



## MULTI-TIER SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

aka Response to Intervention (RTI)

Identifying struggling learners in any grade is the first step to helping them gain the academic skills that lead to high school graduation with a regular diploma. There is tremendous momentum nationwide to develop systematic Pre-K-12 early intervention models for both behavior and academics that target those students most at risk. Multi-Tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) programs are referred to globally as Response to Intervention (RTI); however, states and districts may have given them a local name (e.g. Response to Instruction, Problem Solving Model, Student Success Team, or others). More than 40 states have adopted their version of MTSS, and students—including students with learning disabilities (LD)—are benefiting from the early intervention and learning support these locally developed programs provide.

School districts are seeing valuable outcomes where MTSS is being implemented in Title I schools with rigor and fidelity. Research and current practices show that schools and districts engaging in aligning resources, promoting greater collaboration, and striving to serve students through a rigorous MTSS when they first struggle academically and behaviorally leads to:

- gains in reading and math assessment scores for all students;
- a decrease in inappropriate referrals to special education, particularly for minority students and boys;
- a decrease in suspensions and expulsions;
- improved collaboration between general and special education; and
- corresponding cost benefits.

Our recommendations seek to build on existing statutory language in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) to further align federal education law. ESEA should include the following:

- 1. Allow coordination of funds between Title I, Title II, and any literacy grant program with IDEA Coordinated Early Intervening Services Sec. 613(f).**
  - Align current practices, policies, and programs to protect the federal investment in ensuring students get the early help they need.
  - Ensure flexibility in the blending of federal funding so systematic, school-wide early help for any struggling learner can be provided.



**2. Include a definition of ‘Multi-Tier System of Supports’ in ESEA.**

The definition is as follows: A comprehensive system of differentiated supports that includes evidence-based instruction, universal screening, progress monitoring, formative assessments, research-based interventions matched to student’s needs, and educational decision-making using student outcome data.

**3. Use the term ‘Multi-Tier System of Supporters’ as necessary in Title I, Title II, and any literacy program as an allowable use of funds.**

**NCLD Resources:**

MTSS Overview

RTINetwork.org

