

MODEL STATE LEGISLATION LANGUAGE

READING INTERVENTIONS USING MULTITIER SYSTEM SUPPORTS IN GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

§GENERAL EDUCATION MULTITIER SYSTEM SUPPORTS (MTSS) for reading interventions

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF [insert state name] that all schools and classrooms offer each student in the SEEDS community, grades K-12, Multitier System Supports (MTSS) of intervention to ensure grade-level reading attainment. The schools in the state shall no longer wait until a student is significantly behind grade-level reading, but rather provide continual data-driven assessments, chronicle progress, and deliver remediation as needed for each student's grade level literacy attainment. Students who are not reading fluently in grades 4–12 will be provided intense reading interventions that serve as an alternative to English Language Arts class. Additionally, content areas teachers will teach reading skills while delivering core content that meets the state and district requirements.

§5.1 Program Criteria for MTSS Standards for SEEDS in Grades PK–3

The state of [insert state name] is committed to systemically addressing the academic needs of all of SEEDS by implementing MTSS), for students most at risk for literacy failure. Based on present research, the state of [insert state name] provides in this section an overview MTSS for improving reading achievement for all students as a specific practice of research-based interventions to support students who are reading below grade level. Essentials elements of a successful reading intervention are outlined below and mandated by this law.

- A. Early screening, assessment, and identification of SEEDS in grades PK–3.
- B. Intense Instruction and tiers of support will be delivered with intensity as mandated by [insert state name] Statute, Section 5.0 of this law. Optimally, a student who is struggling to read will be assessed and provided instruction in a group of three and no more than four students, and the student will receive this specialized reading instruction at least four, and preferably five, days a week.
- C. Intense Instruction and Intervention will be delivered by a highly qualified and certified teacher of reading as required in [insert state name] Statute, Section 2.0 of this law. Recent studies highlight the difference that a highly trained accomplished teacher of reading can make in the overall success or failure of a reading program.
- D. Sufficient duration: One of the most common errors in teaching SEEDS to read is to withdraw prematurely the instruction that seems to be working. A student who is reading

accurately at or above grade level but not *fluently* at their independent reading level still requires intensive reading instruction.

§5.2 MTSS in Grades K–3

The terms MTSS mean a comprehensive system of differentiated supports that includes evidence-based instruction, universal screening, progress monitoring, formative assessments, summative assessments, research-based interventions matched to student needs, and educational decision-making using academic progress overtime. All SEEDS will have the opportunity to benefit from a process that helps them through instruction, intervention, and if necessary, referral to Special Education as mandated by this law.

A. [Insert state name] principles of Multitier System Supports (MTSS)

1. Assumption and belief that all students can learn;
2. Early intervention for students who demonstrate risk for literacy failure;
3. Use of a multitier model of service delivery (to achieve high rates of student success, instruction may be differentiated in both nature and intensity);
4. Use of a problem-solving or standard-protocol method to make decisions within a multitier model;
5. Use of research-based, scientifically validated interventions/instruction to the extent available;
6. Monitoring of student progress to inform instruction; and

7. Use of data to make decisions.

B. The process described in this section of the law is for MTSS for SEEDS who struggle in the area of reading:

1. Tier I – **Foundational Reading Instruction** should involve (1) the use of a scientifically based instructional program for all students, (2) ongoing assessment of progress and monitoring of reading achievement gains, and (3) teachers of reading using flexible grouping to target specific skills and differentiate instruction for all students.

2. Tier II – **MTSS Intervention** is designed to meet the needs of SEEDS who do not respond quickly to foundational reading instruction. MTSS will be provided in the regular classroom setting. These students will receive intensive small group reading instruction in General Education. The teacher of reading will provide all the knowledge of [insert state name] Statute, Section 2.2 for Teachers of reading preparation in the reading intervention, emphasizing all essential components of early literacy. Progress monitoring on the student reading development will occur at least every two weeks on targeted skills to ensure adequate advancement and learning. A set of goals for each student will be identified and established. Progress monitoring data will be analyzed, interpreted, and documented. Students who meet set criteria on targeted skills as a result of Tier II Interventions are reintegrated into the regular classroom setting (Tier I).

3. If at any time during the student's Tier II Intervention or after receiving Tier II Intervention (maximum of 10 weeks), the student's progress in the essential components of reading shows no advancement and/or the student demonstrates characteristics associated with learning disorders such as dyslexia or specific learning disability, the teacher of reading shall recommend a formal diagnostic assessment for the student.

