



Georgia Department of Education

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students

January 2019

NOW ACCEPTING COHORT 2 APPLICATIONS



Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students is now accepting applications for Cohort 2! The second cohort of districts will be selected from across Georgia. A panel will review the applications to identify and determine readiness of districts.

We are resolved to collaborate with districts committed to a continuous improvement framework in which problem solving and data-based decision making occurs in an ongoing way and across multiple levels of the education system.

The purpose of this application process is to identify school districts that will participate in Georgia's MTSS training. Georgia's MTSS trainers will provide training, technical assistance and professional development toward implementing a sustainable tiered system of supports.

This application process is open and available for Georgia school districts to submit no later than **February 28, 2019**. Georgia's MTSS Team will review applications and notify all districts submitting.

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HOW TO APPLY FOR COHORT 2

Applications must be submitted via email or postal mail using the contact information at the end of the application.



Visit [Georgia's MTSS](#) to download a copy of Georgia's MTSS application.

Please email applications to gamtss@doe.k12.ga.us.

Selected district will be notified by April 1, 2019. Initial meetings and trainings with district teams will start in May.

You may also mail applications to:

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students
Attn: Karen Suddeth, Program Manager
Special Education Services and Supports
Georgia Department of Education
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
1770 Twin Towers East
Atlanta, Georgia 30334



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SUPPORTING THE WHOLE CHILD

Understanding the “Why”

The MTSS Consortium By William Duncan



Madge Willis, City Schools of Decatur, Christy Bounds and Chelsea Montgomery, Fulton County Schools, and Scott McManus, DeKalb County Schools

I am part of a group of metro Atlanta school district personnel who are charged with overseeing the implementation of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students in all metro schools. We call ourselves the

MTSS Consortium. Collectively, we represent 15 school systems and two state educational agencies, that are currently supported by Metro East Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS).

We meet seven times a year to explore the challenges of implementing a tiered system of supports for students in large and culturally diverse districts. We share ideas that flourish into procedures, materials, and possible solutions to help prevent and reduce implementation challenges. By sharing our individual expertise and experiences , educators can take advantage of a wealth of knowledge and abundance of skills to build a cohesive understanding of the framework.

We have created a positive peer support system with friendly voices, fresh perspectives, and new ideas just a phone call away. Solutions to vexing issues are as plentiful as the members of the consortium.

Implementation of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students with fidelity in every school in the metro area is a lofty aspiration for the consortium's members.

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Our hope is that our efforts will improve the fidelity of implementation and one day we will achieve our goal, ensuring every school we touch has instructional support that will provide academic and behavioral success for every child in metro Atlanta.

*Bill Duncan
Program Specialist, Metro East GLRS*

DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT: SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Jennifer Dobbins, Kathleen Burke, Kymberly Shirk, Martha Cribbs , Aaron Jackson, Ira Williamson, Donna Simmons, Krystal Bell, and Candace Purdom

Monitoring Student Progress to Ensure Achievement for Every Student

The mission of the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS) is to ignite a passion for learning and teaching at high levels. “Our goal is to pursue academic excellence, improve student outcomes, and ensure that all students are prepared for productive futures,” said Aaron Jackson. Jackson is one of the Program Managers with the SCCPSS Department for Specialized Instruction and supports implementation for a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Response to Intervention. To achieve SCCPSS’s mission, educators are using MTSS to find tools to help them identify student risks.

“MTSS will assist the district in evaluating the success of current practices, aid schools in developing a team-based approach to address the unique educational needs of all students, and align resources in order to achieve system objectives efficiently and effectively,” he said.

Monitoring student progress is essential for SCCPSS leaders, as the data informs teachers and teams of any changes that may need to occur within a school's instructional and/or intervention program.



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DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT: SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"Consistent progress monitoring helps school teams identify estimated rates of improvement for students and ensures that educational decisions are data-based. Progress monitoring provides critical information allowing schools to continually assess instructional practices to make certain that selected interventions are effective and lead to increased student achievement."

In SCCPSS, the selection of tools and resources used to monitor student progress are site-based decisions. The district team provides guidance to ensure that progress monitoring tools are evidence-based, reliable, and valid. "Schools throughout the district monitor progress in a variety of ways. Examples include: AIMSweb, Dibels, EasyCBM, FastBridge, GRASP, iReady, and Frequency Charts (Behavior)."

