Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports, Response to Intervention, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Crosswalk
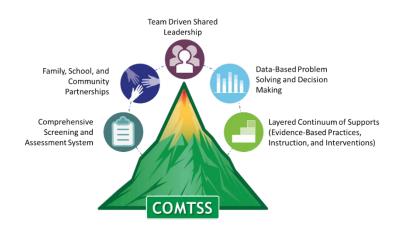## Version 2.0

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to provide *educators* (e.g., leadership teams, administrators, teachers, implementation support personnel) with information regarding the evolution and interrelatedness of Response to Intervention (RtI), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS). The content here reflects current thinking, distinctions between PBIS and RtI, and clarity around alignment of **how the frameworks function under the COMTSS umbrella in Colorado**. As mutually supportive frameworks within COMTSS, RtI and PBIS are essential. This document describes elements of RtI (e.g., legislative expectations and effective practices), and PBIS that are embedded within COMTSS.

Format: This document has two sections. *Section One* provides information on the definitions, features, and components. *Section Two* provides information about the strategic concepts incorporated in the frameworks. Citations/publication dates are included to clarify adaptations that have been made over time.

Color Coding: The boxes highlighted in yellow represent the historical foundation of RtI and PBIS. The column highlighted in light blue demonstrates how COMTSS integrates and builds upon PBIS and RtI to establish a larger system of supports.

Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS), Response to Intervention (RtI), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Crosswalk

FRAMEWORK DESCRIPTORS	COLORADO'S RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)	COLORADO'S POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)	COLORADO'S MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (COMTSS)
SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS, FEATURES, ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS			
A Definition Describing its Scope	RtI is a preventive approach to improving individual outcomes through high-quality universal instruction within a multi-tiered system that connect supports matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. [i]	PBIS (sometimes referred to as: School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports or SWPBS) is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral supports and interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students.	COMTSS is a prevention-based framework of team-driven, data-based problem solving to improve the outcomes of every student through family, school, and community partnerships, comprehensive screening and assessment, and a layered continuum of evidence-based practices applied at the classroom, school, district, region, and state level.
Key Features	Colorado's Response to Intervention (2020): • Collaborative Teaming across all educational systems • A clear problem-solving model with steps and routine • A formal and predictable process to build and implement solutions • Decision rules based on data from a variety of formal and informal assessment tools	Colorado's Eight Guiding Principles of PBIS (2002): • Administrative Leadership • Team Implementation • Define Concrete Expectations • Teach Behavior Expectations • Acknowledge and Reward Positive Behavior • Monitor and Correct Behavior • Use Data for Decision Making • Family and Community Partnerships	Colorado's Five Essential Components of COMTSS (2021): • Team-Driven Shared Leadership • Data-based Problem Solving and Decision-Making • Family, School, and Community Partnerships • Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System • Layered Continuum of Supports (Evidence-Based Practices, Instruction, and Interventions)
Development of Key Features	The Key Features were designed with considerations of research from national literature and Colorado's 6 Components of RtI that were developed in 2009 and included matching both academic and behavioral supports to student needs.	The Eight Guiding Principles were developed based on the work of a representative group of Colorado stakeholders under the guidance, leadership, and technical assistance of national partners from the PBIS Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Technical Assistance Center.	The Six Components of RtI (2009) and the eight Guiding Principles of PBIS informed the creation of five Essential Components of COMTSS. Braiding the elements of RtI, PBIS, and Implementation Science helped ensure alignment of past guidance and lessons learned from implementation efforts both locally and nationally.
COMTSS Component: Team-Driven Shared Leadership	Collaborative teaming in RtI refers to the activities of the designated team, including: • Creating a clear vision and commitment to the RtI process.	Active administrative involvement is emphasized to ensure that the adoption and sustainability of PBIS practices are contextually relevant and applied efficiently.	Teaming processes and structures that focus on distributing responsibility and shared decision-making across and within regions, districts, and schools to effectively design and use systems of training, coaching, resources, implementation, and evaluation.[2]

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[2] (Colorado Department of Education, Office of Learning Supports, 2021)

