

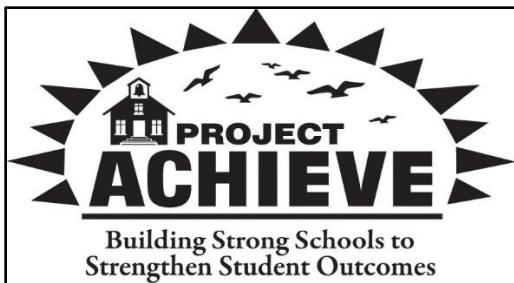
Implementing Effective Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports: Academic and Social-Emotional Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention

Web-Course Syllabus

Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D.

President, Project ACHIEVE
Educational Solutions

Little Rock, AR
USA



PROJECT ACHIEVE PRESS
A Division of PROJECT ACHIEVE INCORPORATED
49 Woodberry Road
Little Rock, AR 72212

Copyright © 2021 by Project ACHIEVE Incorporated
All rights reserved

Consistent with federal copyright law, no part of this course or any of its contents may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the expressed written permission of the author and publisher.

Project ACHIEVE: Building Strong Schools to Strengthen Student Outcomes is a registered trademark of Project ACHIEVE Incorporated.

For information about other Project ACHIEVE products and services, contact 501-312-1484 or visit www.projectachieve.info.

Designed by Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D.
Printed in the United States of America

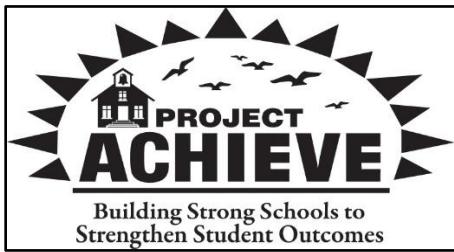


Table of Contents

<u>Content</u>	<u>Page</u>
About the Course Leader/Presenter	iv
Contact Information	vii
Overview	1
Learning Objectives	3
Training Schedule and Content	4
Brief Description of Each Session and Resources Available	6

About the Course Leader/Presenter

Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D. is an internationally-known innovator and hands-on practitioner in the areas of:

- School Improvement and Turn-Around, Strategic Planning and Organizational Development
- School Discipline, Classroom Management, and Student Self-Management (PBIS/PBSS/SEL)
- Differentiated Academic Instruction and Academic Interventions for Struggling Students
- Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Instruction and Strategic and Intensive Interventions for Challenging Students
- Multi-tiered (MTSS/RtI) Services and Supports
- Effective Professional Development and On-Site Consultation and Technical Assistance

Howie is the President of Project ACHIEVE Educational Solutions which has implemented his nationally-known school effectiveness/school improvement program—an evidence-based model prevention program [through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Service's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)]—in thousands of schools or districts over the past 40 years. An international expert on school safety and discipline, classroom management and school-wide SEL systems, student engagement and achievement, and interventions with behaviorally challenging students, Dr. Knoff was a university professor (22 years at the University of South Florida and SUNY-Albany), and Director of the federally-funded State Personnel Development/ State Improvement Grant for the Arkansas Department of Education from 2003 to 2015.

As Director of the Arkansas State Improvement/Personnel Development Grant (SIG/SPDG), Dr. Knoff was directly responsible to the Director of Special Education for the state of Arkansas, and involved in many Departmental policy and procedure discussions and deliberations. In addition to administering the \$12 million received from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs to implement these grants, he and his staff scaled-up critical Project ACHIEVE components across Arkansas focusing on:

- Statewide implementation of Positive Behavioral Support (PBIS) Systems;
- Literacy and mathematics interventions for at-risk, underachieving, and students with disabilities;
- Response-to-Instruction and Intervention (RtI²) and Multi-Tiered Systems (MTSS) of support to help close the achievement gap, reduce disproportionality, and speed essential academic and behavioral interventions to needy students; and
- Sustained and real school improvement for Priority, Focus, and other schools or districts

Significantly, Project ACHIEVE (through the SPDG grant) was written into Arkansas' approved Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Flexibility process as the school improvement model for all Focus schools in the state of Arkansas from 2010 to 2015.