SCCPSS is dedicated to implementing MTSS as it serves as the framework for continuous school improvement and aligns with the district's mission.

"We see the framework as one which will result in a systems-change paradigm within districts that emphasizes and embraces collective responsibility and ensures an appropriate fit of curriculum, instruction, and intervention to facilitate successful outcomes for all students."

COACHES' CORNER

South Georgia Regional Coach: Jeannie Morris, SSIP Program Specialist



Becoming a regional coach was a natural transition for Jeannie Morris, who was influenced by the creative progression of her great Aunt Delilah. Despite having multiple disabilities, Delilah was an artist with a flair for writing poetry and captivated family and friends with her sense of humor.

Her aunt excelled in life because she used her disabilities to highlight her unique talents and her drive for success was celebrated by others.

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"It was my relationship with her that enabled me to know that I wanted to be a teacher so that I could work to find each students' strengths and to assist them in building on those strengths like my great aunt had learned to do," said Morris.

Morris has evolved as a special education teacher to an instructional coach, and served as school administrator before becoming a coach for Georgia's Tiered Systems of Support for Students and the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) team.

Morris supports Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools' MTSS team in partnership with new regional coach, Launa Chamberlin. The teams work together to apply each of the essential components of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students and evaluate areas of strength and need.

"One strength of SCCPS is the district's data collection platform. Regardless of the tier of intervention being implemented, teachers are progress monitoring on a weekly basis and this data is being entered into the platform."

Morris said this type of continuous learning and data collection helps educators make data-based decisions that will meet their students' unique needs. She's optimistic that like SCCPS, all districts in Georgia will begin to regularly progress monitor students and implement MTSS to have a compounding effect on early intervention and graduation rates so that we all can be proud to celebrate their students' accomplishments after graduation.

JANUARY NEWS

Welcome New MTSS Coach!



With nearly 20 years of experience in the education and social work profession, Launa Chamberlin is the new South Georgia Regional Coach. Chamberlin will support Savannah-Chatham County School System and Dodge County School District.

Chamberlin is the mother of two boys and she is affectionately called "LaLa" by her grandson.

"As a mother, social worker, grandmother, and educator I wanted to make a difference in the lives of others, so struggles could become achievements," she said.



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INTEGRATING OUR WORK

Building a Network of Supports for All Students



Left to Right, Ann Cross, Annette Murphy, Susan Brozovic, and Jeannie Morrie

Georgia's Student Success Imagine the Possibilities (SSIP) initiative was created to improve the graduation rate for students with disabilities. The statewide initiative

implements a tiered system of supports for all districts to improve graduation rates so that all students can be college and career ready by graduation.

This is the fifth year of the initiative that is made up of a team of program specialists, district coaches, and the Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS).

The state uses three systemic improvement program specialists to provide intensive supports around graduation, dropout and improved results for all students to thirteen identified intensive districts. Districts are required to provide evidence-based interventions and supports to improve results for students. Through this initiative the SSIP team and the GLRS have implemented Check and Connect across the state.

Check and Connect is an evidence-based practice to improve attendance, behavior, and course completion, decreasing dropout and increasing graduation rates for districts for all students. It is an evidence-based practice with positive impact results.

GLRS staff provide specialized professional learning, technical assistance and coaching for school systems on a variety of topics related to students with disabilities and graduation.

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Through Collaborative Communities, universal supports are provided to all districts around the SSIP work.

GLRS and SSIP Teams provide a state-wide support to districts and schools by providing professional learning, technical assistance, and coaching to districts and are an essential part of implementing Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students.

"Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students assists all districts in providing a framework to develop tiered supports to meet the needs of all students, thereby, increasing outcomes. The work of SSIP focuses this work to support districts struggling with graduation," said Leigh Ann Cross, GLRS program manager.



"It integrates the work across divisions to provide a systemic approach and a common message. The MTSS framework utilizes a problem-solving approach around evidence-based practices. I am very excited about this initiative and believe we will see improved results for students while providing greater supports to administrators, teachers and families."

The SSIP program specialists are an integral part of the MTSS implementation team. They are collaborative members of the MTSS state team members, assisting with developing professional learning units and using this training to build capacity and improve outcomes for all students in the state.

PROGRESS MONITORING RESOURCES

To learn more about select progress monitoring tools that best meet individual needs, visit the National Center on Intensive Intervention on the American Institutes of Research's (AIR) website to view the [Progress Monitoring Tools Chart](#).