Practice Profile for the Essential Components of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
Family, School, and Community Partnering

COLORADO
Department of Education

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Colorado has defined Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) as a prevention-based framework of team-driven, data-based problem solving for improving the outcomes of every student through family, school, and community partnering and a layered continuum of evidence-based practices applied at the classroom, school, district, region, and state level.

Essential Components of MTSS Implementation

Colorado has identified **five Essential Components** fundamental in implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework.

The five components are:

1. Team-Driven Shared Leadership
2. Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision-Making
3. Family, School, and Community Partnering (FSCP)
4. Layered Continuum of Supports
5. Evidence-Based Practices

These components are complementary and iterative. They are neither mutually exclusive nor hierarchical.

If the components are integrated and effectively-implemented, student outcomes will improve.
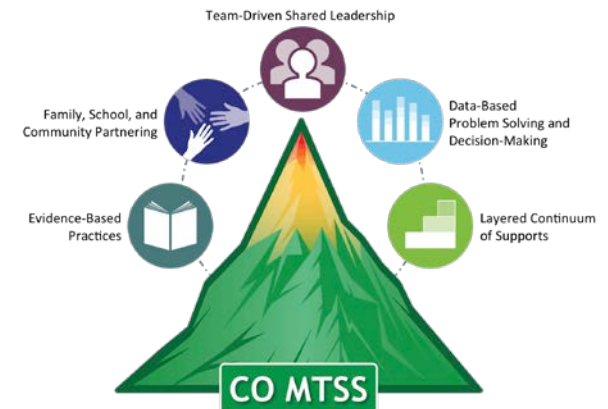
Purpose of this Practice Profile

A Practice Profile is utilized to support the adoption and implementation of an innovation; in this case, the innovation referred to is the MTSS framework, with each profile representing one of five Essential Components. A Practice Profile is an instrument used to operationalize the features of a practice, program, and/or system. This Practice Profile defines the guiding principles and critical components of **Family, School, and Community Partnering**, an Essential Component of MTSS implementation. It defines this Essential Component according to the ideal or "gold" standard of implementation, acceptable variation, and unacceptable variation. The content for this profile is adapted from the *National Family-School Partnership Standards* (National PTA, 2008) and the *Dual Capacity-Building Framework* (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Family, School, and Community Partnering Defined

The collaboration of families, schools, and communities as active partners in improving learner, classroom, school, district, and state outcomes.

	Ideal "Gold Standard"	Acceptable Variation	Unacceptable Variation
Welcoming All Families	Families are active participants in the educational system, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to staff, and to what students are learning and doing. Positive relationships exist. The school community respects and includes every family.	Relationships have been established *between* families and between *families and educational staff*. Families feel comfortable attending school/district activities, at school(s) and in the community.	Families feel intimidated by the school(s). Some families are not included in efforts to partner effectively. Relationships are not established.
Communicating Effectively	Families and staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning. Communication is timely and reciprocal, authentic inquiries are made of families, and staff members are responsive. Multiple methods of communication ensure access and equity. Communication is ongoing.	Plans for multiple methods of communication are being developed and implemented. Staff members share information on relevant topics (e.g., instruction, issues, and decisions). Families are encouraged to initiate communication.	Communication is one-directional. Information is infrequent &/or minimal. Only one communication method is used. Content is rarely related to student learning. Access and equity are not considered.
Supporting Student Success	Families and staff continuously collaborate as active partners to support students' learning at home and at school through a tiered system of supports. Information is shared about student-level and system-level progress.	School-based learning activities are known and supported by families and staff. Student-level progress data is consistently shared with each family.	There is no home and school coordination for student learning and progress. Learning is school-owned. Progress data is not known by all.
Speaking Up for Every Child	Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure fairness and access. Families know how school systems operate, how to raise questions, and what their rights and responsibilities are.	Families feel empowered to advocate for their own children. Every family has awareness of family rights and responsibilities.	Families feel discouraged from asking questions or advocating. Families are not aware of their rights or how school systems operate.
Sharing Power	Families and staff are partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs. Family voice *and* family leadership are evident. Shared responsibility is exhibited in problem solving processes.	Select policies, documents, and procedures are results of partnering. Common language but inconsistent protocols are used in problem solving and decision-making processes.	Family voice is absent from individual and system-wide decision-making. Strategic, inclusive problem solving is not taking place.
Collaborating with Community	Families and educational staff mutually collaborate with community partners (e.g., businesses, organizations, institutions of higher education) to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.	Links to community resources exist. The school/district has a place in the life of the greater community.	Families, educational staff, and community partners do not collaborate on projects. There is no mutual commitment between stakeholder groups to support student learning.
Dual Capacity - Building	Evidence-based adult learning principles are applied in an enabling context to provide varied opportunities (e.g., side-by-side workshops, online modules, forums, academies, etc.) to support the capabilities, connections, cognition, and confidence of families and educators to partner effectively throughout a multi-tiered framework.	Learning approaches, language, and content are considered when planning for adult learners. Tiered supports for families and educators are evidence-based. Delivery methods are limited.	Adult learning principles are not considered. Partnering content and/or skill development is not available. A single delivery method or stakeholder group is served. Multi-tiered partnering is not visible.