Dr. Knoff received his Ph.D. degree from Syracuse University in 1980, and has worked as a practitioner, consultant, licensed private psychologist, and university professor since 1978. Dr. Knoff is widely respected for his research and writing on school reform and organizational change, consultation and intervention processes, social skills and behavior management training, Response-to-Intervention, and professional issues. He has authored or co-authored 24 books,

published over 100 articles and book chapters, and delivered over 5,000 papers and workshops nationally—including the **Stop & Think Social Skills Program (Preschool through Middle School editions)** and the **Stop & Think Parent Book: A Guide to Children’s Good Behavior** published by Project ACHIEVE Press.

Among his recent books or book chapters are the following:

- Knoff, H.M. (2019). A multi-tiered service and support implementation guidebook for schools: Closing the achievement gap. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Teasing, taunting, bullying, harassment, hazing, and physical aggression: Keeping your school, common areas, and students safe. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Teaching students classroom and school routines: From preschool to high school. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Developing school discipline codes that work: Increasing student responsibility while decreasing disproportionate discipline referrals. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Implementing a progressive school discipline code through classroom-based Behavioral Matrices. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Developing and implementing the behavioral matrix: Team and teacher worksheets to create grade-level matrices. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Changing student behavior by linking office discipline referrals to a strategic Time-Out process: A step-by-step implementation guide. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). The Stop & Think Social Skills Program: Exploring its research base and rationale. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Analyzing school resources: The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) assessment guide. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Creating effective school mission statements: Characteristics and analysis. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Shared leadership through school-level committees: Process, preparation, and first-year implementation action plans.

- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Evaluating school-wide discipline/Positive Behavioral Support Systems: Three years of sequenced implementation activities. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). The school safety audit and emergency/crisis prevention process. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). Conducting Quarterly Student Achievement Review (Q-STAR) meetings. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H.M. (2018). The Get-Go Process: Transferring students' multi-tiered information and data from one school year to staff and prepare for the next. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.
- Knoff, H. M. (2015). Best practices in strategic planning, organizational assessment, and school effectiveness. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), Best practices in school psychology-VI. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Knoff, H.M., & Dyer, C. (2014). RTI²—Response to Instruction and Intervention: Implementing Successful Academic and Behavioral Intervention Systems. Rexford, NY: International Center for Leadership in Education.
- Knoff, H.M. (2013). Changing resistant consultees: Functional assessment leading to strategic intervention. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 23(4), 307-317.
- Knoff, H.M. (2013). Classroom management from an organizational perspective: Positive behavioral supports at the system, school, and staff levels. In A. Honigsfeld & A. Cohan (Eds.), Breaking the mold of classroom management: Innovative and successful practices for the 21st century. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Knoff, H.M. (2012). School Discipline, Classroom Management, and Student Self-Management: A Positive Behavioral Support Implementation Guide. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Knoff, H.M., Blanchard, K., Covey, S., & Tracy, B. (2010). Discover Your Inner Strength: Cutting Edge Growth Strategies from the Industry's Leading Experts. Sevierville, TN: Insight Publications.

Dr. Knoff has a long history of working with schools, districts, and community and state agencies and organizations. For example, he has consulted with a number of state departments of education, the Department of Defense Dependents School District during Desert Storm, and the Southern Poverty Law Center. He has also served as an expert witness in federal court five times, in addition to working on many other state and local cases—largely for legal advocacy firms who are representing special education and other students in need. Specific to school

safety issues, Dr. Knoff was on the writing team that helped produce Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, the document commissioned by the President that was sent to every school in the country in the Fall of 1998; and he participated in a review capacity on the follow-up document, Safeguarding our Children: An Action Guide.

