Best Partnering Practices in MTSS Individualized

Problem Solving

* School/district written and verbal MTSS information is provided for all staff, families, and community resources; multiple venues such as back-to-school nights, conferences, websites, emails, texts, office brochures, newsletters, weekly folders, and cultural/ language liaisons are suggested.
* Everyone understands that MTSS individualized problem solving can be about academics or behavior or both.
* Classroom teachers and family members work together to intervene when concerns are first evidenced.
* Teachers and family members jointly refer to the individualized problem solving process when progress is insufficient (referrals can be separate, but collaboration works best).
* Students are included in the process as appropriate.
* Family members and participating community resources are invited to be full team members in the problem solving process, with the classroom teacher and other specialists; if they can’t attend meetings, a two-way communication structure is established so there is ongoing information sharing.
* The MTSS individualized problem solving process is explained to families before the first meeting, including how and when a referral for special education evaluation might occur.
* Family members and participating community resources are supported in sharing student strengths and other information before process begins, so their information is available in decision-making.
* Family members and participating community resources are included in goal setting, intervention planning, and monitoring; learning interventions are coordinated between home and school.
* Copies of all referral information, plans, progress data, and diagnostic/prescriptive assessment reports are given to families.
* There is some mechanism to transfer student problem solving process data to future schools, so that interventions can continue if indicated.
* A staff “MTSS liaison” (such as teacher, mental health professional, specialist, or administrator) may be identified. This person could support the family and community partners throughout the individualized problem solving process. Activities might include helping families to share information; answering questions; explaining interventions, data, and movement throughout the tiers; accessing needed family resources; and providing information on learning at home.

**Materials**

* Written information (electronic and text) explaining school-specific MTSS individualized problem solving team roles, terms, and process (brochure, insert, articles, meeting invitation etc.)
* Format for families and community resources to share home information in advance of process
* Referral and intervention plan documents with “space” for family and community resource information and data

**Reminders**

* Each educator, family, and community partner has unique knowledge about the student and interventions. Each partner has a specific role “on the team and at the table”.
* MTSS individualized problem solving is focused on the student and his/her school success at all times.
* Identifying strengths as part of the process is important.
* Sharing data (and visual data are best) provides common information for all stakeholders. Multiple data sources and points are important in decision-making.
* Much of the MTSS individualized problem solving process takes part outside of meetings. It is intervening, monitoring, communicating, and adjusting to ongoing data.
* When students struggle, adults are worried. Teachers, students, family members, and community resources may have personal or emotional reactions. It is important to understand and work with these feelings, always continuing to focus on, “What is best for OUR student?”
* Targeted and intensive interventions, by definition, take more time and resources for schools, families, and community agencies.