Multi-Tiered Family, School, and Community Partnering (FSCP) Supports Checklist

This *Checklist* was developed to assist family members, school staff, and community collaborators in assessing how their site or situation currently operationalizes partnering throughout the tiers or layers of support. Another term, "differentiated partnering" (Edwards, 2011), has been used to describe this idea – that there needs to be a continuum of partnering actions so as every student and family is successfully included in a school community. The goal is to ensure seamless partnering for every student's success, matching supports to needs. This tool was created using the fifty plus years of research findings that specify the importance of family participation in students' positive educational outcomes. Originally, this *Checklist* was developed to guide use of actions and tools as provided in the *Response to Intervention (RtI)) Family & Community Partnering: "On the Team and At the Table" Toolkit* (Colorado Department of Education, 2009). It has since been adapted and revised according to stakeholder feedback, Colorado legislation, the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (PTA, 2008), and the Dual Capacity-Building Framework (U. S. Department of Education, 2013). Items represent the evidence-based actions identified in these various initiatives and documents within a tiered framework.

This *Checklist* can also be used in action planning. As individuals answer the questions, they have the opportunity to assess what they observe, experience, and know from their unique perspective. Individuals and/or different stakeholder groups can collect and analyze results as a whole and/or disaggregate to identify specific patterns or needs. Data can be used in strategically planning, implementing, and evaluating partnering activities. Using a team-based approach may allow for different individuals (educators, families, or community members) to share expertise they might have about supports that are aligned to certain areas of need. The *Checklist* can be used as an evaluation tool to help assess growth and effectiveness. In addition, the items in this assessment can be used to formulate specific partnering "job descriptions" for a specific role or set of responsibilities. The *Checklist* could be considered during performance evaluations or when developing professional growth goals, as well.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is incorporated within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Multi-Tiered Family, School, and Community Partnering (FSCP)
Supports Checklist

Date: School: Role (Educator, Family, Community):

INSTRUCTIONS: Please check those that you observe in your site or situation; note NA if not aware.

Universal Supports – All Families/Staff

SCHOOL: Our school administrators and all school staff members are…

____1. Creating a welcoming, culturally and linguistically responsive environment with multiple visiting and volunteering opportunities (home and school).

____2. Providing a shared understanding of the evidence and legal base for partnering.

____3. Communicating partnering beliefs: *(a) Education is a shared responsibility between home and school; (b) Families are active partners; (c) Student success is always the focus.*

____4. Integrating partnering practices and language into all documents, procedures, and team processes.

____5. Ensuring every family uses the school technology - parent portal, email, website, texting.

____6. Ensuring every family member knows the importance of his/her actions in supporting learning at home:*(a) Frequent and systematic discussions about school; (2) Encouraging their children regarding schoolwork; and (3) Providing or working with resources to provide supervision, support for homework and after-school time.*

____7. Sharing the school's tiered MTSS or RtI framework with all staff and families.

____8. Providing family education on learning-related topics, based on identified needs.

____9. Including families in school decision-making and on leadership teams (SACs, DACs).

____10. Using data systematically to improve and expand family partnering practices.

____11. Allocating time for a staff person to support personnel and families in partnering.

____12. Collaborating with community resources.

____13. Implementing federal and state legislated partnership responsibilities, such as cited in ESEA, IDEA, SB 09-163, SB 09-256, SB 10-191, SB 13-193, ECEA, and READ Act.

CLASSROOM: Our teachers and specialists are…

____1. Contacting every family personally to create ongoing, two-way communication.

____2. Ensuring each family, including students, understands class and homework success expectations, and how everyone will partner if a student struggles in learning.

____3. Providing information on current class content so families can reinforce learning at home.

____4. Asking families what they need to support learning at home and following up.

____5. Sending progress data regularly to families, with opportunities for discussion.

____6. Telling students that school and home are working together for their success.

Targeted and Intensive Supports – Some or Few Families/Staff (Includes All Universal)

Our specialists/intervention teams, with teachers and administrators, are…

____1. Designating people and processes to reach out and individually encourage families and staff who may be hesitant or uncomfortable.

____2. Including families as active partners throughout the individualized MTSS problem solving process, providing information and participation in decision-making.

____3. Supporting teachers and families in mutually developing and implementing individual student plans such as IEP, Behavior, READ, Truancy, and Advanced Learning.