A recipient of the Lightner Witmer Award from the American Psychological Association's School Psychology Division for early career contributions in 1990, and over \$40 million in external grants during his career, Dr. Knoff is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (School Psychology Division), a Nationally Certified School Psychologist, a Licensed Psychologist in Arkansas, and he has been trained in crisis intervention, mediation processes, and trauma-based interventions. Frequently interviewed in all areas of the media, Dr. Knoff is an ongoing guest on EduTalk Radio; he has been on the NBC Nightly News, numerous television and radio talk shows; and he was highlighted on an ABC News' 20/20 program on "Being Teased, Taunted, and Bullied." Finally, Dr. Knoff was the 21st President of the National Association of School Psychologists which now represents more than 25,000 school psychologists nationwide.

Dr. Knoff is constantly sought after for his expertise in a wide variety of school, psychological, and other professional issues. He also has extensive experience as an Expert Witness having testified in many federal and state special education court cases across the United States.

Contact Information

Dr. Howard M. Knoff

President, Project ACHIEVE
49 Woodberry Road
Little Rock, AR 72212

Phone: 501-312-1484
FAX: 501-312-1493

E-mail: knoffprojectachieve@earthlink.net
Web site: www.projectachieve.info
Blog: www.projectachieve.info/blog
Publications Store: www.projectachieve.info/store

Implementing Effective Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports: Academic and Social-Emotional Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention

Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D.
President, Project ACHIEVE Educational Solutions

Overview

The goal of every school across the country is to maximize the academic and social, emotional, and behavioral progress and proficiency of every student. Ultimately, this translates into academic independence and social, emotional, and behavioral self-management, respectively. All of this is accomplished through (a) effective and differentiated classroom instruction, complemented with (b) positive and successful classroom management, that (c) is delivered by highly qualified teachers who have (d) administrators, instructional support and related services staff, and other consultants available to support classrooms, grade-level or teaching units, and other school programs and processes. All of this is intended to result in students who demonstrate age-appropriate (or beyond) independent learning and behavioral self-management skills.

While an admirable goal, the reality is that not all students are successful even when in effective classrooms. Indeed, some students come to the schoolhouse door at-risk for educational failure, while others are struggling learners who are disengaged, unmotivated, unresponsive, underperforming, or consistently unsuccessful. These struggles occur academically and/or as social, emotional, or behavioral challenges. For these students, districts and schools are required by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to have multi-tiered services, supports, strategies, interventions, and systems to address their individual academic or behavioral needs.

The ESEA was signed into law by President Barak Obama on December 10, 2015. Critically, the Law transferred much of the responsibility for developing, implementing, and evaluating effective school and schooling processes to state departments of education and school districts across the country. It also includes a number of specific provisions to help to ensure success for all students and schools—especially at-risk, disengaged, unmotivated, unresponsive, underperforming, or consistently unsuccessful students. The ESEA defines a multi-tiered system of supports as:

“a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students’ needs, with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision-making.”

While this definition states that a district or school’s multi-tiered system should be designed and implemented for any student “in need,” ESEA also specifically cites the use of multi-tiered systems of support with the following students or instructional areas: (a) students with disabilities, including children with significant cognitive disabilities; (b) English Language Learners; (c) children with developmental delays; and (d) in the provision of literacy services.

But this very broad definition in the spirit of ESEA becoming more district self-determined (see above) means that districts need to evaluate their own student needs, their local resources and personnel, and the skills and talents in their midst to create their own multi-tiered systems that are guided by the law, as well as sound science and practice.

This self-determination is reinforced by the fact that the phrase “multi-tiered systems of support” appears in ESEA only in lower case terms and never as an “MTSS” acronym. This means that no district in this country is required to use either the federal MTSS Framework, nor any state MTSS Framework (unless the latter is required by state law—which currently is not true).