	- Identifying, selecting, developing, implementing, and monitoring student interventions - Promoting effective and efficient RtI implementation practices. - Supporting collaborative problem-solving approaches with colleagues, families, learners, and community members to build partnerships.[1]	- Team has established a clear mission/ purpose - Team has administrative support predicated upon clearly articulated expectations of practice to all staff. - Team has regular meetings (at least monthly) - Team includes one or more family representatives who are equal members - Team is representative of all staff, student/family demographics and values cultural diversity	- The purpose of the Leadership Team creates authentic opportunities for shared responsibility, buy-in, and inclusivity that contribute to alignment and cohesion across the educational system in support of effective and sustainable implementation of COMTSS and positive learner outcomes. - The Leadership Team consists of representative voices who possess vision, knowledge, and skills to lead COMTSS implementation. - Organizational structures and processes are used to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of teaming functioning. - Committing resources, time, and energy equitably to building capacity and sustaining momentum across the system. - Systems change is used to examine the effectiveness of implementation and alignment of initiatives across the organization. - Intentional collaboration between all teams within the system enables COMTSS integration and scale-up efforts
COMTSS Component: Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision-Making	Primary focus of data collection and analysis is related to the development, implementation, and evaluation of support at the student level. Student responses to instruction and intervention are evaluated using assessment, non-assessment, and fidelity of implementation data. Progress monitoring at the student level is prioritized. Interventions are provided based on individual needs regardless of the student's designation.	Team based problem solving is used to address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of all students. This approach is used across all levels and contexts of the school; process steps include: - Analysis of data is used to inform a precise problem statement. - Useful solution(s) are selected with considerations of contextual fit. - Implementation is systematically employed and monitored.	A continuous improvement process used by teams to collect, analyze, and evaluate information to inform decision making at the system and student levels. Analysis includes both aggregated and disaggregated data for the purpose of examining trends and systematic issues. Data-based problem solving and decision- making ensures evidence guides effective and efficient decision-making at the system and student level Thoughtful collection and analysis of academic and behavioral data inform instruction, performance, interventions, fidelity of

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[1] (Colorado Department of Education, 2010)

	• Individual problem-solving teams identify students who require additional supports or acceleration. • Analysis of data-driven decision making is ongoing, responsive, and systematic • A formal and predictable process to build and implement solutions is evident • Educators' perceived ability to implement specific features of student-level plans as well as their confidence in the plan's ability to achieve intended outcomes are addressed with care taken to ensure fidelity of implementation.	• Evaluation of plan implementation is conducted to determine further decision making.	implementation, and the efficient use of resources. • A problem-solving culture exists; inclusive and equitable access is embedded throughout the system. • The four-step process (*problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation,* and *plan evaluation*) is applied formally and informally. This asset-based approach is used within all contexts, in all educational settings and at all levels, including individual, classroom, school, district, BOCES, and state. • Problem solving occurs across the tiers (i.e., universal, targeted, and intensive) to ensure students are responding to best first instruction including evidence-based classroom management practices. • Resources are mapped, aligned, and reallocated in response to staff/student needs and outcomes. • An efficient data management system is selected, used, and maintained that provides timely, valid, reliable, accessible, and accurate data and information.
COMTSS Component: Family, School, and Community Partnerships	In RtI, the focus of collaborative partnerships is on an individual student's network of supports to address individual student's needs. • Establishes and sustains trusting relationships • Understands the importance of and integrating family and school culture for student success • Maintains reciprocal communication • Promotes collaborative problem-solving, coordinating learning at home, school and in the community, and acknowledging and celebrating progress.	Families and communities are essential to the efficacy and success of the PBIS framework through all staff valuing their involvement and desire to achieve and sustain a positive school climate and culture. Families and communities are informed and actively invited to participate across all elements of PBIS implementation: • Representative voices on leadership teams to support the PBIS framework. • Ongoing partnership with all-staff across all classroom and non-classroom settings. • Clear and consistent communication of school-wide expectations, rules,	Families, early-childhood programs, schools, and communities actively partnering to develop, implement, and evaluate effective and equitable practices to improve educational outcomes for children and youth. Family, school, and community partnerships (FSCP) positively impact academic and behavioral student outcomes (earn higher grades or test scores, graduate from high school and attend post-secondary education, develop self-confidence and motivation in the classroom, have better social skills and classroom behavior).

	• Partnerships between home, school, and community supports focused on student needs and network of supports • Guidance for families on how to request assistance for their child and the available continuum of interventions and supports is explicit.	acknowledgement system, and discipline processes. • Data-sharing occurs at specified intervals with the imperative of confidentiality.	• The FSCP Self-Assessment Rubric User's Guide[3] frames the expectations for implementation of high-impact strategies. • Effective Multi-Tiered Partnerships consist of comprehensive, strategic, and sustainable structures that benefit everyone in the learning community. Shared goals are embedded in continuous improvement efforts. • FSCP is equitable and inclusive; ongoing relationships demonstrate value of cultural and linguistic diversity. Informed by the experiences and philosophies of stakeholders, partnering practices are genuine, meaningful, and relevant. • Dual Capacity-Building (USDE, 2013) is prioritized; policies and adult learning opportunities enhance the capabilities, connections, cognition, and confidence of every stakeholder.
COMTSS Component: Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System	No matter the presenting problem, student level teams consider assessment and non-assessment data in all areas (academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development) when investigating root cause and contributing factors. Analysis of fidelity of implementation data is used in conjunction with student outcome data when evaluating the effectiveness of student level plans • Diagnostic and prescriptive data is primarily used to plan and measure the impact of supports, but is also used for identification of Giftedness, Specific Learning Disability (SLD),[4] Serious	Emphasis on the use of ongoing data collection and analysis to inform decision making. This requires identifying a variety of relevant data sources that can be efficiently and effectively accessible. • Assessment collection tools are selected for efficiencies and the degree to which leadership teams can access data in an easily digestible way to make decisions at the school, classroom, non-classroom and student level. • Disaggregated assessment and non-assessment data is used to measure responses of various student groups to implementation efforts.	The coordinated effort of gathering information across multiple measures to support decision making at the system and student level for the whole child. A comprehensive assessment system contributes to an outcomes-driven approach that includes structured monitoring and evaluation with a commitment to continuous improvement. • Assessment practices are systematically evaluated across the system to consider overall functionality, efficiency, cultural sensitivity, and usefulness. • Assessment and non-assessment measures for academic, behavioral, and indicators that measure school climate and conditions are selected and aligned to the four assessment

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[3] (Colorado Department of Education, 2021) https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/self-assessment-rubric-users-guide

[4] **SLD**: Specific Learning Disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. (Colorado Department of Education, 2016)

	Emotional Disability (SED), and Significant Reading Deficiency (SRD).[5] • Data collection that aligns to the four assessment purposes are integrated into student support plans which includes universal screening/benchmarking, diagnostic/prescriptive, formative (progress monitoring), and summative (outcome). • Screening and progress monitoring assessments are used to identify students who may need more support.		purposes including universal screening/benchmarking, diagnostic/prescriptive, formative (progress monitoring), and summative (outcome). • High-quality professional learning is developed for each assessment and non-assessment measure that includes the interpretation of results to inform and support equitable decision making practices, instruction, and interventions across student groups. • Assessment schedules include the frequency of collection and regular use of universal screeners and progress monitoring assessments in the areas of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports across the tiers.
COMTSS Component: A Layered Continuum of Supports (Evidence Based Practices, Instruction, and Interventions)	Response to Intervention utilizes evidence-based instruction, interventions, and practices (e.g., differentiation, modified scheduling, targeted skill development) for improved student outcomes. These tiered *interventions* are matched to student need. Responses to tiered *interventions* are used for decision-making, including intensifying or lessening of an *intervention*. Eligibility and determination decisions are not assumed as a result of receiving *interventions.* Students not responsive to a research-based *intervention* may trigger the suspicion of a disability and a referral for a special education evaluation. • Fluid Student interventions that are emphasized • There is a focus on student responses to layered supports	A continuum of culturally responsive behavioral supports is emphasized across all tiers, using function-based thinking, to reduce the frequency, intensity, and duration of challenging behaviors. • Universal: Primary prevention occurs school-wide and in classroom, non-classroom, and individual systems. • Targeted: Supplemental interventions and supports are provided for some students to benefit from universal instruction. • Intensive: Specialized, individualized systems are provided for students with complex behavioral challenges. • PBIS consists of core elements that exist within a multi-tiered framework. These	Ensuring that every student receives equitable whole child supports that are evidence based, culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate through layered supports. The framework of a multi-tiered approach provides for efficient, effective, and equitable allocation of resources within the education system. When appropriately used, the tiers support each learner in experiencing success by meeting their unique needs. • Hierarchical, preventive tiers of instruction, interventions, and supports (as a layered continuum) are accessible for every student within the school • Tiered supports facilitate improvement and growth for every student (i.e., struggling or excelling) and are not contingent on student label or identification

[5] **SRD:** Significant Reading Deficiency: A student does not meet the minimum skill levels for reading competency in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, including oral skills, and reading comprehension established by the State Board for the student's grade level. (Colorado Department of Education, 2015)

• Supports are layered on top of core instruction and supplement rather than supplant. • A data-driven and systematic selection of evidence-based instruction and interventions is utilized. • Student-level plans incorporate evidence-based practices that align to root cause, contributing factors and presenting needs. • Contextual fit for evidence-based practices is determined through a culturally and linguistically sensitive lens.	elements are implemented systemically and with fidelity.[6] • Administrative Leadership • Team Implementation • Define Concrete Expectations • Teach Behavior Expectations • Acknowledge and Reward Positive Behavior • Monitor and Correct Behavior • Use Data for Decision Making • Family and Community Partnerships	• An Inventory is created that defines, organizes, and aligns tier 1,2, and 3 practices interventions, and supports across the school • Layers of support are established for students, but also for adult stakeholder groups, including school staff, families, and the community. • A formal selection and deselection process of evidence-based practices, instruction, and interventions is utilized. • Opportunities exist to receive ongoing, high-quality professional learning on the delivery of each evidence-based academic, social, emotional, and behavioral intervention across the tiers.

SECTION 2: STRATEGIC CONCEPTS

A Focus on Prevention	RtI is a responsive and culturally sensitive approach designed to support equitable access to effective instruction and interventions and reduce academic, social-emotional, and behavioral challenges students' experiences. Accurate identification of students with exceptionalities is a priority.	School-wide PBIS is a system's approach to establishing the social culture and behavioral supports needed for all children in a school to achieve both social and academic success. Through a school-wide approach, emphasis is placed on prevention. The sustained use of effective practices will prevent problem behaviors, and when problem behaviors occur, reduce the intensity, number, and complexity of incidents.[7]	A prevention-based framework, consisting of five essential components, supports improved learning outcomes for every student. Each system of supports establishes a learning culture and a positive climate. Prevention also occurs systematically across the tiers. Preventing the emergence and habituation of learning obstacles is paramount. Every stakeholder in the learning community contributes to the creation and maintenance of an enabling context where learning occurs in each educational setting and at each layer of intensity within the continuum.
Multi-Dimensional Application	Implementation is applied across general, compensatory, and special education program areas intentionally focused on the use of data, evidence-based practices, and monitoring student responses to instruction and intervention to ensure every student makes educational growth to succeed in	Implementation efforts are intentionally focused on developing and sustaining effective and efficient multiple systems (district, school-wide, non-classroom, classroom, individual student, family and community) to support the school community.[1]	Implementation occurs across multiple levels and settings (e.g. state, BOCES, district, school, classroom, and individual student). Strategic selection methods, sequential progression of planned activities, and the adaptability of

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[6] (Horner, et. al., 2015)

[7] (Sugai, et al., 2015)

	postsecondary settings and to advance in career pathways of choice		organizational drivers contribute to systematizing using Implementation Science as a guide.[8]
Prioritizing Student Outcomes	Intended to be inclusive of a student's academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. School personnel provide instruction within a nimble system to deliver fluid access to interventions that support student success.	The effective implementation of PBIS depends on function–based thinking that allows schools to design both school-wide and individual systems which encourage and support adaptive behavior for all students.	Culturally relevant and equitable access to support is provided to every student to ensure positive academic and behavioral outcomes. A coherent system is developed across each setting to support every student's success.
Visible in Legislation	Colorado statutes, rules, and guidance require Response to Intervention: • The Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) created provisions to identify and support the needs of gifted students and students with disabilities • HB 12-1238 READ Act (Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act) to support students identified as having a significant reading deficiency • SB 09-90 SACPIE (State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education) to support best practices for family engagement and partnering for student success	The Individual Students with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Federal Rules and Every Student Succeeds Education Act (ESSA) ensure the use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to improve outcomes for student.[9]	MTSS is identified throughout Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2016).[10] The Essential Components of COMTSS make RtI, PBIS, and MTSS inextricably aligned within the same framework.

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8 (NIRN, 2016)
9 IDEA §300.170; §300.324; §300.704; ESSA § 2103 (b)(3)(F); §4108(G); §8002 (42)(B)(xii)
10 ESSA § 2103(b)(3)(F); §2224(e)(4); §8002 (33); §8002 (42) (B) (xii)

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[i] (McIntosh, K., & Goodman, S., 2016)