

## Key Terms in the VTmtss and Early MTSS Frameworks Defined

Depending on where you may have entered into the work of tiered systems of support in Vermont over the past twenty years, may influence how you view and speak of the following concepts. These terms are being defined to bring a common understanding to our work so collectively we may continue to expand and improve our systems in support of each and every child.

**The VTmtss Framework** articulates the components and principles of an effective school system that are necessary to provide each and every student with the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports and services they need to succeed.

The innovation neutral systems-level approach of this framework provides the infrastructure for content or practice specific multi-tiered systems of support models, such as PBIS or RtI to be equitable and sustainable.

The VTmtss Framework is not tiered.

**Early MTSS** - Early MTSS aims to improve early learning, social and emotional well-being, and competence for children from birth through age 8.

Vermont Early MTSS focuses on building capacity at the systems and practice level-- a two-prong approach and is innovation neutral.

Early MTSS balances building a system of supports for school-based programs, families, health providers, and community partners with supporting evidence-based inclusion practices in the classroom to fidelity.

**MTSS** - A multi-tiered system of supports may be a framework that is content-specific, such as PBIS or a process or set of practices like those of RtI.

A shared understanding is that the first tier of a tiered systems should be able to meet the need of most students.

It is also agreed that a tiered system of supports is not a program or curriculum to be implemented.

Tiered systems are designed serve both students with and without an IEP; they should not be used to delay evaluation request for special education services.

### Contact Information:

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**RtI** - Response to intervention (RTI) is a proactive approach that involves closely monitoring student progress to measures students' skills and uses this data to decide which interventions to use.

It aims to identify struggling students early on and give them the support they need.

RTI isn't a specific program or type of teaching.

**Tiers** - Although there is no specific number of tiers in a tiered system of support, three tiers are most common.

Please note that supports, practices, and interventions may be tiered, but not students or staff. Tier 1 (universal) has the goal of bringing differentiated supports into core instruction to meet the needs of most students, thus minimizing the number of students in need of supplemental targeted supports.

Tier 2 (targeted) has the goal of supporting supplement, short-term, skill-specific instruction and practice in a small group setting.

These supports should be a part of the differentiated supports provided during core instruction as much as possible.

The goal of Tier 3 (intensive) is to provide supplemental, short-term, skill-specific support to a few or an individual student.

These intensive supports may also be a part of the differentiation of instruction and practice that takes place in core instruction.

**Layers of tiered supports** - The layering of tiered supports refers to a system that provides students with more than one type of support at a time when needed.

For example, a student with an individual education plan for basic reading skills while simultaneously be provided with supplemental short-term support in a small group setting for a skill deficit with using place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100.

Another student in the same small group may have a Section 504 Plan to accommodate for their visual impairment.

**EST** - An Educational Support Team is a collaborative team that has regularly scheduled meetings with shared agendas, identified roles for participants, and uses data to determine the additional supports a child may need to be successful.

Ideally, the EST includes an administrator, teachers, a school psychologist, special educator, school counselor(s), parents/families, a social worker, other staff with behavioral and/or academic expertise, and students when appropriate.

This team implements a student plan that supports a classroom teacher’s instruction with supplemental, short-term, skill-specific interventions for a student. Plans are frequently monitored to assess progress and adjust.

**EPT** - An Evaluation Planning Team is a group of individuals including the parent that is responsible for developing an evaluation plan and reviewing the results to determine if a student is or continues to be eligible for special education and related services.

**Evidence-based Practices** - Evidenced-based practices are those “effective educational strategies supported by evidence and research” (ESEA, 2002).

When teachers use evidence-based practices with fidelity, they can be confident their teaching is likely to support student learning and achievement of CCRS.

Teachers also use [formative assessments](#) to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching practice and make modifications, as necessary.