Finally, as the “old” response-to-intervention approaches that preceded the currently-framed multi-tiered systems of support had numerous significant flaws (see Knoff, Reeves, & Balow, 2018), it is now time for districts to have the science-to-practice guidance and templates so that they can create and implement their own successful multi-tiered systems.

This seven-session (with one Bonus Session) professional development video-course provides everything that districts need, as above, to create and implement their own successful multi-tiered systems.

This is accomplished by guiding them through the essential information and practices needed:

- To understand the history, flaws and corrections, and current status of multi-tiered academic and social, emotional, and behavioral support systems in the field;
- To recognize the cost savings that result with effective prevention and early intervention services, the staff time that is wasted with unnecessary referrals for special education testing, and the importance on emphasizing student equity and excellence;
- To evaluate their own current systems’ strengths, limitations, and gaps;
- To design—guided by a nationally field-tested science-to-practice common sense implementation blueprint—their own scaffolded multi-tiered flowchart, that integrates effective instruction with early intervention services with their 504 accommodation processes with their IDEA special education processes;
- To conduct functional and practical data-based root cause student assessments; that link
- To multi-tiered academic (especially in literacy and mathematics) and social, emotional, and behavioral services, supports, strategies, and interventions.

The course comes with an MTSS Implementation Guidebook and other resources to help districts be successful in their multi-tiered self-evaluation and self-determination process.

Learning Objectives

During this course, participants will learn about the following:

1. The research and principles underlying effective multi-tiered systems of services, supports, and interventions.
2. How to design and implement a multi-tiered school-level decision-making process for all students—but especially for academically and behaviorally unsuccessful students.
3. The questions that will help identify classroom that need improvements in curriculum and instruction;
4. The importance of effective differentiated instruction, and its characteristics;
5. The characteristics of an effective academically-focused multi-tiered response-to-intervention program;
6. The depth, breadth, and differences among remediation, modification, and accommodation, and the importance of assistive supports;
7. Understand why interventions need to focus on students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs, and not their diagnostic labels;
8. Become aware of a range of social, emotional, or behavioral interventions that schools need to implement to assist students from diverse backgrounds who are behaviorally challenging;
9. Consider the interdependence among student, teacher, instructional, and curriculum (and other cultural, SES, social, peer, and home) factors that must be considered when implementing interventions;
10. The data-based problem-solving process—including the problem identification, problem analysis, intervention, and evaluation steps.
11. How to complete a data-based Problem Analysis of a student's academic or behavioral challenges—including how to generate and confirm or reject different instructional, curricular, and student hypotheses to explain specific challenges.
12. The “Seven High-Hit Reasons” why students present with significant academic or behavioral concerns.
13. How to link these “High-Hit” reasons to specific instructional, academic, or social, emotional, behavioral interventions.
14. How to determine when to use (and examples of) skill-based versus curriculum-based interventions in the areas of literacy and math.

15. How to implement a number of selected interventions to address some students' most significant academic or behavioral concerns.
 16. How to understand the differences between Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions when using a continuum that focuses on the intensity of services and supports (and not on the percentage of involved students or the place of service delivery).
 17. The cost savings and student impact of an effective, prevention-focused multi-tiered system.
 18. The multi-tiered school-level procedural investments that help make multi-tiered preventative systems cost- and outcome-effective.
-

Training Schedule and Content

Introduction to the Course [12 minutes]

Session 1. Effective Academic and Behavioral MTSS Services and Supports: Moving from Referring, Testing, & Placing to Problem-Solving, Consulting, and Linking Assessment to Effective Interventions [1 hour/16 minutes]

- Overview
 - ESEA Realities: Multi-tiered Systems of Support
 - The MTSS Teams
 - Summary
-

Session 2. The MTSS Data-based Problem-Solving Process Focusing on Assessment to Get to Intervention Part I [2 hours/37 minutes]