4. Tier III – **MTSS Intensive Instruction** involves a small percentage of students who have received Tier II Intervention in General Education and continue to show marked difficulty in acquiring necessary reading development to reach grade-level attainment. These students necessitate intensive instruction that is more explicit and specifically designed to meet their individual needs. These students will receive progress monitoring at least every two weeks on targeted skills to ensure adequate progress and learning. The approximate time for Tier III Intensive Instruction is 8–10 weeks. After this intensity of instruction the student can return to Tier II Intervention support before reintegration into the regular classroom setting (Tier I).

5. If at any time during the student's Tier III Intensive Instruction, or after receiving Tier III intervention, the student's progress in the essential components of reading development shows no advancement and/or the student demonstrates characteristics associated with a learning disorder such as dyslexia or specific learning disability, the

teacher of reading will immediately recommended a formal diagnostic assessment for the student.

§5.3 Reading Interventions and Strategies for Older Students Grades 4–12

In the state of [insert state name] grades K–3 reading is considered a separate subject, but in middle school it is important for [insert name of state government department of education] to establish a school culture that recognizes that every content area teacher is a reading teacher, because reading is involved in every subject area, [insert state name] Statute, Section 2.2 of this law. Therefore, reading strategies will be implemented as a school wide program in connection with a school culture and vision that works toward high levels of student achievement in reading literacy. Specific interventions and strategies will be provided to support SEEDS who have struggled to learn to read and are performing below grade level in reading. [insert state name]’s schools will provide every opportunity for students to read, practice their strategies, in every subject, every day, to enhance their development of the reading skills they need to become better readers and, ultimately, reading literate.

A. Each school will provide intensive reading interventions to SEEDS in grades 4–12 with reading problems. While the expectation is that students will learn to read with understanding before attaining middle and high school status, the reality is that many students reach these schools unable to read grade-level text effectively and with understanding. SEEDS with demonstrated reading difficulties will be provided 32 to 26 weeks of supplemental reading interventions as an alternative to English Language Arts class in middle and high school, that directly addresses their vocabulary, comprehension, and word reading challenges so they are able to perform significantly better in reading subject material text and can achieve grade-level reading literacy. Research supports identification and MTSS to help:

1. Identify students who are more than one grade level behind in reading and provide daily reading intervention. Using a dedicated period each day with a certified teacher-of-reading professional, students who have reading difficulties that are one or more grade levels below expectations are provided with daily reading instruction, approximately 40- 50 minutes per day, focused specifically on their instructional needs. Providing students specific interventions that are focused on their learning needs requires identifying whether a student’s reading comprehension difficulties are a function of (a) word reading problems (e.g., decoding unknown words), (b) word meaning problems (e.g., vocabulary), (c) adequate knowledge to understand text (e.g., background knowledge), (d) unusually slow text reading (e.g., fluency), and/ or (e) inadequate use of reading comprehension strategies to promote reading comprehension. Through diagnostic assessment, teachers can determine which of the above are contributing to the reading difficulties and target their instruction.

2. Target instruction for each student by providing systems of support in

three tiers with an outline of assessments of skill accomplishments and a time line for stages of support.

3. During Tier I Intervention for Grade 4–12 students who need intervention in word study, a certified teacher of reading provides students with approximately 25 lessons taught over 7–8 weeks depending on student mastery. The daily lessons are composed of Word Study to teach advanced decoding of multi-syllabic words. Students' mastery of sounds and word reading determines their progress through the lessons. Students receive daily instruction and practice with individual letter sounds, letter combinations, and affixes. In addition, students receive instruction and practice in applying a strategy to decode multi-syllabic words by breaking them into known parts. Students also practice breaking words into parts to spell. Word reading strategies are applied to reading in context in the form of sentences and passage reading daily. During Tier I Intervention, high levels of teacher of reading support and scaffolding are provided to students in applying the multi-syllabic word reading strategy to reading words and connected text, and spelling words. Fluency instruction is promoted by using oral reading fluency data and pairing higher and lower readers for partner reading. Students engage in repeated reading daily with their partner with the goal of increased fluency (accuracy and rate). Partners take turns reading orally while their partner reads along and marks errors. The higher reader always reads first. After reading, partners are given time to go over errors and ask questions about unknown words. Partners read the passage three times each and graph the number of words read correctly. The teacher of reading is actively involved in modeling and providing feedback to students. Vocabulary is taught daily by teaching the meaning of the words through basic definitions and providing examples and non-examples of how to use the word. New vocabulary words are reviewed daily with students matching words to appropriate definitions or examples of word usage. Comprehension is taught during and after reading by asking students to address relevant comprehension questions of varying levels of difficulty (literal and inferential). Teachers assist students in locating information in text and rereading to identify answers.

