

ED 589: MTSS 101: Introduction to a Multi-Tiered System of Supports

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COURSE CREDIT:	0.5 graduate credit
DATES & TIMES:	July 7 – July 21, 2014 Online/asynchronous via Blackboard (Expectation of 4 hours of online activity per week for the 2-week long course, for a total of 8 clock hours of course activity.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this class, we will explore concepts that lead to successful implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The framework will be identified and the Essential Components will be defined. Each participant will review materials created by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to support effective system-wide implementation and individual action planning. Participants who could benefit from this instruction include those who want to learn about how to implement or facilitate implementation of an MTSS, such as: administrators, specialized service providers, special educators, general educators, and family or community members.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Define the Six Essential Components of MTSS.
2. Identify how the integrated supports (data, systems, and practices) within MTSS contribute to improved student outcomes, with an intentional focus on creating a problem-solving culture.
3. Explain the value added by an efficient and effective implementation of MTSS.
4. Describe how MTSS connects and encompasses diverse student populations, varied stakeholder groups, and designated or identified hierarchies/authorities within a learning community.
5. Apply action planning strategies for personal development of MTSS knowledge and next steps for MTSS implementation within the participant's site or situation.

TEXTS, READINGS, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

Primary materials: Participants will access materials housed on the CDE MTSS website as well as other CDE subweb pages.

- Colorado Department of Education. (2014). *Multi-tiered system of supports*. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/>

Additional materials may be accessed/referenced; in addition to others, the following will be used:

- Dufour, R., & DuFour, R. (2006). *Learning by doing*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- Garmston, R., & McKanders, C. (2013). *Developing and facilitating collaborative groups*. Bangkok, Thailand: Thinking Collaborative.
- Kretlow, A.G., & Blatz, S.L. (2011). The ABCs of evidence-based practice for teachers. *Teaching exceptional children*, 8-19.
- OSEP Technical Assistance Center (2014). *Positive behavioral interventions & supports*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbis.org>
- National Center for Learning Disabilities. (2014). *RtI action network*. Retrieved from <http://www.rtinetwork.org/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In order to receive a Passing grade, the participant must:

- Participate actively online (min. 4 hours/week for two weeks). This is the expectation of committed online time that the participant will be engaging actively; this does not include “homework” activities that may be done independent of online/Blackboard participation. The participant may need to complete necessary offline reading, viewing, etc. to prepare for online submissions.
- Actively engage in online discussions and activities related to course objectives (using the Discussion Board and assignments for submission to instructors).
- Complete the Pre- and Post- Assessment: This will address the course objectives.

The Course Requirement section and the Grade Distribution section should mirror each other – in the Course Requirements section, you need to LIST and DESCRIBE anything you are going to grade (see below).

Graded Work:

- Pre-Assessment/Post-Assessment: These brief online surveys ask respondents to denote their perceptions of initial and final understanding and skill development in relation to MTSS. The surveys “mirror” each other with identical content contained in each. In addition to completing 8-10 multiple choice questions, participants will provide inquiry questions in the pre-assessment and will have an opportunity to answer those same questions in the post-assessment. The pre-assessment will be the first activity that is completed, and the post-assessment is the final task that will be completed for the course. [5 points each week]
- Weekly Discussion Board entries (rubric will be provided): Weekly participation on the discussion board includes: (A) 5 points for answering a prompt provided by the instructor(s), (B) 3 points for introducing a question/prompt of one’s own that depicts the participant’s thinking/connections, and (C) 2 points for responding to at least one other participant’s prompt/question. [10 points each week]

- Individual Reflection (one per week): Each week, participants will use the Blackboard Assignment submission mechanism to upload a Reflection Journal that is 1-3 typewritten pages in length (with a minimum of 225 words). Participants should synthesize ideas from the different materials and/or learning modules that are presented each week. The participant’s reflection should provide a clear, coherent link between what was addressed and his/her own context. The journal entries should be written in the first-person; however, there is an expectation that citing relevant authors, sources, and/or instructors will be included within each journal entry. The content should address each of the topics, readings, and videos that were addressed that week. Although a lengthy focus on each topic may not be necessary, participants are expected to apply metacognitive strategies and demonstration of cognitive processing in his/her submitted journal. See course outline included below for weekly topics/activities. [10 points each week]
- Outline of Intentional Plan (week one): At the end of the first week of learning, participants will use the Blackboard Assignment submission mechanism to upload an outline of their planned activities for post-course application of learning. Each participant will be asked to draft ideas for how his/her practice will change as a result of the learning; this would include the purpose, audience, and topic for the participant’s focus. Participants will need to describe for whom/with whom they will be addressing their development. Activities and timelines will be proposed. This initial outline will be used to frame the plan that will be finalized in week two. [15 points]
- Office Hours (coaching conversation with instructor): These will be scheduled between instructor(s) and participants; office hours will occur during week two. Communication will be via phone conference call and/or Adobe Connect virtual meeting space. [15 points]
- Final Action Plan (week two): At the end of the second week of learning, participants will use the Blackboard Assignment submission mechanism to upload a final draft of the Action Plan. This will be a well-articulated depiction of the use of course materials for plans for implementation after the course ends. The timeline defined in the plan should not exceed 120 days after the course ends. Participants should name for whom/with whom they will be applying their learning. The template provided for participants will allow for recording of when/how participants will use the course resources to attend to a formalized purpose, audience, and topic. The implementation plan will make mention of long-term goals, but the prioritized requirement will be on the creation of well-defined short-term plans. Each participant will need to include instruments for measuring success of implementation of his/her plan and methods for evaluation and decision-making rules. [20 points]

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

Grade Distribution:

Pre-Assessment/Post-Assessment	10%
Weekly Discussion Board Entries	20%
Individual Reflections	20%
Outline of Intentional Plan	15%
Office Hours	15%
Final Action Plan	20%

Grade Scale:

Grading will be Pass/Fail: A minimum score of 80% will be required to pass.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week One/Unit One: Develop understanding of MTSS

- Pre-assessment
- Course Outcomes
- Introduction of Reflection/Discussion Board Activities
- Definition and key concepts within MTSS: Emphasis on systems thinking
- History/evolution of RtI for use for SLD/SED criteria
- Implementation Science
- Value-Add in Colorado (legislative priorities and implementation practices)
- Essential Components: Shared Leadership, Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision Making, Layered Continuum of Supports

Products from learning:

- Pre-Assessment (within learning module)
- Individual submission of reflection
- Participation in Discussion Board
- Outline of Personal Planning (with provided template)

Week Two/Unit Two: Evaluate current learning state and build opportunities for MTSS implementation

- Review Week One Reflection/Discussion Board
- Complete Week Two Reflection/Discussion Board
- Office Hours: Personal Coaching with Instructor(s)
- Essential Components: Evidence Based Instruction, Intervention, and Assessment Practices; Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring; Family, School, and Community Partnering
- Post-Assessment

Products from learning:

- Individual submission of reflection
- Participation in Discussion Board
- Personal Action Plan (with provided template)
- Post-Assessment (within learning module)

Note: Online Technology

- The online module will be delivered via Blackboard Academic Suite. Each participant will need Internet capability in order to access the course materials and interactions with other class participants. Instruction as to how to log into the course will be sent with your registration confirmation.