- MTSS Introduction/Overview
 - The MTSS Data-based, Problem-Solving, Consultation, Intervention Process
 - Problem Identification and The “First Things First”
 - Identifying and Prioritizing Student Concerns
 - Beginning the Assessment Process
-

Session 3. The MTSS Data-based Problem-Solving Process Focusing on Assessment to Get to Intervention Part II [3 hours/10 minutes]

- MTSS Review of Part I
- Review of the MTSS Data-based, Problem-Solving, Consultation, Intervention Process

- Generating Hypotheses to Explain Students' Academic and/or Social, Emotional, & Behavioral Challenges
 - Functional Assessment Questions to Facilitate Hypothesis Generation
 - Generating Predictions to Confirm or Reject Hypotheses
 - Multi-tiered Interventions
 - Developing and Evaluating Intervention Plans and Planning
-

Session 4. Multi-Tiered Assessment and Intervention for Students with Significant Academic Needs [2 hours/15 minutes]

- Student Learning and Independence
 - Characteristics of Effective Classrooms
 - The Positive Academic Supports & Services Model
 - Differentiated Instruction and Assistive Technology
 - Remediation, Accommodation, and Modification
 - Strategic Academic Interventions
-

Session 5. Behavioral Interventions for Disobedient, Disruptive, Defiant, and Disturbed Students [2 hours/45 minutes]

- The Importance of Self-Management
 - The Stages of Data-based Functional Assessment Data-Based Problem Solving
 - The Seven High-Hit Reasons for Students' Behavioral Challenges
 - Selected Tier 2 Interventions to Change Challenging Students:
 - Increasing Appropriate Behavior
 - Decreasing Inappropriate Behavior
 - Controlling Behavior
 - Final Integration and Summary
-

Session 6. Designing and Implementing a Comprehensive Schoolwide System of MTSS Services and Supports Effective Planning, Process, Procedures, & Practices [2 hours/4 minutes]

- Introduction
 - ESEA Realities Reviewed: Multi-tiered Systems of Support
 - Core MTSS Principles
 - The School-Level Multi-Tiered Process
 - How to Start Your MTSS Planning
 - Summary
-

Session 7. The Economics and Ethics of Effective Instruction and Early Intervention Services: Where to Invest Your MTSS Time and Effort [1 hour/38 minutes]

- Overview
 - Prevention and Early Intervention Challenges and Realities
 - The Cost Savings and Student Impact of Effective Prevention Programs
 - MTSS Investments that Make Prevention Programs Cost- and Outcome-Effective
-

Bonus Session #1. The Year-End Get-Go Process: Transferring Student “Lessons Learned” from One School Year to the Next [1 hour/21 minutes]

- Articulation
 - The Get-Go Process
 - Student Briefing Reports
 - Preparation Week Grade-Level Articulation Briefings
-

Bonus Session #2. MTSS Case Study: Joshua [1 hour/23 minutes]

TOTAL Continuing Education Credit Time:

Contact Time (through presentations): 17+ hours
Independent Reading/Preparation Time: 8 hours (estimated)

TOTAL: 25 hours of CEU

Brief Description of Each Session and Resources Available

Session 1 Description. Effective Academic and Behavioral MTSS Services and Supports: Moving from Referring, Testing, & Placing to Problem-Solving, Consulting, and Linking Assessment to Effective Interventions [1 hour/16 minutes]

- Overview
- ESEA Realities: Multi-tiered Systems of Support
- The MTSS Teams
- Summary

This Session provides a past and present historical and legislative overview of multi-tiered services. In this context, it describes some of the service-delivery flaws in the previous response-to-intervention framework, and provides ten science-to-practice solutions that can help districts and schools evaluate their current practices with an eye toward improved efficacy and student outcomes.

The two primary components of an effective multi-tiered system of supports are overviewed: the multi-tiered service teams, and the data-based problem-solving process. A “Call to Action” concludes the Session.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M., Reeves, D., & Balow, C. (2018). A multi-tiered service & support implementation blueprint for schools & districts: Revisiting the science to improve the practice. Irvine, CA: Illuminate Education.