4. During Tier II Intervention the instruction emphasis is on vocabulary and comprehension with additional instruction and practice provided for applying the word study and fluency skills and strategies learned in Tier I Intervention. Lessons occur over a period of 17–18 weeks depending on students' progress. Word Study and Vocabulary are taught through daily review of the word study strategies learned in Tier I by applying the sounds and strategy to reading new words. Focus on word meaning is also part of word reading practice. Students are also taught word relatives and parts of speech (e.g., politics, politician, politically). Finally, students review application of word study to spelling words. Vocabulary words for instruction are chosen from the text read in the fluency and comprehension component. Three days a week teachers use subject matter lessons and materials. Two days a week teachers use novels with lessons developed by the research team. Fluency and comprehension are taught with an emphasis on

reading and understanding text through discourse or writing. Students spend three days a week reading and comprehending expository subject matter text. One and two days a week reading and comprehending narrative text in novels. Content and vocabulary are needed to understand the text and are taught prior to reading. Students then read the text at least twice with an emphasis on reading for understanding. During and after the second reading, comprehension questions of varying levels of complexity and abstraction are discussed with students. Students also receive explicit instruction in generating questions of varying levels of complexity and abstraction while reading (e.g., literal questions, questions requiring students to synthesize information from text, and questions requiring students to apply background knowledge to information in text), identifying the main idea, summarizing, and employing strategies for multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

5. Tier III Intervention continues the instructional emphasis on vocabulary and comprehension with more time spent on independent student application of skills and strategies. Tier III occurs over approximately 8–10 weeks.

B. Each content area teacher will identify key content subject words for each student to learn and teach at least two new words every day and review one from the previous day. This practice can be readily implemented across all content area instruction and provides students with opportunities to expand their academic vocabulary, increase their background knowledge, and better understand the key ideas that they are reading and learning about. One way a content area teacher can do this is to select words in a unit that are high-priority and high-utility words. Assuming that a unit is three weeks long, they can then determine the key words students need to know, explicitly teaching them each week and also reviewing them in subsequent weeks. There are several ways that these words can be taught:

1. Teachers can use vocabulary maps that use the key word, pictures of the word, words that relate to the key word, a student friendly definition, and how the word can be used in a historical context.
2. Teachers can illustrate, show a picture that represents the word, or read one or two sentences that include the word describing it in ways that allow students to make informed decisions about word meaning. Then the students and the teacher can use this information to co-construct the meaning of the word.
3. Key words can be taught within the context of a debate or structured discussion in which students use those key words in their written and oral arguments.

C. Teachers should ask students to ask questions while they read and after they listen to the teacher read while they are following the text so that they will monitor comprehension and learning. Students who are actively engaged while listening and reading are more likely to understand and remember what they read or hear. Teachers

can promote that practice by instructing students to ask questions while they are reading. After students complete their reading they can also be asked to develop one question to ask the class. Students benefit from having question stems to help them develop these questions.

D. Teachers must teach word meaning strategies within content area classes. Concept words are the center of learning the big ideas of content as well as the necessary academic vocabulary for success. Content areas (e.g., math, science, social studies, and English language arts) each have unique vocabulary used to communicate concepts and explain processes. Students need to learn what these words mean and how to use them within the multiple contexts of reading, writing, and speaking. Adolescents will encounter approximately 10,000 new words per year, the majority of which are the complex terms of the content areas. Research supports two practices for helping students learn academic vocabulary:

1. Teachers can provide explicit instruction of academic or concept words that students need to learn to master the key ideas they are teaching. These words need to be introduced to the student by showing them the words, showing them a picture, video, or other demonstration to make the words vivid. Teachers then need to work with students to discuss what the word means and doesn't mean. A critical step is to return to these words regularly throughout the lesson and throughout the instructional unit to assure that students can use them with understanding in their speaking and writing tasks. Teach students the meaning of words within the context of learning and also the multiple meanings of words.
2. Teachers need to provide instruction in word learning strategies. Although explicit instruction is important, the sheer number of words students need to learn requires that they develop strategies for independently determining the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary. One means of equipping students to understand the content area terms they encounter is to teach the component morphemes (prefixes, roots, and suffixes) and how they contribute to the meaning of words. Students taught this process of analyzing words by morphemes were able to infer the meanings of untaught terms in subject-matter text. Other research indicates the practice is particularly effective with SEEDS when done systematically and coupled with multiple opportunities to practice. This can be facilitated by applying learned morphemes to words used in different content areas. Another word learning strategy involves teaching word meanings directly through the use of a mnemonic word association and a picture that ties together the word clue and the definition.

E. Teachers must instruct students how to activate and build appropriate background knowledge for understanding text content. Researchers report that background knowledge is second only to vocabulary in enhancing reading comprehension outcomes with secondary readers. A lack of prior knowledge can make understanding informational text particularly challenging. Research supports this strategy for building background knowledge:

1. Teach students to use text to support answers and consider whether they can locate text-based support for positions, and
2. Teach students to elaborate on why statements that they select could or could not be supported based on the text.

According to researchers, this technique requires students to identify related background knowledge in their memories to link to the statements and to provide adequate justification for their responses. When used in connection with text reading, it encourages students to return to important information to obtain further elaboration for their responses. Students would be asked to determine whether they could or could not adequately support the statement and use prior learning and text to support their views.

F. Teachers must teach students to use reading comprehension strategies while reading complex text. Students benefit from using reading comprehension strategies while reading complex text. Too often, adolescents proceed through text with little understanding of what they are reading or awareness of when their comprehension has broken down. They need to be taught to recognize when they do not adequately understand text and how to build comprehension. Research supports these strategies for reading comprehension:

1. Teach students to generate questions while reading to build comprehension skills. Learning to generate questions while reading is one way of getting students to stop at regular intervals to think about what is being communicated and how the information relates across paragraphs. Studies have shown that the practice can increase comprehension of content area text for students of different ability levels. The first level of questions is the most literal in that they are based on a fact that can be identified in one place in the text. The second level of questions combines information that is located in two different parts of the text. And, the third level of questions relates information in the text to something the reader has experienced or learned previously.

2. Another means of encouraging students to be active readers and to monitor their own comprehension is to teach them how to generate main idea statements for single or multiple paragraphs. Adolescents and teens that learn to identify the explicitly or implicitly stated main ideas of a text have shown increased understanding and recall of important information. Referred to as either “Paragraph Shrinking” or “Get the Gist,” students at a range of ability levels and language backgrounds have been successfully taught to use three steps in generating a main idea statement:

- a. Identify *who* or *what* is the focus of the paragraph or section;
- b. Determine the most important information about *what* the key person place/thing *has, is, or does*;

c. Succinctly state the *who* or *what* and most important information about him/her/it in a sentence.

G. Teachers must guide and engage students in activities that are text-related. Through both classroom discussion and written assignments, students will learn to apply critical analysis, inference, interpretation, and summation of printed material. The goal is to guide the student to understand text and respond through productive discussion and written answers. Research supports the following strategies for encouraging reading for understanding:

1. Foster discussion in small groups. Give students the opportunities to return to texts a number of times to explore, discuss, and revise their developing understanding of the ideas and concepts. This practice can be fostered through the use of reciprocal teaching, a multi-component strategy intended to support student comprehension. In reciprocal teaching, the teacher leads the dialogue about the text until students learn to assume different roles independently: summarizer, questioner, clarifier, or predictor. After reading a short section of text (generally a few paragraphs, at first, but increasing to several pages with practice), the summarizer highlights the key points for the group. Then, the questioner helps the group consider and talk about what was read by posing questions about anything that was unclear, puzzling, or related to other information that was learned. In this portion of reciprocal teaching, students can apply question generation skills that will support asking about more than surface-level information. The clarifier in the group of students is responsible for seeking out portions of text that will help answer the questions just posed. However, all members of the group participate in discussing the information and connecting ideas. In doing so, students must return to the current selection and, possibly, other readings to look for text evidence in support of their responses. Finally, the predictor offers suggestions about what the group can expect to read in the next section of text. These predictions are focused on activating relevant background knowledge, setting a purpose for reading, and relating new information to that just discussed by the group.

