

MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) for Young Children: Driving Change in Early Education

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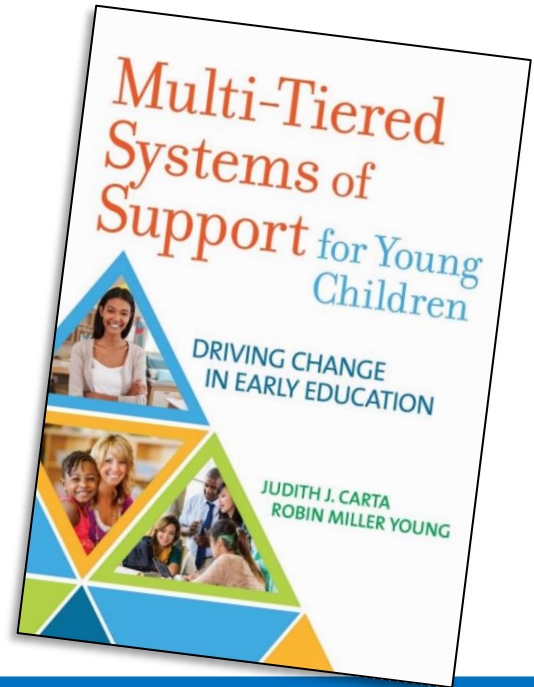
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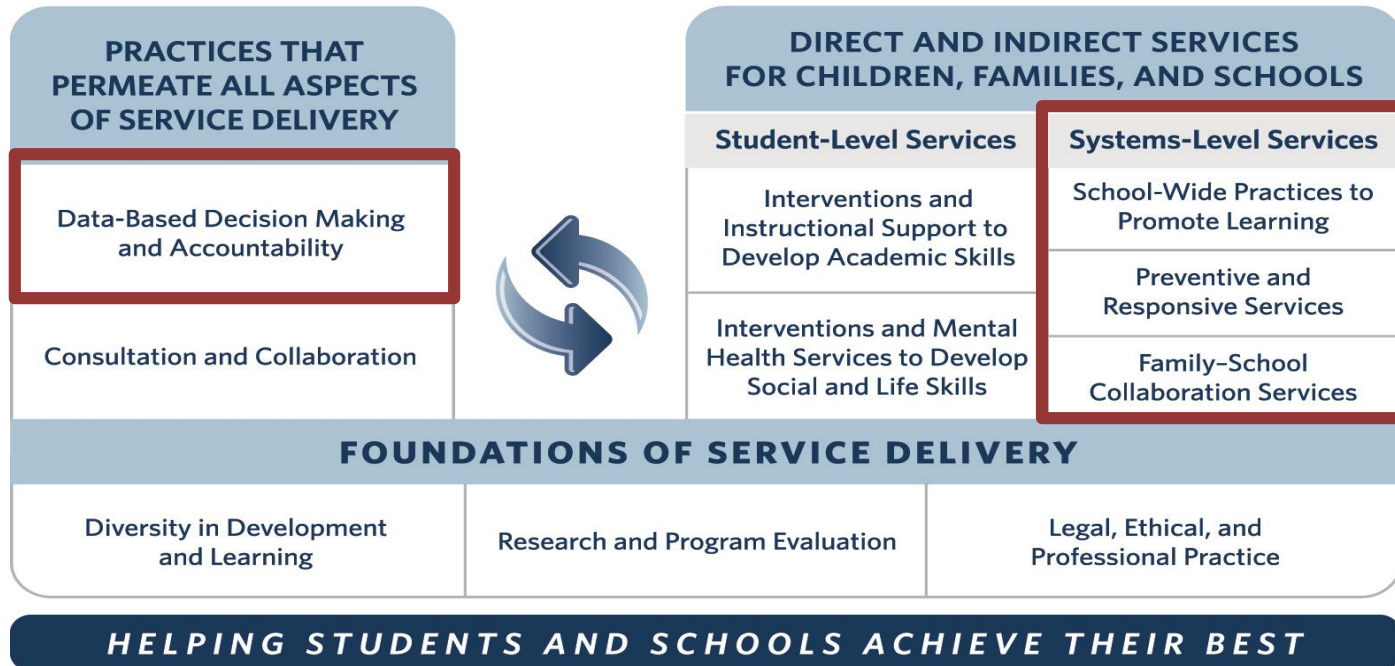
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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Model for Services by School Psychologists



MS 185 MTSS for Young Children: Participant Objectives



Describe MTSS for young children;
how can it meet their diverse needs.



Articulate rationale for including
schools psychs on Leadership Team.



Name a strategy for moving into an
MTSS service delivery framework.

MS 185 MTSS for Young Children: Participant Objectives . . .



Describe how data-based decision making is a foundation for MTSS.



Explain how the 4-step problem solving process can be applied.



Describe an application of the 4-step problem solving process at Tier 1.



Attendees'
Settings . . .
Roles . .
Knowledge of
MTSS . . .

Vision: What kind of early learning program should be available for all children?



What is MTSS?

A whole-school data-driven framework for improving learning outcomes for ALL students delivered through a continuum of evidence-based practices and systems.



What is MTSS?

- Goal: to identify children who may be struggling to learn and intervene early so they can catch up to their peers.
- It can be designed to identify children who are struggling in academic or behavioral areas.



MTSS is not...



- Just added support for academics
- The responsibility of just a few specialists—general educators are key!
- An excuse for delaying a special education

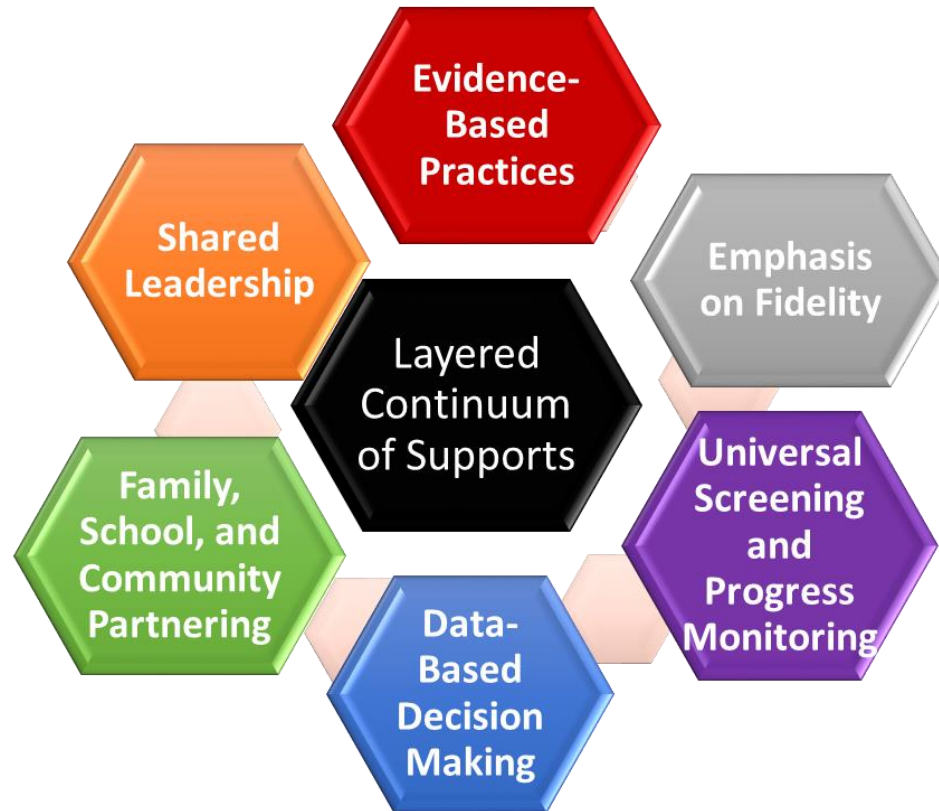
How is MTSS for YC different from typical practice in early education?

- We don't usually systematically address the range of individual differences in general early education settings.
- We **typically wait** for significant delays before we provide additional support (and then it is a referral to special education).

How is MTSS for YC different from typical practice in early education?