Knoff, H.M. (2019). A multi-tiered service and support implementation guidebook for schools: Closing the achievement gap. Little Rock, AR: Project ACHIEVE Press.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 2 Description. The MTSS Data-based Problem-Solving Process Focusing on Assessment to Get to Intervention Part I [2 hours/37 minutes]

- MTSS Introduction/Overview
- The MTSS Data-based, Problem-Solving, Consultation, Intervention Process
- Problem Identification and The “First Things First”
- Identifying and Prioritizing Student Concerns
- Beginning the Assessment Process

This (and the next) Session discuss, step-by-step, the data-based problem-solving process needed to identify the root causes of students’ academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges. Applying the scientific method to psychoeducational problems, the process involves Problem Identification, Problem Analysis, Intervention, and Evaluation. These steps are operationalized using field-tested science-to-practice actions that not only help building-level multi-disciplinary MTSS Teams to be more efficient and successful, but they also help identify services, supports, strategies, and interventions that have the highest probability of student success.

In this Session, the Problem Identification and Problem Analysis steps are emphasized. A Case Study of a high school student with numerous academic and behavioral challenges is used throughout to demonstrate the step-by-step problem-solving process.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M. (2021). Why Students Have Academic or Social, Emotional, or Behavioral Challenges: Functional Assessment, Data-based Problem-Solving, and the Tiers of Intervention. Adapted book chapter from Knoff, H.M., School Discipline, Classroom Management, and Student Self-Management: A Positive Behavioral Support Implementation Guide. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Knoff, H.M. (2021). The MTSS Data-based Functional Assessment/Problem-Solving Process: Case Study—Samantha. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 3 Description. The MTSS Data-based Problem-Solving Process Focusing on Assessment to Get to Intervention Part II [3 hours/10 minutes]

- MTSS Review of Part I
- Review of the MTSS Data-based, Problem-Solving, Consultation, Intervention Process
- Generating Hypotheses to Explain Students' Academic and/or Social, Emotional, & Behavioral Challenges
- Functional Assessment Questions to Facilitate Hypothesis Generation
- Generating Predictions to Confirm or Reject Hypotheses
- Multi-tiered Interventions
- Developing and Evaluating Intervention Plans and Planning

This Session continues the discussion of the step-by-step data-based problem-solving process needed to identify the root causes of students' academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges. In this Session, the Problem Analysis step is completed, and we show how to link the results of the root cause analysis to specific strategic or intensive services, supports, strategies, or interventions.

During the presentation, the six ecological components that help to organize the root cause analysis and the hypotheses to explain students' academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges are detailed, as are the "Seven High-Hit Reasons" why students present with these challenges. These Seven High-Hit Reasons frame out a "21st Century Functional Assessment" process, and they are specifically linked, once again, to evidence- or research-based interventions.

Ways to assess identified hypotheses are described in detail, along with the characteristics of effective Intervention Implementation and Formative and Summative Evaluation.

The Case Study begun in Session 2—of the high school student with numerous academic and behavioral challenges—is continues to be used to demonstrate the remainder of the step-by-step problem-solving process.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M. (2021). The MTSS Data-based Functional Assessment/Problem-Solving Process: Case Study—Samantha. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 4 Description. Multi-Tiered Assessment and Intervention for Students with Significant Academic Needs [2 hours/15 minutes]

- Student Learning and Independence
- Characteristics of Effective Classrooms
- The Positive Academic Supports & Services Model
- Differentiated Instruction and Assistive Technology
- Remediation, Accommodation, and Modification
- Strategic Academic Interventions

IDEA and ESEA require multi-tiered systems of services and supports for students demonstrating significant academic challenges. However, from this academic perspective, this begins with effective, differentiated instruction that is supported by well-designed curricular materials, and that focuses on helping students to become independent learners.