2. Teachers must instruct students in how to summarize text. Students that are explicitly taught how to summarize text are better able to discern the relationships among main ideas and significant details. When students work collaboratively on summaries of expository text, such as in reciprocal teaching, they reach higher levels of comprehension and retain more content information. Teachers must thoroughly explain and model each step multiple times with different types of text before students will be able to complete them in collaborative groups or, eventually, on their own.

H. Teachers must maximize all opportunities for students to read printed material. Both middle and high school content area teachers will have a range of readers in their classrooms, providing challenges for assignments that require text reading. For this reason, and others, many classroom teachers require students to read very little both inside and outside of their class time. Teachers also report that they increasingly rely on reading text aloud or using other media (e.g., videos) as a means for providing students

with content knowledge perceiving text reading as inaccessible. Reading and understanding text requires practice, and students need opportunities to read a range of text types (e.g., textbooks, letters, descriptions, original documents, poetry). Research supports the following strategies to enhance opportunities for students to read and respond to text:

1. Prepare students to read text by providing key ideas and key words. Providing the big idea and connecting principles prior to having students read the text will facilitate comprehension. This goal can also be accomplished by soliciting the big idea and principle from the students. Present the key words orally, on the board, or on a handout, including all proper nouns, prior to text reading.
2. Provide daily opportunities for students to read for a specific amount of time, then, provide a prompt for student response (e.g., 2–3 minutes for reading and 1–2 minutes for responding). Students can be asked to respond to predetermined prompts such as, “What is this section mostly about?” “How does the author describe _____?” “What did you learn about _____?” Students can respond in writing using learning logs or they can respond orally by turning and talking with a partner for 1 minute.
3. Have students participate in partner reading (typically a better reader and a less able reader) and then ask them to take turns reading the same passage with the better reader reading the passage first and then the less able reader rereading the passage. Students can partner-read for a specified amount of time (e.g., 3 minutes) and can use 1–2 minutes to write responses by determining the main idea, writing and answering a question, or summarizing.

I. Teachers should organize students into collaborative groups for reading tasks. Student involvement and learning can be well enhanced through well- structured collaborative groups, designed to promote both individual and group accountability. These groups can be used within content area classes and are associated with improved reading comprehension for students when implemented two or more times per week. Research supports the following strategies for collaborative groups:

1. Having students utilize Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). CSR has two important phases: the first phase is learning the four reading comprehension strategies that include (1) previewing text (preview), (2) monitoring comprehension while reading by identifying key words and concepts that are challenging (click and clunk), (3) thinking about the main idea while reading and putting it into your own words (get the gist), and (4) summarizing text understanding after you read (wrap up). The second phase is teaching students to use cooperative groups effectively as a means of applying the strategies. The focus of the practice described in this section is on implementing cooperative groups. Once students have developed proficiency using the four strategies with teacher guidance, they are ready to use these same strategies in peer-led cooperative learning groups. Some teachers ask students to first work in pairs and then move into a group, while other teachers find it better to start with cooperative

groups.

2. Forming CSRs will be a success if the teacher is aware that all students will not function equally well in a group and that groups are more effective when the teacher selects students with the intent of designing a well-functioning team. Teachers assign approximately 4 students to each group, considering that each group will need a student with reading proficiency and a leader, thus providing a group that represents varying abilities. Teachers assign students to roles in the group and teach them to perform their role. Roles rotate on a regular basis (e.g., every couple of weeks) so that students can experience a variety of roles. Student roles are an important aspect of effective implementation of cooperative learning so that all group members are assigned a meaningful task and participate in the group's success.

3. The teacher's role in CSR, while students are working in their groups, is to ensure the students have been taught their role and know how to implement their responsibility. Forming successful and productive groups is an important accomplishment because it allows the teacher to circulate among the groups, listen to students' participation, read students' learning logs, and most importantly, provide clear and specific feedback to improve the use and application of the strategies. Teachers can help by actively listening to students' conversations and clarifying difficult words, modeling strategy usage, encouraging students to participate, and modeling strategy application. It is expected that students will need assistance learning to work in cooperative groups, implementing the strategies, and mastering academic content.

§**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective [insert date].