent of students who were off track decreased by 19 percentage points.

Feedback from Field

- Increased student engagement with authentic themes from around the world
- Students like the choice of activities
- Not time intensive on the part of teacher - pinpoints student difficulties
- Optimizes independent work time for students- generalization and maintenance with differentiated pencil-paper materials while maximizing time for teachers to plan and deliver small group targeted skill instruction
- Data is easy to understand for staff
- Strong correlation with our own MAP data

V. Program evaluations – Read 180 and System 44

We conducted program reviews of these two secondary reading interventions for the purpose of examining current fidelity as assessed by observation and teacher self-report; and growth-related student outcomes for 2014-15. The Board of Education received these reports in their weekly update on 11/5/15. Below re-caps the major findings related to student outcomes that were previously reported.



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Read 180 Report – Major finding

When looking at our tiered supports, we must remember that our intervention effectiveness hinges on the quality of our core instruction. READ 180 students' reading ability is far below their peers and these students have often not made progress for many years. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration where they are starting, set an ambitious goal, and determine how close they come to meeting that goal. If the majority of the students (group average in this case) are meeting growth-referenced targets, then it can be said that the intervention is having the intended impact. Therefore, we looked at MAP growth targets in relation to number of sessions, and we looked to see if cohorts of students were meeting ambitious goals using the in-program assessments. Overall, 6th, 7th, and 9th grade cohorts met their growth referenced goal indicating effectiveness of intervention.

System 44 – Major Finding

Students who are enrolled in System 44 have reading ability that is far below their peers, as they are still learning how to decode basic words. These students have often made minimal progress for many years. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration where they are starting, set an ambitious goal, and determine how close they come to meeting that goal. Therefore, we looked at MAP growth targets in relation to number of sessions, and we looked to see the percentage of students meeting the goal of 1.5 years gain on the SRI/SPI. Using MAP, we found that 56% of System 44 students in 2014-15 met typical fall to spring growth targets, which is around the district average and represents solid, but not exceptional, improvement. Using the SRI/SPI, we saw that more than half of the students made a year's worth of growth on measures that directly relate to their skill deficits, but only 43% of students met their ambitious goals of 1.5 years of gain. Therefore, given that MAP growth numbers were around the district average and students, on average, showed a year's worth of gain on the SRI/SPI, it is fair to conclude that System 44 participants improved by about the amount that a typical student would improve during an academic year. For students who are many years below expectations for their grade, achieving typical improvement for a year may be something they have never accomplished before. But we also must acknowledge that this pace of improvement does not correspond to gap closing; instead, it corresponds to preventing already huge gaps from worsening further.

Implications/Next Steps

As we continue to focus on high quality core instruction through the application of the Great Teaching cycle (Plan, Teach, Reflect & Adjust), we must also apply this cyclical process to our intervention instruction. At the school level, schools must plan, deliver, and reflect and adjust interventions on a regular basis throughout the school year to ensure that students are making expected progress. At the district level, we provide professional development to help schools plan (match intervention to identified needs), teach (provide guidance on implementing with fidelity), and reflect and adjust on the effectiveness of our interventions over longer periods of time. The purpose of the reports was to understand strengths and opportunities related our two specific middle and high school interventions. This inquiry has allowed us to reflect and adjust our support to schools so as to improve the quality of interventions delivered and data driven decision making, thereby resulting in meaningful achievement for students.

VI. Next Steps for Secondary Interventions

- Secondary Interventions
 - Work at a systems level to help schools understand the multi-dimensional aspects of fidelity through face-to-face and online professional development opportunities with various stakeholder groups, and provide explicit guidance to schools on using data to think through scheduling for student intervention needs. This type of guidance will be provided in the annual Teaching & Learning Guidance documents, which will include scheduling guidance and recommendations for implementing Read 180, System 44, and other interventions/supports.
 - Based on these summary reports, we are offering targeted support to Read 180 and System 44 teachers at the middle school and high school level. This targeted support consists of type and content. Types of targeted support are differentiated professional learning for first year and continuing teachers, voluntary meetings after school, required and optional in-person coaching visits, and online modules/opportunities. The content of targeted support focuses on areas of opportunity identified in these summary reports such as increasing the use of rSkills assessment, Boost & Stretch instruction, Stretch test and software completion rates.



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- Given that System 44 results are not as accelerative as we would like, we will work with schools to ensure that this program is implemented as intended and/or provide alternative ideas about other interventions that may be a better match for student need. Given that this program serves students who do not yet have decoding skills, we are considering the appropriateness of using System 44 in 5th grade and/or other interventions that meet this need. This would allow for identifying and targeting skills gaps prior to entering middle school.