This Session describes the characteristics of these components, especially emphasizing those related to differentiated instruction, remediation, accommodations, modifications, and assistive supports. These are organized into the Positive Academic Supports and Services (PASS) model, and specifically applied to the areas of literacy and mathematics (with many guiding resources provided).

The Session continues, as it relates to significantly struggling academic learners, by applying the functional assessment process from the earlier sessions, to strategic and intensive interventions that are available in literacy and mathematics—including the best ways to link these interventions to the root cause analysis process.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M. (2021). Academics Interventions Appendix. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 5 Description. Behavioral Interventions for Disobedient, Disruptive, Defiant, and Disturbed Students [2 hours/45 minutes]

- The Importance of Self-Management
- The Stages of Data-based Functional Assessment Data-Based Problem Solving
- The Seven High-Hit Reasons for Students' Behavioral Challenges
- Selected Tier 2 Interventions to Change Challenging Students:
 - Increasing Appropriate Behavior
 - Decreasing Inappropriate Behavior
 - Controlling Behavior
- Final Integration and Summary

There are many reasons why students demonstrate angry, aggressive, and acting out behavior in their schools or classrooms—or anxious, withdrawal, and “checking out” behavior. This Session focuses especially on the Tier 2 (strategic) and Tier 3 (intensive) interventions that schools need to implement to assist challenging students who are demonstrating social, emotional, and/or behavioral challenges in their classrooms or across their schools. In focusing on these interventions, ways to translate the research that typically underlies these interventions into practical and realistic classroom-based strategies is particularly noted.

To get to these interventions, we review the “21st Century” functional assessment approach through the “Seven High-Hit Reasons” for students’ challenging behavior, and detail how these high-hit reasons align with the specific challenging behaviors and then interventions.

Intensive or crisis-management (Tier 3) interventions will be addressed as those (a) that are similar to Tier 2 interventions, but require more-intensive or more-clinical implementations; and/or (b) that involve a more comprehensive mental health perspective and/or community-based health and mental health partnerships.

The interventions themselves are organized in those that: Increase or Establish New Student Behaviors; Decrease or Eliminate Inappropriate Behaviors; Teach Attention and Engagement Skills; Teach Social, Self-Management, and Self-Control Skills; Increase Student Motivation; and Enhance Peer Engagement/ Initiation and/or Peer Response/Management Skills. Two specific interventions—how to teach students emotional self-regulation or control, and response cost—are discussed in step-by-step implementation detail. This demonstrates the most effective ways to implement and consult with social, emotional, or behavioral interventions.

The Session ends by providing twelve behavioral intervention “rules of thumb” as a summary.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M. (2021). The Behavioral Interventions Staff Survey. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 6 Description. Designing and Implementing a Comprehensive Schoolwide System of MTSS Services and Supports Effective Planning, Process, Procedures, & Practices [2 hours/4 minutes]

- Introduction
- ESEA Realities Reviewed: Multi-tiered Systems of Support
- Core MTSS Principles
- The School-Level Multi-Tiered Process
- How to Start Your MTSS Planning
- Summary

After reviewing the history, flaws and corrections, and current status of multi-tiered academic and social, emotional, and behavioral support systems in the field, this Session describes in detail the flowchart and process outlined in a field-tested school-level MTSS Implementation Blueprint. Beginning in effective general education classrooms, the process involves a systematic series of scaffolded data collection and analysis steps—completed by classroom teachers, grade-level teams, and the building-level MTSS Team—whereby the underlying root causes of students’ academic or social, emotional, or behavioral challenges are analyzed and addressed.

The Session discussed the specific elements in each step, the decision rules that need to be made at different junctures, how cases are elevated and discussed by the multi-disciplinary MTSS Team, and why a Problem Solving-Consultation-Intervention mode of operation is essential. Also addressed are where 504 accommodation and IDEA-related special education services should occur, and the steps needed as school begin their self-evaluation and MTSS improvement activities.