- MTSS identifies who needs the additional support and provides a **continuum of evidence-based practices** within the general education settings.
- The focus of MTSS is **prevention**—providing additional support as soon as it's needed for success.
- The aim of MTSS is to use **proven** instructional strategies that can help struggling students close the performance gap with typically developing students.

Core Components of MTSS for YC



Evidence-based practices are the foundation

- “Proven techniques”
- Few practices in EC meet the strict definition of EBP but there are some
- Even practices with strong evidence may not work for all children.
- Practitioners can provide their own evidence through progress monitoring data: Practice-based evidence

Fidelity of Interventions:

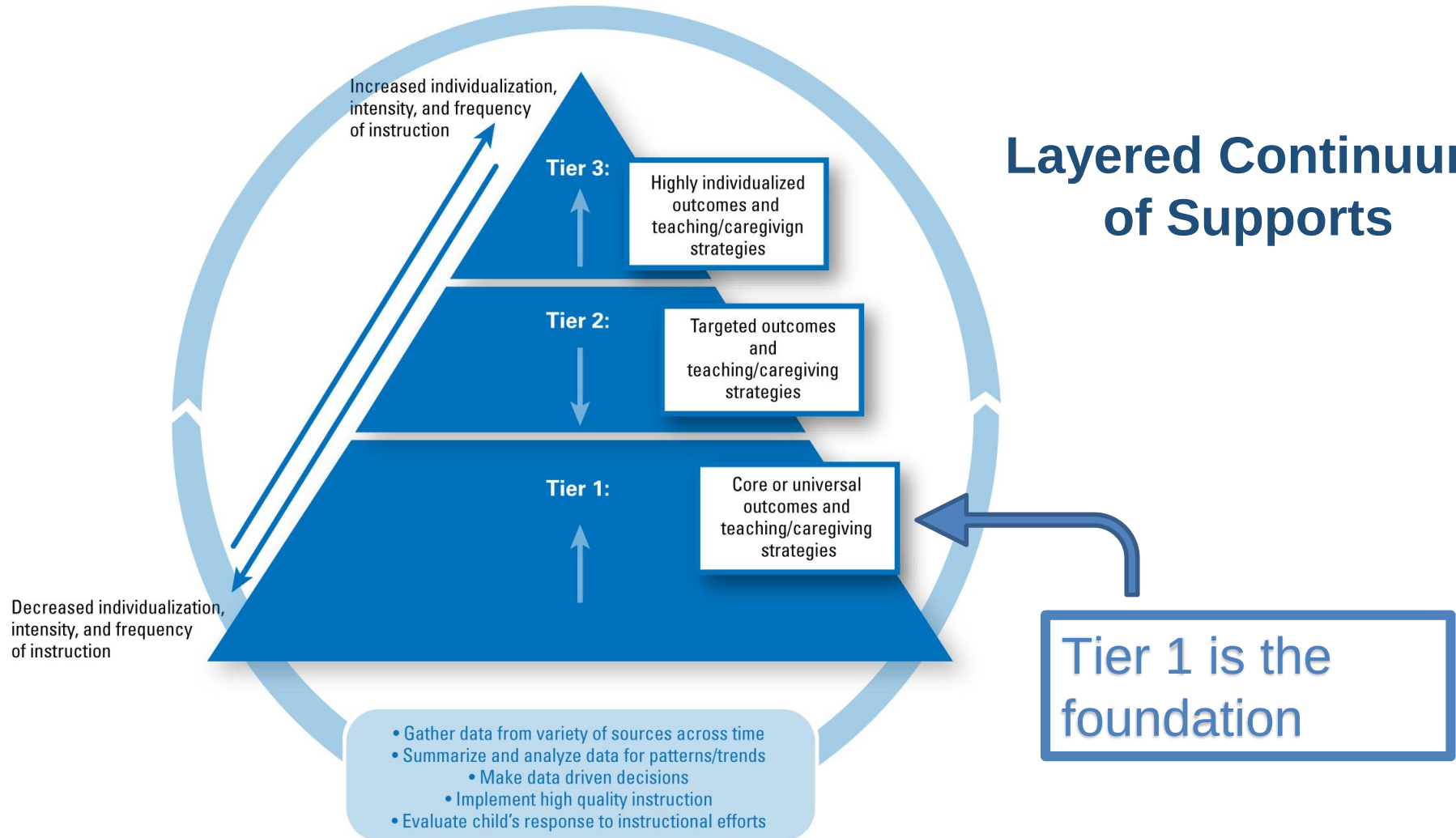
- Interventions implemented with low or inconsistent fidelity are less likely to work—children won't show change.
- Without measurement of fidelity, you don't know if the child needs a different intervention, a more intensive intervention, or the same intervention with better implementation.



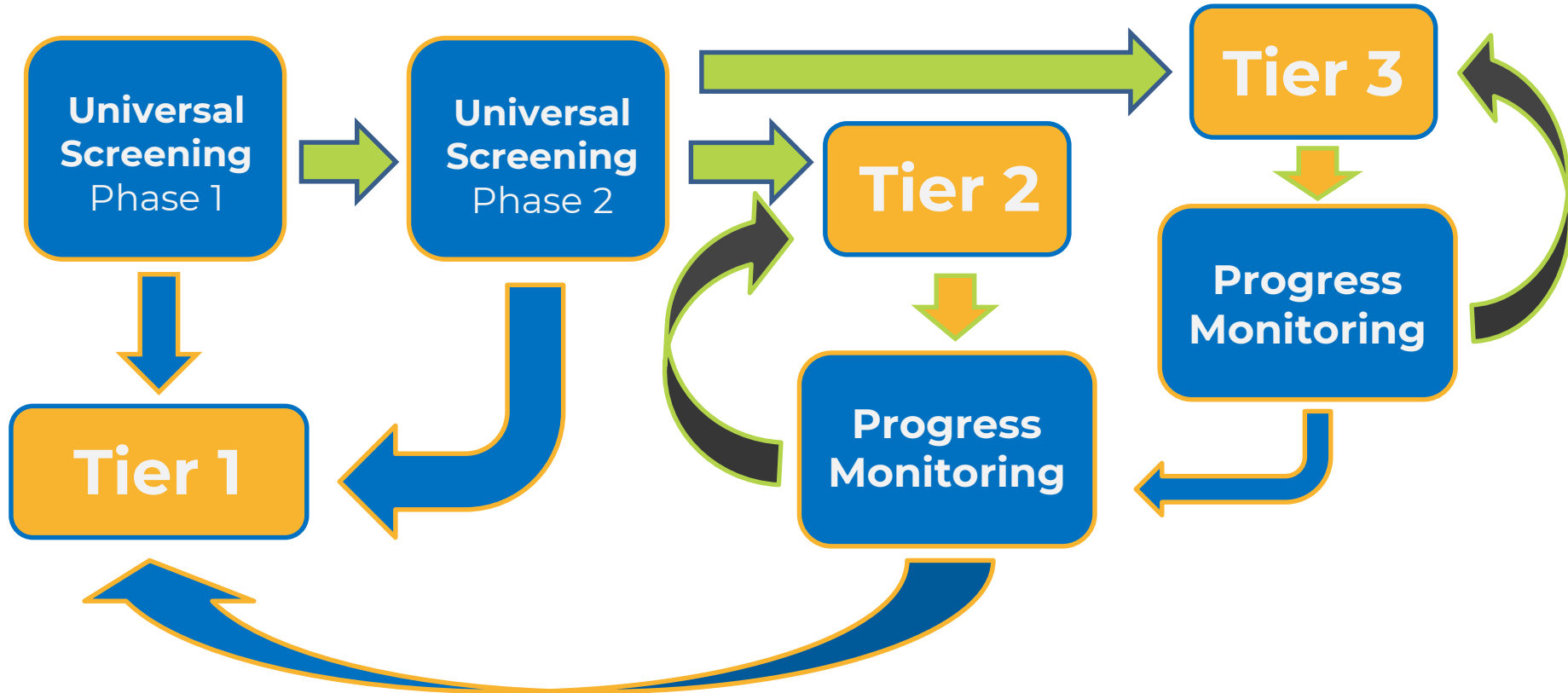
LESSON:

Make sure an intervention is being implemented correctly before recommending changes to it.

Layered Continuum of Supports



Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring



Universal Screening

- **PURPOSE:** determines how well core curriculum is working for the majority of students
- **TOOLS:** very brief assessments on key elements of the curriculum; these are NOT the same as developmental screening tools
- **FOCUS:** all students
- **TIMEFRAME:** usually assessed three times a year



Progress Monitoring

- **PURPOSE:** monitor students' response to instruction in order to estimate rates of improvement, identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress
- **FOCUS:** students identified through screening as at risk for poor learning outcomes
- **TOOLS:** brief assessments that are [valid, reliable, and evidence based](#)
- **TIMEFRAME:** students are assessed at regular intervals (e.g., weekly, biweekly, or monthly)



MTSS relies on partnerships



Schools

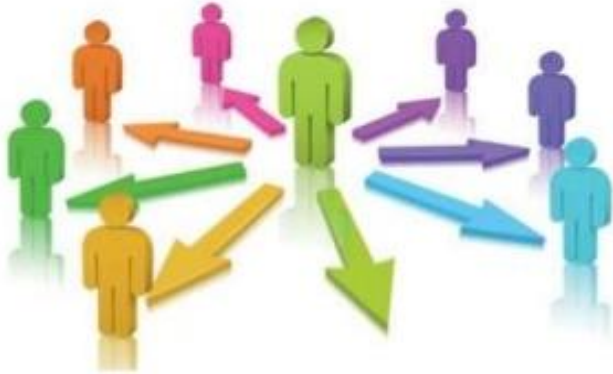
Family

Community

Partnerships

Shared Leadership provides direction

Who's the leader?



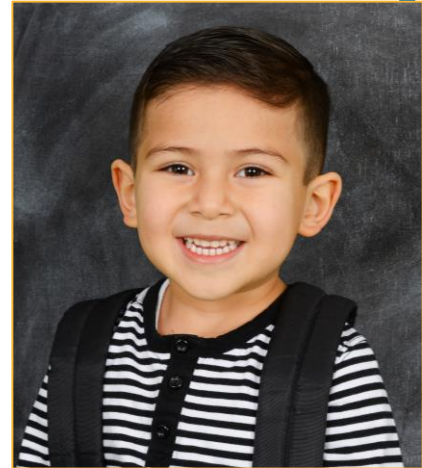
A few words about special groups & MTSS

- Children with disabilities
 - might receive instruction at any tier in an inclusive classroom.
 - Children do NOT need to go through the MTSS process in order to be referred for special education.



A few words about special groups & MTSS

- Dual language learners
 - Assessments (universal screening and progress monitoring) need to be conducted in home language with valid instruments
 - Can be at any level of MTSS
 - Strengthening Tier 1 with use of home language, language bridging techniques can help dual language learners be successful



Engaging Families in MTSS

- Leaders need to plan strategically to engage families
- Specific areas for building staff competence:
 - Communication skills
 - Understanding family values and practices
 - Focusing on cultural awareness and sensitivity
 - Helping the family feel welcome in school and with the team



Data-based decision making

Shift THINKING to SYSTEM focus:

- All system levels, including school/program, classroom, and individual-child levels, will make decisions based on data.
- Students' needs will have a "Just Right" match to interventions, progress will be monitored, intervention plan will be modified as necessary, to achieve success!



Data-based decision making

Shift CULTURE to DB-DM focus:

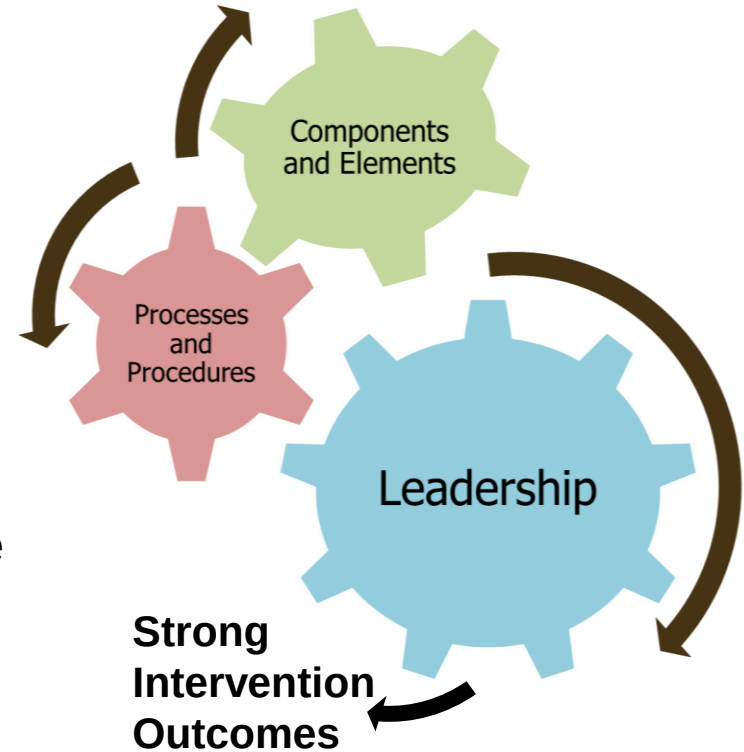
- Data and evidence-based practices drive program vision; who to teach (Inclusive/Blended model).
- What will be taught, what methods will be used, where will teaching take place, etc..
- Essential outcomes achieved by children and families.



Leadership: Shifting into an MTSS Framework

Service delivery SYSTEM focus:

- Purpose: Internal parts are organized and arranged to interact so young children achieve early learning outcomes.
- Infrastructure (Components): Who will be served, what will they learn, what teaching methods will be used, where will teaching occur, etc.
- Processes (Procedures): How a supportive culture will be created, how teams will be created, how decisions will be made, how rules will be made and laws followed.



Leadership: Shifting into an MTSS Framework

Focus on PROGRAMS and SCHOOLS:

- Rationale: Services are delivered to programs and schools, and outcomes are measured at this level, so this is where we focus change.
- Leaders: Held accountable for results, have legitimate authority to make changes, must shift culture, and support staff through change process
- Resource: Leader's Role in MTSS



Vision: What kind of organization
do we want to be?

Resource:
Example vision,
mission, core
values, guiding
practices and
standard
operating
procedures.



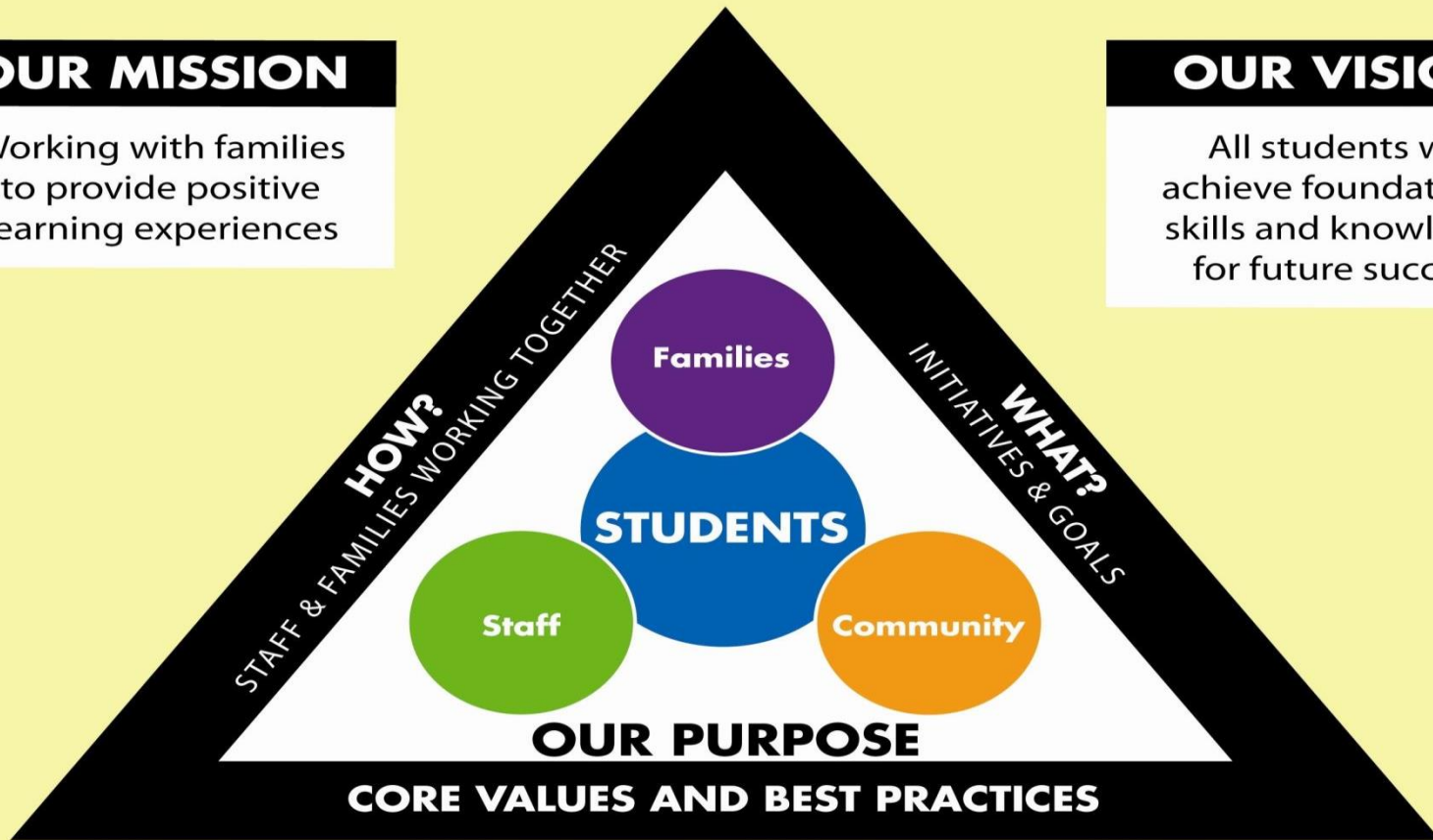
INCREASED LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

OUR MISSION

Working with families
to provide positive
learning experiences

OUR VISION

All students will
achieve foundational
skills and knowledge
for future success



Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)



Sole Purpose: Ensure the instruction and intervention delivery system results in verifiable gains for young children and their families.

Exploring: Is MTSS the right initiative for your program or school?

EXPLORATION Stage

(Implementation Science):

- Tasks: Assess needs, examine intervention components, consider implementation drivers, and assess “goodness-of-fit” of proposed new practice.
- Resource: Appendix 3B: Multi-tiered Systems of Support in Early Childhood: Stage of Implementation Analysis.



Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Norms for Interaction/
Collective Commitments
- Goals Aligned with Vision and Mission
- Clear Purpose
- Decision Making-Process
- Processes for Accomplishing Purpose



Resources: Table 2.1 and MTSS Annotated Resource List



**Initial High Quality
Training and
On-going
Practice-Based
Coaching are
Essential**

Role of School Psychologists on ILT

- Typical and atypical development
- Indicators of school success
- Effective instruction
- Intervention development
- MEASUREMENT



Steps of the Problem-Solving Model

Problem Identification

- Is there a difference between current performance and expected or desired performance?
- What is the goal relative to the expected/desired performance?

Problem Analysis

- Why does the problem exist?
- What factors could be contributing to the problem that we can address?
- What resources are required to address the problem?

Intervention Implementation

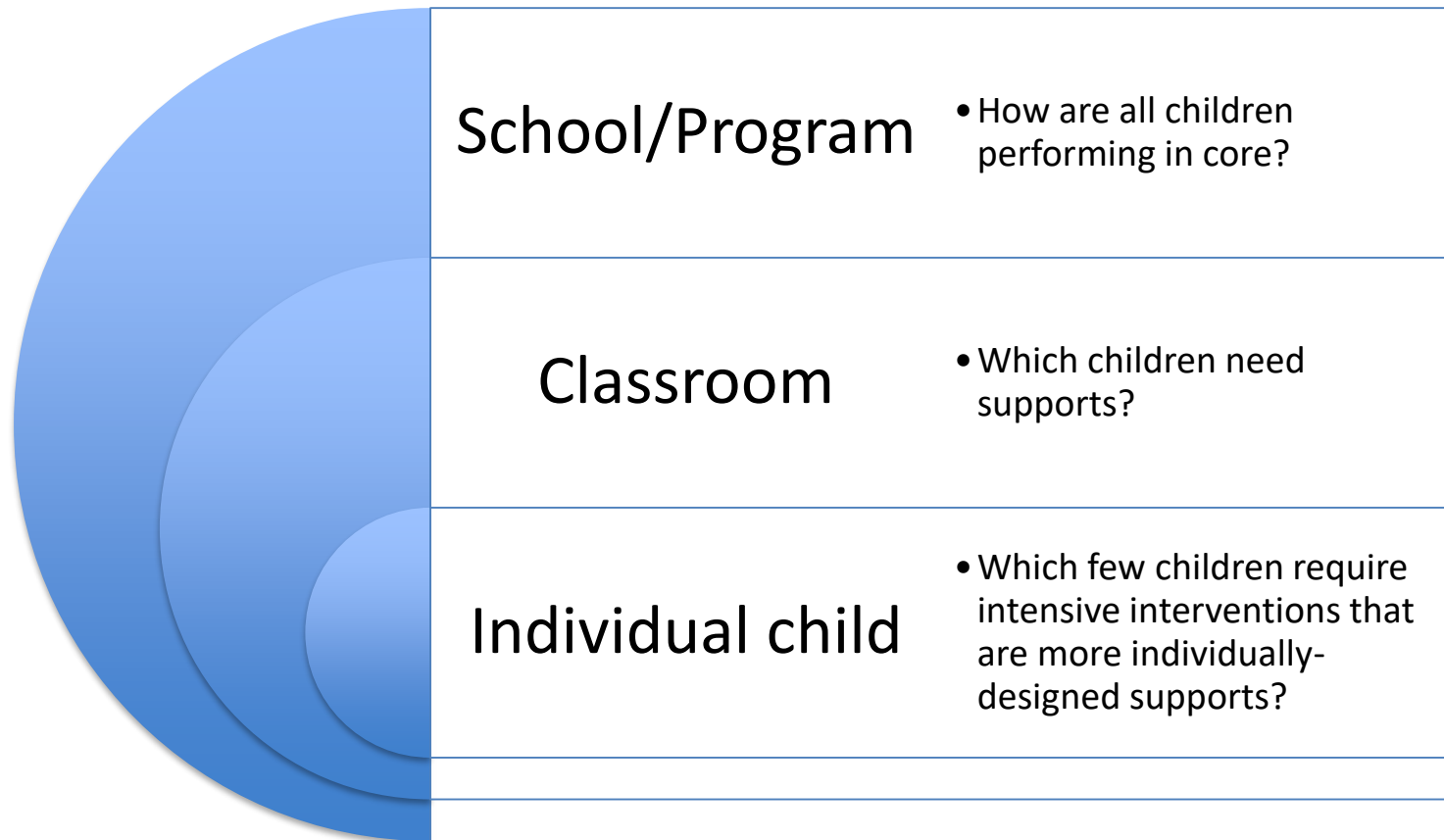
- What can be done to reduce the difference between current and expected/desired performance?
- What supports are needed to ensure strong intervention implementation?

Plan Evaluation

- How is/are the student(s) responding?
- How is the plan working?
- Has the difference between current and expected/desired performance been reduced to a satisfactory level?
- What are the next steps?

Figure 4.1. Steps of the problem-solving model.
Source: Batsche, G. et al., 2005.

