

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS) POLICY

The Butte County SELPA is dedicated to the belief that all students can learn, and that students with special needs shall be guaranteed an equal opportunity to become contributing members of society. Butte County SELPA believes in success for all students and supports inclusion in all aspects of life.

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), specifically, CA MTSS, is an equity-based inclusive framework that uses a strengths-based approach to assist schools in creating an optimal culture for learning for all students. The key components of MTSS framework include the effective use of data and evidence-based processes to connect students to the proper supports; transformational leadership in creating purpose and relational trust to engage staff and students; collaborative inquiry that involves staff in action research to improve teaching and learning; and a prevention-driven, tiered support system not only for academics, but also for behavior and social emotional needs.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides greater flexibility to states in determining specific practices and service delivery models to improve school climate, increase school safety, and expand access to comprehensive learning supports. MTSS enables the integration of multiple school improvement efforts and represents an effective strategy to accomplish the following goals:

- Improve outcomes for all students, including high-performing students, English language learners, students receiving special education services, and those struggling with barriers to learning;
- Improve instruction and alignment of curricula across general and special education;
- Improve school climate and safety;
- Create safe and supportive learning environments free from bullying and harassment;
- Support students' mental and behavioral health; and
- Implement effective discipline policy and practice.

MTSS is a framework to help students graduate from high school ready for career, college, and life. It offers different levels of academic and non-academic services and supports based on individual student needs. MTSS incorporates elements of Response to Intervention and Instruction (RtI), Positive Behavior Instruction and Supports (PBIS), Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and other evidence-based methodologies that have a proven record of success in helping all students to better succeed. For a more complete description of MTSS, see the following link to the California Department of Education (CDE) description of MTSS components: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/>

Butte County SELPA supports the vision of the CDE in transitioning to One Statewide System of Support, connecting resources and supports to all students in order to better meet the needs of the whole child and to support capacity of LEAs to meet Local Control priority areas. On this basis, the SELPA will play a part, in partnership with Approved: 10.17.18 Butte County Office of Education, in developing and maintaining supports for the development of MTSS within schools in Butte County. SELPA will partner with district members at times to collaboratively provide technical assistance and training on components of MTSS. Since implementation of MTSS is complex and often requires many years to complete, the SELPA is committed to supporting a multi-year approach to help facilitate the adoption of a MTSS framework.

It is important that the SELPA continue to encourage and support “best first instruction” at a universal level; monitor supplemental and intensive interventions to ensure efficacy and fidelity to

evidence-based interventions; and consider referral for special education services only after these have been utilized and documented as ineffective. SELPA recognizes that a Multi-Tiered System of Support, fully implemented with fidelity, can address most students' needs promptly, effectively and inclusively, without the need for assessment or a special education label. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 56303, "A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized." For a more detailed description of how MTSS for academics is currently determined in our LEAs, please refer to the Butte County SELPA Local Plan policy on Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses at the following link:

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/87003/PSW_Manual_DRAFT_5.24.17.pdf

Legal References:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act/ESSA (five occurrences)

Education Code § 56303