Resources Available. The following resources for this session are posted and available on the course website:

Knoff, H.M. (2021). The School-level MTSS Implementation Flowchart. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

Knoff, H.M. (2021). The MTSS Essential Question Evaluation Checklist. Little Rock, AR; Project ACHIEVE Press.

The Florida MTSS Project. (2021; Adapted). The Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation. Tallahassee, FL: Author.

Quiz: Available on the Course website.

Session 7 Description. The Economics and Ethics of Effective Instruction and Early Intervention Services: Where to Invest Your MTSS Time and Effort [1 hour/38 minutes]

- Overview
- Prevention and Early Intervention Challenges and Realities
- The Cost Savings and Student Impact of Effective Prevention Programs
- MTSS Investments that Make Prevention Programs Cost- and Outcome-Effective

This Session first identifies some of the common financial, personnel, and other arguments that are often made by districts when considering preventative services for students with academic and/or social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. These arguments are countered with data from long-term studies that demonstrate the cost- and time-effectiveness of preventative services, and their positive impacts of students into adulthood.

The Session continues with discussions on a number of significant investments that districts can make that increase the success of preventative services. These investments relate to (a) Staff recruitment; (b) professional development; (c) teacher mentoring, coaching, and supervision; (d) how districts grant tenure; (e) the use of data management or student information systems; and (f) shared leadership committee structures and grade-level/trans-disciplinary planning and teaming.

The Session finishes by demonstrating the cost savings that result when districts and schools use the MTSS “First Things First” process (discussed in an earlier Session), IDEA’s 15% prevention provision, and when they decrease the number of special education referrals of students that most MTSS Team members know will not qualify.

Bonus Session #1 Description. The Year-End Get-Go Process: Transferring Student “Lessons Learned” from One School Year to the Next [1 hour/21 minutes]

- Articulation
- The Get-Go Process
- Student Briefing Reports
- Preparation Week Grade-Level Articulation Briefings

The “Get-Go” Process is a systematic process whereby the growth and progress data for every student in a school is briefly reviewed by his/her grade-level team toward the end of each school year. This is done to (a) determine each student’s current functional status, as well as progress during the school year; (b) what services and supports (if any) specific students will need on the first day of the next school year; (c) how to prepare teachers and other support staff to deliver these needed programs or interventions; and (d) how to best organize students into their next year’s classrooms so that differentiated instructional approaches and positive classroom interactions are maximized.

This Bonus Session describes the Get-Go process, discusses the data and information that need to be collected and analyzed prior to the Get-Go meetings, and explains how to conduct and debrief the actual meetings. The resulting Student Briefing Reports are described, as well as a process to conduct grade-level articulation meetings to discuss specific student needs during the days before each new school year begins.

Bonus Session #2 Description. MTSS Case Study: Joshua [1 hour/23 minutes]

This Case Study will demonstrate how the data-based problem-solving process is applied from Background Information to Hypothesis Generation and Assessment, to the Linking of the Problem Analysis to Intervention Identification and Evaluation.

Joshua is a sixth grader who lived in another community 50 miles away and attended school there until the end of third grade. He entered his current school at the beginning of fourth grade and has been in this school since. He entered fourth grade approximately one year behind in reading and a half a year behind in math. He is now experiencing both academic and behavioral problems in the classroom, and his teachers are concerned enough that they are presenting him to the Building-level MTSS team.

Joshua is a very emotional boy. He has lived in a foster home with many other children over the past four years. His mother is in prison, and he has never known his father. His foster parents seem continually overwhelmed. They have never attended a parent conference in the four years Joshua has been in school, but they are open to home visits. They have virtually no information on Joshua’s social and developmental history, and they largely attend to Joshua only when he presents a problem at home.