



Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports

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Kansas State Department of Education External Evaluation of the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) EVALUATION SUMMARY

Purpose

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) has contracted with WestEd¹, an independent, not for profit, research, evaluation, technical assistance and professional development organization, to conduct an external evaluation of the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS). The project will design, pilot, refine, and implement an evaluation system that measures the statewide progress of MTSS toward its main goal: *creating a statewide system of support to local schools and districts in order to increase school capacity to use resources in ways that enable every child to be successful*. The project will provide formative and summative evaluation information to KSDE for improving and sustaining MTSS at the school, district and state levels.

Background

MTSS² is a coherent continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices that supports a rapid response to children's academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve to high standards. The focus of MTSS is system level change across the classroom, school, district and state.

Prior to 2007, KSDE supported the use of problem-solving approaches to intervention and tiered approaches to instruction in a number of Reading First elementary schools. This work informed and eventually led KSDE to articulate the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) framework. The framework contains a defined set of practices and principles that address prevention of academic and behavioral problems inclusive of all students.

Plan for the Evaluation

The external evaluation will take place over a four-year period. Year 1 will involve the development of a comprehensive evaluation plan and the development and piloting of instrumentation and data collection procedures. Year 2 will involve piloting the evaluation in a selected number of districts and schools. Years 3 and 4 will involve full implementation of the evaluation design. Two WestEd senior staff, Kristin Reedy, Ed.D., and Natalie Lacireno-Paquet, Ph.D., will co-direct the project and lead a team of evaluators to conduct the MTSS evaluation.

¹ Information about WestEd's may be found at www.wested.org.

² Additional information and materials related to MTSS are available at www.kansasmtss.org.

The evaluation will involve a mixed methods design using qualitative as well as quantitative methodologies.

Evaluation Questions

The project will address five over-arching evaluation questions:

1. **Scope:** How many schools, districts, and early childhood settings are participating in MTSS?
2. **Implementation:** Annually, how many schools, districts, and early childhood settings are (a) exploring the use of MTSS to meet students' academic and behavioral needs, (b) adopting and installing components of MTSS (e.g., assessments, curriculum, instruction, etc.), or (c) successfully implementing MTSS with fidelity?
3. **Student Outcomes:** How are students performing in schools, districts, and early childhood settings that are fully implementing MTSS?
4. **Statewide System and Infrastructure:** How effective are KSDE and MTSS Core Team activities in supporting statewide implementation of MTSS with fidelity by schools, districts, and early childhood settings?
5. **Sustainability:** How successful are schools, districts, and early childhood settings in sustaining MTSS?

Data Collection Strategies

Five main data collection strategies will be used to answer the over-arching evaluation questions:

1. An online survey of teachers and administrators in schools that are implementing MTSS;
2. Interviews and/or focus groups with members of KSDE leadership structures, recognized MTSS facilitators, consultants and partners;
3. Onsite visits to a selected number of case study schools/districts that will include interviews, observations, focus groups, and data review/analysis;
4. Analysis of extant data to address impact on student outcomes; and
5. Document and website review.

The overall goal of the evaluation will be to provide valid, useful, and timely information to determine the degree to which MTSS is meeting its goal—to provide and sustain an integrated, systemic approach to meeting the needs of all students, using its resources in the most effective and efficient manner to ensure the success of every child served by the Kansas public schools.

For more information about the MTSS external evaluation, please contact Natalie Lacireno-Paquet or Kristin Reedy at WestEd by email at MTSSevaluation@wested.org or by phone at 1-800-347-4200 extension 1133.

For more information about MTSS, in general, please contact the KSDE MTSS Core Team at info@kansasmtns.org.

The contents of this resource were developed under an agreement from the Federal Department of Education to the Kansas State Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and endorsement by the Kansas State Department of Education or the Federal Government should not be assumed. Kansas MTSS is funded through Part B funds administered by the Kansas State Department of Education's Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services. Keystone Learning Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in this program and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Keystone Learning Services Executive Director, 500 E. Sunflower Blvd, Ozawkie, KS 66070, 785-876-2214.