Strengths-based Problem Solving



Problem-Solving Model Steps: Continuous Improvement Process

Problem Identification

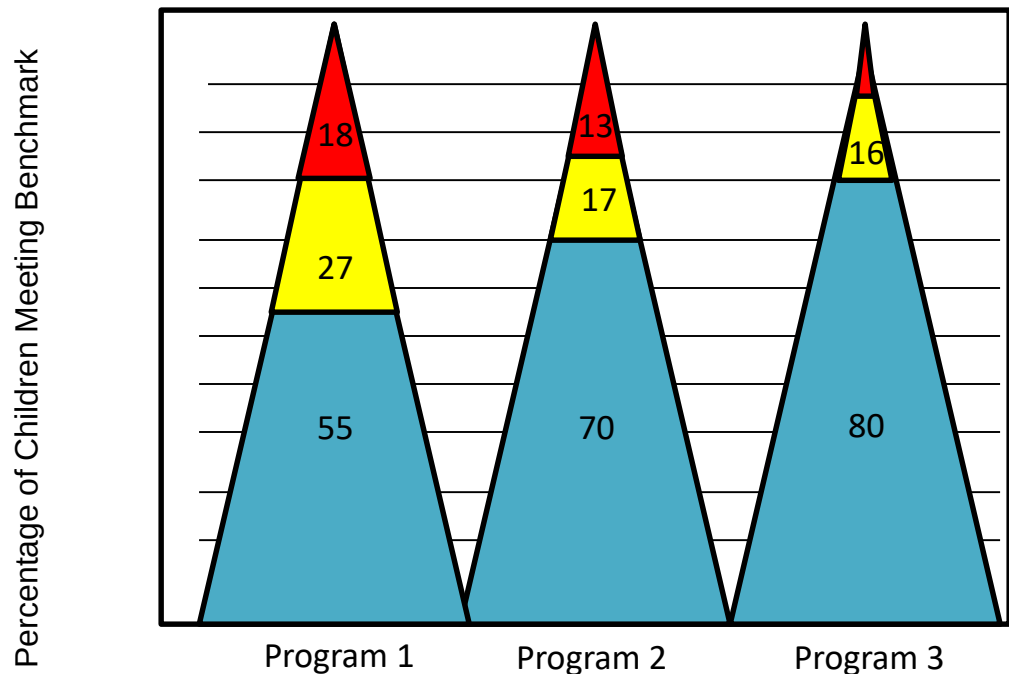
- Is there a difference between current performance and expected or desired performance?
- What is the goal relative to the expected/desired performance?

Decision: If there is a problem,
move to **Problem Analysis** phase.

Methods and Tools to Support Problem Identification

- Universal screening
 - Standardized published tools (e.g., Individual Growth and Development Indicators; Behavioral and Emotional Screening System; Ages & Stages Questionnaire)
 - Program level data
 - Classroom level data
 - Accurate identification in context of the measurement framework
- What do you use for universal screening?

How are all children performing in the core for three different programs?



Which children need supports?

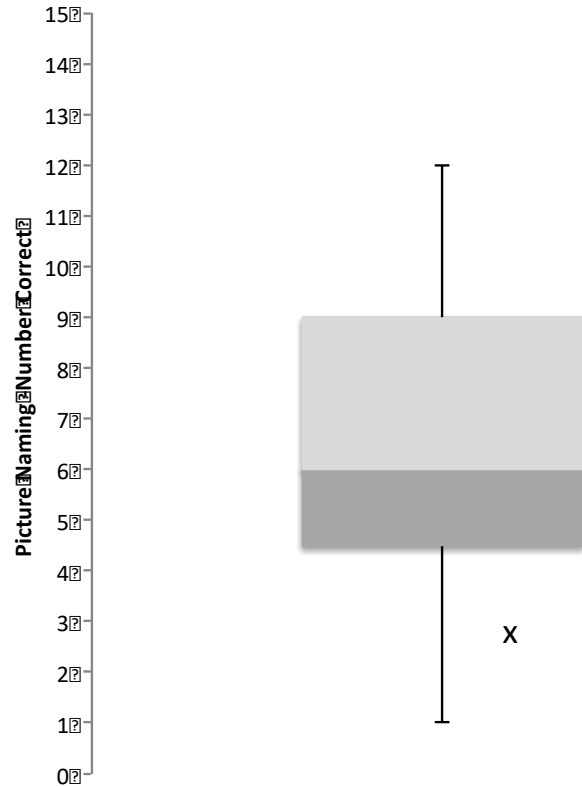
First	Fall PN
Cadence	9
Eternity	7
Dianlix	6
Christopher	6
Noah	2
John	9
Arianny	6
Milan	12
Jeniah	11
Daralyn	6
Jayden	1
Makenzie	12
Kendry	6
Elena	2
Drake	8
Michelle	10
Jayden	3
Audrey	4

Is that the
right question
to be asking in
this case?



Which few children need individualized supports?

Fall Picture Naming



Problem-Solving Model Steps: Continuous Improvement Process

Problem Analysis

- Why does the problem exist?
- What factors could be contributing to the problem that we can address?
- What resources are required to address the problem?

Decision: Once the problem is understood, move to Intervention Implementation phase.

Sample Factors to Consider



Student Factors

Does the student have a medical condition?
Has the student been taught the desired skill?
Does the student possess necessary prerequisite skills?
What are the student's strengths?



Teacher and Classroom Factors

Has the teacher been provided sufficient resources to support the student?
Does the teacher consistently implement reinforcement strategies?
Are there sufficient opportunities for practice across activities/routines?
In what activities/routines is the student successful?



Curricular Factors

Is the curriculum evidence-based?
Is the curriculum implemented with fidelity?
Is support provided for curriculum implementation?
Is the curricular focus aligned with students' learning targets?



Social-Contextual Factors

Are expectations consistent across home and school settings?
How do peers react to the student in problematic and non-problematic times?
Can the physical arrangement of the classroom, including materials, be a factor?

Hojnoski, R.L. & Polignano, J.C. (2019). Using data-based decision-making to improve learning outcomes for all children: Figure 4.2 Sample factors to consider. In J.J. Carta & R.M. Young (Eds.), *Multi-tiered systems of support for young children: Driving change in early education* (p 77). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co

Methods and Tools to Support Problem Analysis

- Record Review
- Teacher and caregiver interviews and rating scales
- Other assessment data
- Curricular review
- Classroom observations
 - Instructional environment
 - Individual child behavior
 - What to look for?

Problem-Solving Model Steps: Continuous Improvement Process

Intervention Implementation

- What can be done to reduce the difference between current and expected/desired performance?
- What supports are needed to ensure strong intervention implementation?

Decision: Match child's (children's) strengths and needs to intervention, implement and then do Plan Evaluation.

Monitoring the response to the intervention –the Alphabet Monitor

Letter	Name	Sound
B	1 O	1 O
C	1 O	1 O
T	1 O	1 O
J	1 O	1 O
H	1 O	1 O
D	1 O	1 O
G	1 O	1 O
K	1 O	1 O
Total 1		

Letter	Name	Sound
W	1 O	1 O
F	1 O	1 O
N	1 O	1 O
L	1 O	1 O
P	1 O	1 O
M	1 O	1 O
S	1 O	1 O
R	1 O	1 O
Total 2		
Grand Total		

Olszewski, A., Haring, C., Soto, X.T., Peters-Sanders, L. & Goldstein, H. (2019). Designing and implementing Tier 2 instructional support in early language and literacy: The alphabet monitor. In J.J. Carta & R.M. Young (Eds.), *Multi-tiered systems of support for young children: Driving change in early education* (pp. 118-119). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co

How would you collect these data and “graph” the results?

Letter	Name	Sound
B	1 0	1 0
C	1 0	1 0
T	1 0	1 0
J	1 0	1 0
H	1 0	1 0
D	1 0	1 0
G	1 0	1 0
K	1 0	1 0
Total 1	4	3

Letter	Name	Sound
W	1 0	1 0
F	1 0	1 0
N	1 0	1 0
L	1 0	1 0
P	1 0	1 0
M	1 0	1 0
S	1 0	1 0
R	1 0	1 0
Total 2	5	3
Grand Total	9	6

Supporting intervention implementation

Pre-intervention

- Contextual fit?
- Training
- Supports identified
- Clear plan of action

During intervention

- Check in and feedback
- Additional supports required?
- Modifications needed?

Post-intervention

- Planning for maintenance/generalization/fading
- Social validity check

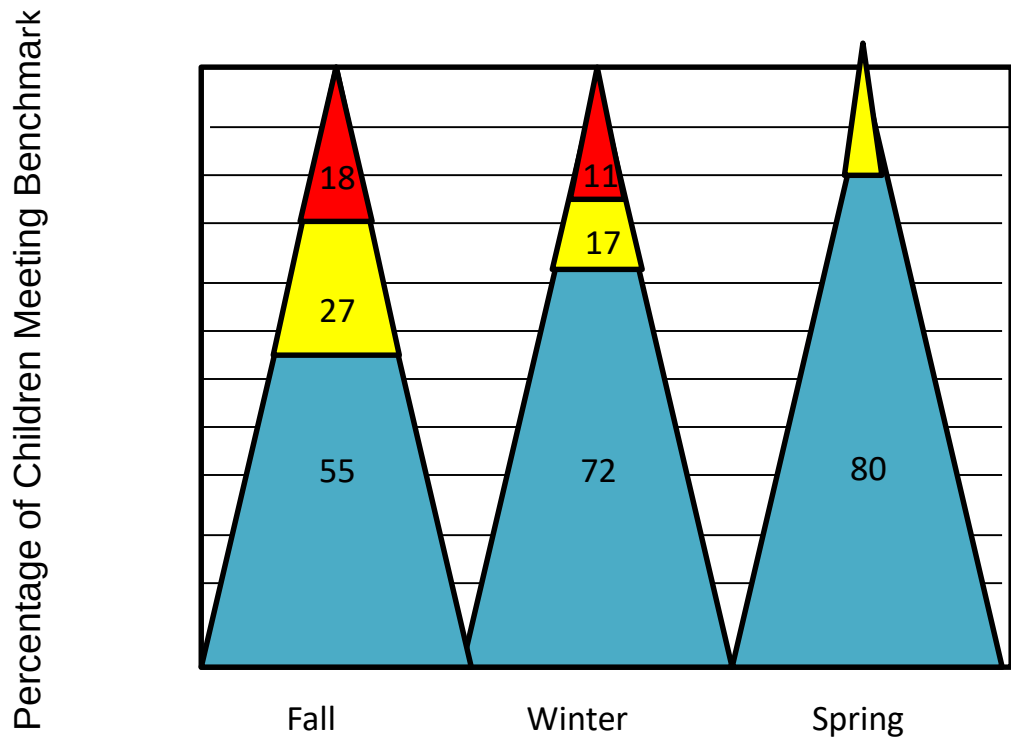
Problem-Solving Model Steps: Continuous Improvement Process

Plan Evaluation

- How is/are the student(s) responding?
- How is the plan working?
- Has the difference between current and expected/ desired performance been reduced to satisfactory level?
- What are the next steps?

Decision: If the problem still exists, implement modified plan. No problem, end intervention.

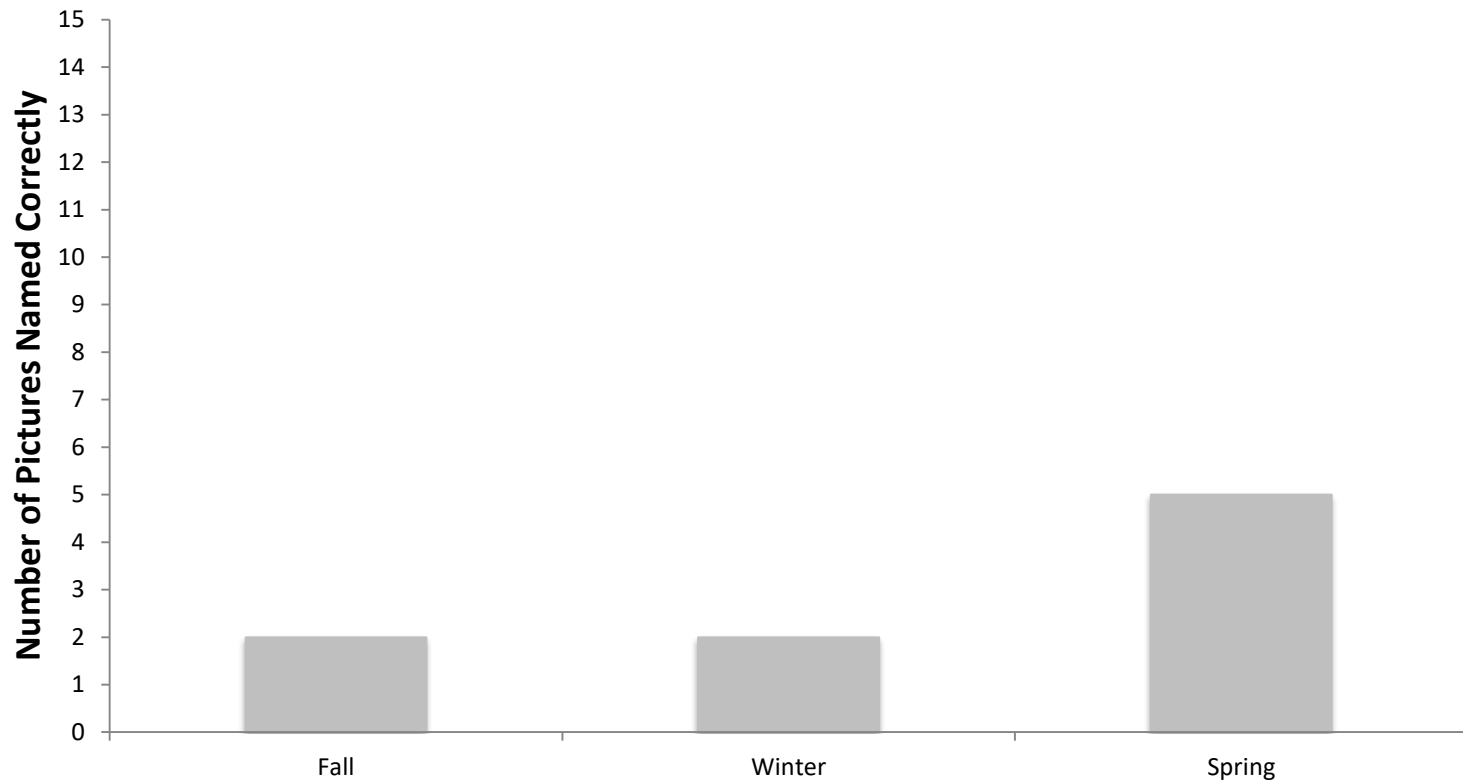
How are all children performing in the core in one program across time?



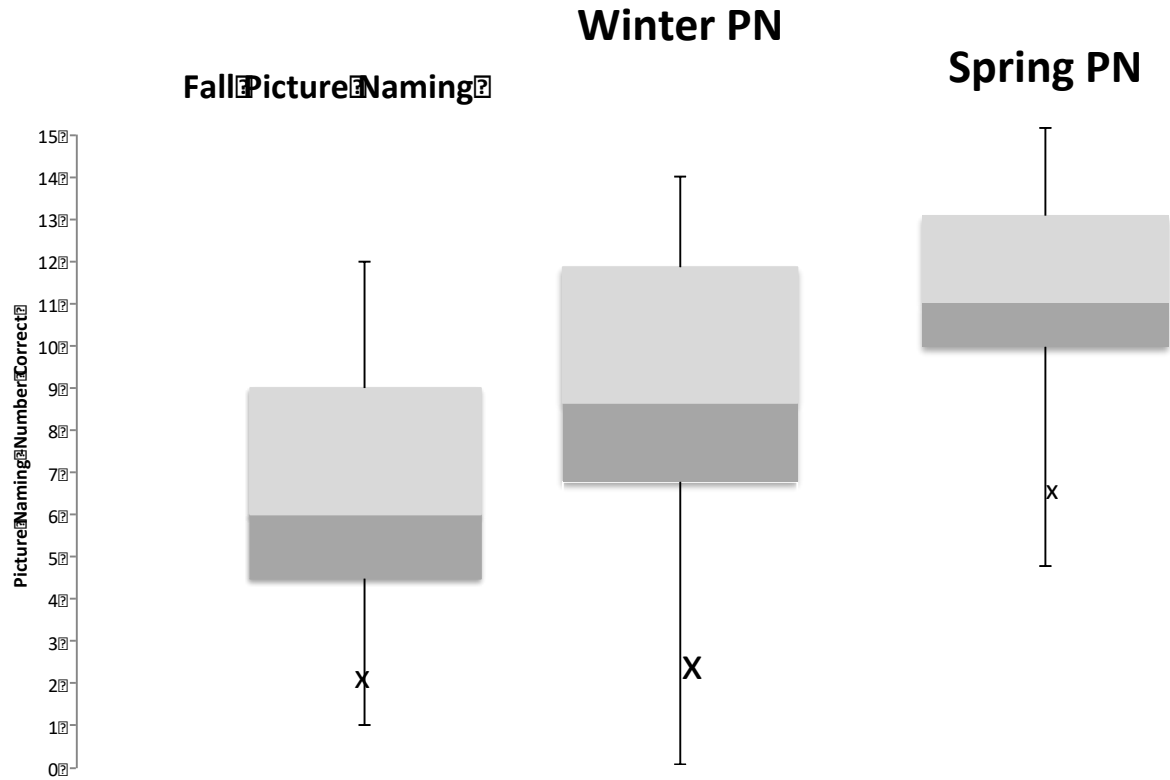
Which children still need supports,
or need additional or different supports?

First	Fall PN	Winter PN	Spring PN
Cadence	9	13	15
Eternity	7	11	13
Dianlix	6	7	11
Christopher	6	5	10
Noah	2	0	6
John	9	9	11
Arianny	6	6	11
Milan	12	11	13
Jeniah	11	13	15
Daralyn	6	8	11
Jayden	1	8	10
Makenzie	12	11	15
Kendry	6	9	12
Elena	2	2	5
Drake	8	8	12
Michelle	10	12	15
Jayden	3	5	8
Audrey	4	8	9

How does one child respond to the intervention over time?



Boxplots across time



Show MTSS for Young Children

Video #3: Problem-Solving at the Program/School Level

(available on the Brookes Publishing website.)





**Data-based
decision making
and
strengths-based
problem solving
at
program/school
level:
Tier 1**

Essential Ingredients in Tier 1 Early Literacy

4 Key Content Areas that lay the foundation for reading

- Oral language/Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Phonemic Awareness
- Alphabet Knowledge



Examples of Evidence-Based Practices

- World of Words (Vocabulary) (Neuman)
- Dialogic Reading (Whitehurst)
- Explicit Instruction (Archer)
- I do, We do, You do



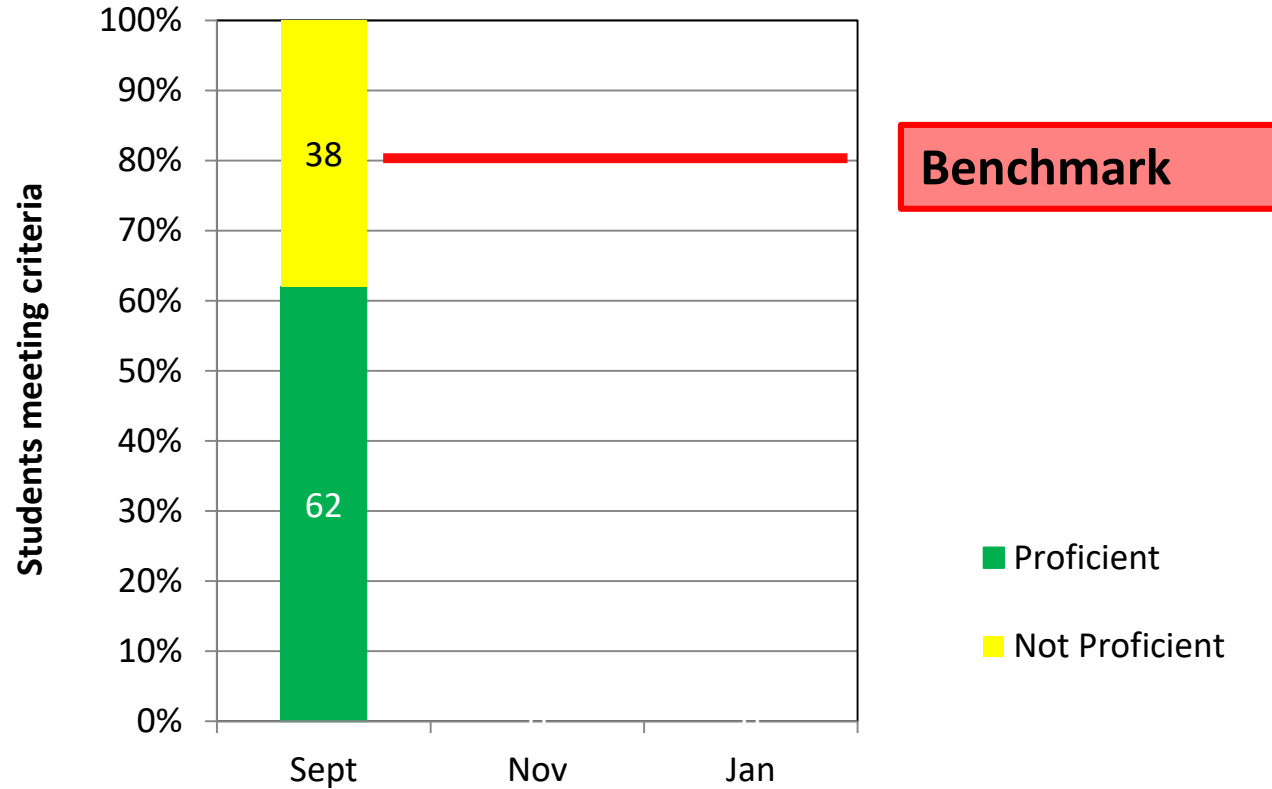
Tune-up Checklist

DATE GOAL
COMPLETE: _____

Reflection Questions	Circle One	
<i>Content of Instruction</i>	YES	NO
• Is there an established routine to teach the skill?	YES	NO
• Can instruction be more concrete with physical objects?	YES	NO
<i>Opportunities to Learn</i>	YES	NO
• Does lesson plan/instruction provide many opportunities to respond?	YES	NO
• Can the skill be emphasized during another part of the day?	YES	NO

Source: Abbott et al., 2012

Universal Screening Data-Vocabulary



Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Identification

PI meeting: What was learned . . .

(To be completed with session participants)

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Identification

PI decision: We do have a problem; need to plan PA meeting to focus on system-level explan

(To be completed with session participants)

Do you agree that there is a “Problem”? Why? Why not?

What information needs to be gathered before the PA meeting to look at “system-level” (Tier 1) explanations for the gap and to help design an intervention plan?

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Identification

PI decision: We do have problem; need to plan PA
(Need to complete after watching the video)

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Analysis

PA meeting: What was learned . . .

(To be completed with session participants)

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Analysis

PA meeting: What was learned . . .

(need to complete after watching the video)

IDEAS Vocabulary Strategy – Applied Example

IDEAS Intro: "I see you are flipping pancakes."

Identify

- I do it: "This is a spatula."
- We do it: "Say the word spatula with me." Child repeats with teacher
- You do it: "Now, you say the word spatula." Child says spatula.

- **Define** "A spatula is something that you use while cooking to turn or flip something over."

- **Explain** "I always use a spatula when I make pancakes and also when I fry potatoes."

- **Ask** "What food can you flip with a spatula?"

- **Say again** "Spatula. Say spatula." Child say, "Spatula."

Source: Abbott
et al., 2015

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Analysis

PA Decision: An Intervention Plan was developed:

(To be completed with session participants)

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Problem Analysis

PA Decision: Intervention Plan was developed

(To be completed after watching video)

Program/School Problem Solving Example

Plan Evaluation: First Meeting

Review **Intervention Plan** results

(To be completed with session participants)

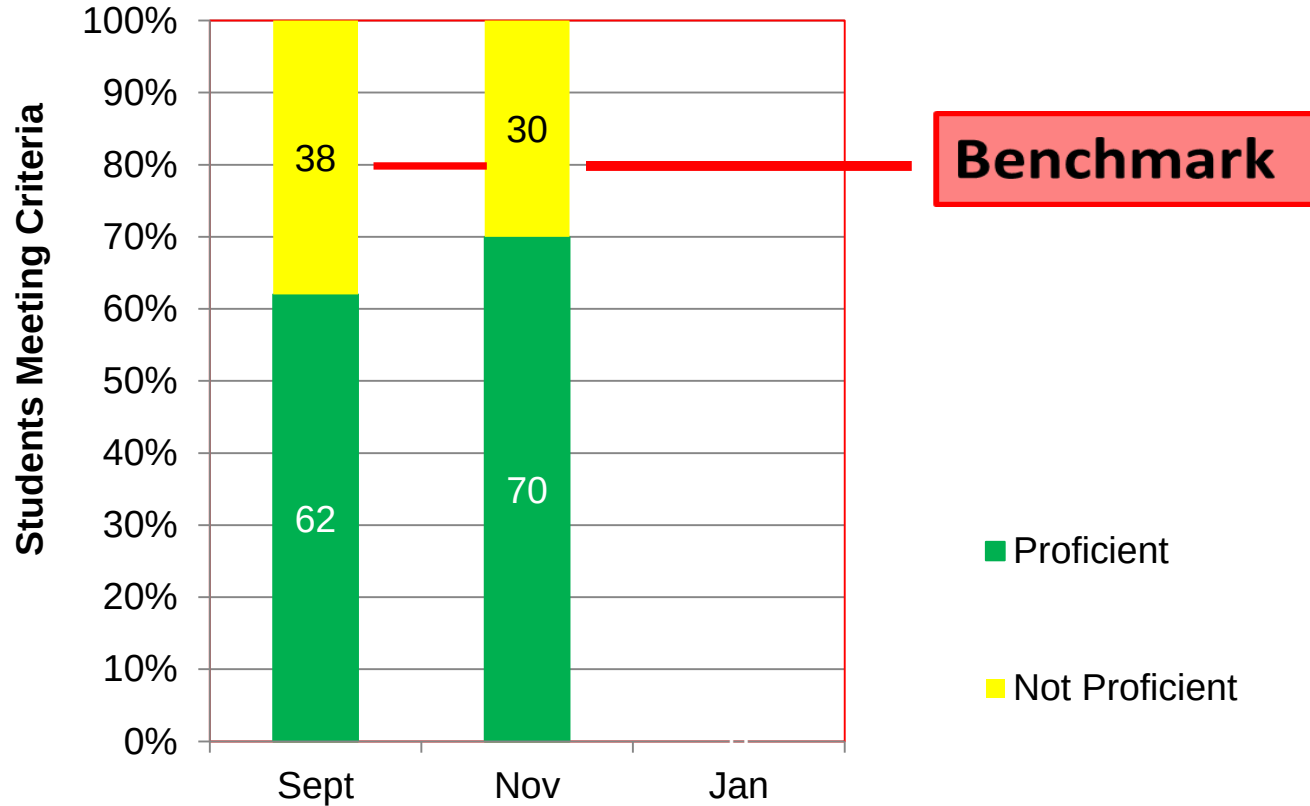
Program/School Problem Solving Example

Plan Evaluation: First Meeting

Review **Intervention Plan** results

(To be completed after watching the video)

Universal Screening Data-Vocabulary



Program/School Problem Solving Example

Plan Evaluation: Second Meeting

Review **Intervention Plan** impact:

(To be completed with session participants)

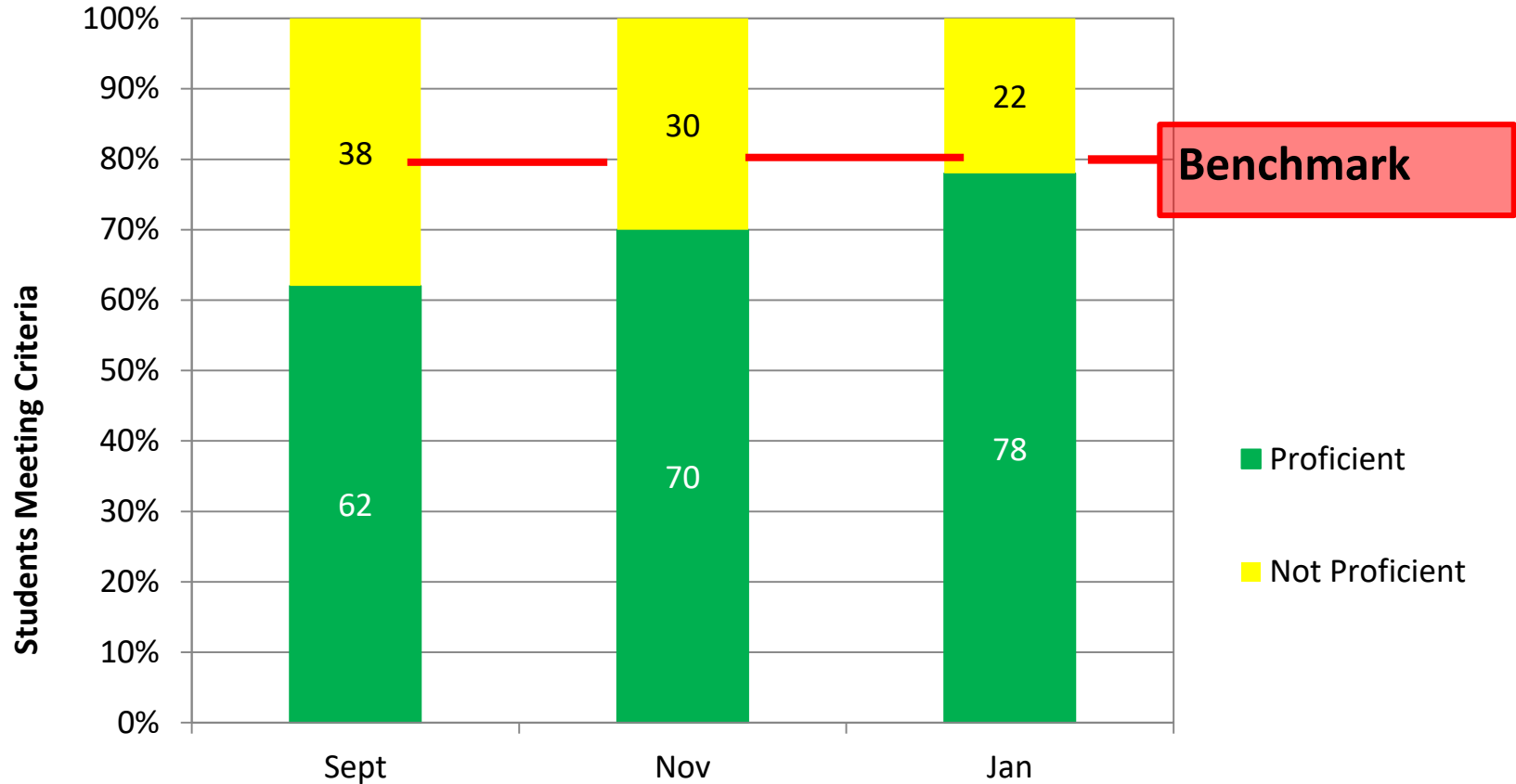
Program/School Problem Solving Example

Plan Evaluation: Second Meeting

Review **Intervention Plan** impact:

(To be completed after watching the video)

Universal Screening Data-Vocabulary



MTSS for Young Children: Key Takeaways

- All children get the level of instruction that meets their needs
- Prevention of delays and disabilities—
better than “wait to fail”
- Early intervention is more effective and less costly than later remediation.
- Continuous progress monitoring ensures that children don’t get “stuck” receiving ineffective instruction.
- Data-based decision-making fosters team members moving in the same direction.

Our Vision for MTSS in Early Education

Wouldn't it be great if. . .



every child could participate in an early education program with evidence-based instruction, and receive appropriate levels of instructional intervention to achieve the best possible early academic and behavioral outcomes?

Thank you for joining us on this journey! Robin, Judy and Robin

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