____4. Ensuring families understand and participate in the implementation of small group (standard protocol) instructional academic and behavioral interventions.

____5. Individualizing family-school partnering plans and support when needed.

____6. Providing school, family and community wraparound when needed.

____7. Accessing conflict resolution support and processes when needed.

Total Universal School: ____/13; Total Universal Classroom: ____/6; Total Upper Tiers: ____/7;

SUPPORTS SUMMARY: Strengths: Concerns:

* Aligned with the *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* (PTA, 2008), the research which relates specific, intentional family-school partnering to increased student success (Christenson and Reschly, 2010), and the Dual Capacity-Building Framework (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Indicator #8 Planning Tool

Families and Educators of Students with Disabilities

Indicator #8: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs)

Name (Optional):   **Role (Family Member or Educator or Team):**   **Date:**

Directions: Select the column that best describes your role. Mark your rating of the practice for your site or situation from your perspective. This tool is designed to help stakeholders examine similarities and differences between family and educator views, thus guiding strategic planning and training to support effective family-school partnering focused on improving student learning. Each question is aligned with one of the *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* (PTA, 2008), but numerous of the practices could have been aligned with several of the *Standards.* The one that seemed most relevant was chosen.

	Rate your level of agreement with the following statements using the options on the right. Complete according to your role.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Families	**Educators**	1	2	3	4	5
1	I was asked to provide input for the assessment (testing) plans for my child.	We ask families to provide input for the assessment (testing) plans their child.					
	National Standard: *Sharing Power*						
2	My child's evaluation reports are written in terms that I understand.	We write reports in terms that are understandable to families.					
	National Standard: *Supporting Student Success*						
3	I was given timely notice of the IEP meeting.	We give families timely notice of IEP meetings.					
	National Standard: *Sharing Power*						
4	At my child's last IEP meeting, I provided input about my child's participation in statewide testing (state assessment or alternate state assessment).	At IEP meetings, we ask families for input about their child's participation in statewide testing (state assessment or alternate state assessment).					
	National Standard: *Communicating Effectively*						

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5	I am an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's educational program.	Families are equal partners with teachers and other professionals in planning their child's educational program.					
	National Standard: *Sharing Power*						
6	My child's school provided me with information about opportunities for training on my child's needs and/or IEP goals.	We provide families with information about opportunities for training on their child's needs and/or IEP goals.					
	National Standard: *Supporting Student Success*						
7	My recommendations are documented on the Prior Written Notice (Prior Written Notice is the written explanation of the actions that the school is proposing or refusing to take).	We document families' recommendations on the Prior Written Notice.					
	National Standard: *Sharing Power*						
8	Teachers or administrators helped me to understand the Procedural Safeguards (the federal requirements that protect the rights of parents and students).	We help families to understand the Procedural Safeguards.					
	National Standard: Speaking Up for Every Child						
9	I receive regular reports on child's progress toward the annual goals listed on the IEP.	We provide families with regular reports on their child's progress toward the annual goals listed on the IEP.					
	National Standard: *Supporting Student Success*						
10	When I request information from the school about my child, it is provided promptly and in ways that I understand.	When families request information from the school about their child, it is provided promptly and in ways they understand.					
	National Standard: *Communicating Effectively*						

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11	I initiate communication with the school about my child.	Families initiate communication with the school about their child.					
	National Standard: *Communicating Effectively*						
12	My child's school initiates communication with me about my child.	We initiate communication with families about their child.					
	National Standard: *Communicating Effectively*						
13	My child's school offers me a variety of ways to communicate with teachers.	We offer families a variety of ways to communicate with teachers.					
	National Standard: *Communicating Effectively*						
14	Teachers and administrators respect my cultural heritage.	We respect each family's cultural heritage.					
	National Standard: *Welcoming All Families into the School Community*						
15	Members of my family or I actively participate in school committees, events, and programs.	Families participate in school committees, events, and programs.					
	National Standard: *Welcoming All Families into the School Community*						
16	My child's school has given me information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.	We provide families with information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.					
	National Standard: *Collaborating with the Community*						
Average Score: _____			Total (SD):	Total (D):	Total (N):	Total (A):	Total (SA):

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National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (National PTA, 2008)

Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5 – Sharing Power

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

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Families, Educators, and Communities Fostering Student Success

Activity

Applying the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning!

Name/Team: Date: Role and Site:

Instructions: The National Standards can be applied to a classroom, school, district, or community and for every educator, family, and student. Please identify one specific, measurable, relevant action that you might be already doing or that you might potentially enact for ANY one, two or all of the Standards as you see them applying to **social, emotional, and behavioral learning**.

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
(PTA, 2008)

Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively
Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Families, Educators, and Communities Fostering Student Success

Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Standard 5 – Sharing Power

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Measurable Action for Site or Situation:

Comments: