



# Developing a Common MTSS-B Mission

## What is a MTSS-B mission statement?

As your District-Community Leadership Team (DCLT) begins to set priorities for their MTSS-B work, it is important for the group to come together to form a shared understanding of their MTSS-B mission that represents the values, needs, and goals of all stakeholder groups.

### This mission statement will:

- ✓ Define the purpose of the DCLT
- ✓ Establish goals and priorities for MTSS-B
- ✓ Serve as a communication to all stakeholders (school staff, parents/families, students, community members, leadership, potential funders)

As the DCLT works through the early stages of the MTSS-B implementation process – e.g., reviewing student and community data, conducting an inventory of related initiatives – the group will begin to coalesce upon values, priorities, and goals relevant to supporting student wellness. The mission serves to articulate those understandings in a succinct statement that solidifies a shared understanding of the work, and which can quickly communicate the MTSS-B purpose to a broader audience.

The DCLT should begin this process by reviewing any previously existing mission statements across participating organizations to determine whether current versions align with the MTSS-B approach. Current missions can be integrated and aligned, or you may discover you need to develop a new statement from scratch.

### Your mission statement should answer some basic questions:

#### YOUR CAUSE

- Why does your DCLT exist?
- Who does it serve?
- What does it seek to do, and where?

#### YOUR ACTIONS

- What do you do to make that happen?

#### YOUR IMPACT

- What is the intended benefit?
- What changes for the better are you working toward?

### To be effective, your mission statement should be:

#### FEASIBLE AND REALISTIC

Make sure you can actually move the needle on your intended outcomes

#### PRECISE AND CLEAR

Steer clear of vocabulary, terms, and acronyms that the general public would not understand

#### BRIEF AND TO-THE-POINT

Though challenging, try to keep your statement to 20-30 words



## Some examples:

To foster system change, the District-Community Leadership Team aims to improve school climate and culture using the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Behavioral Health & Wellness framework.

The District-Community Leadership Team provides collaborative guidance and leadership to support the overall wellness of our school communities through the intentional development and implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports.

The mission of the District-Community Leadership Team is to create, integrate, and leverage existing and new school-community partnerships to develop a full continuum of data-based, systemic interventions for students. It encompasses three intervention tiers:

1. Systems for promoting healthy development and preventing problems
2. Systems for responding to problems as soon after onset as is feasible
3. Systems for providing intensive care

Below is an example of one structured method for generating a mission statement – but use a process that works best for your DCLT.

## First, gather your DCLT

### What you will need:

- Paper and pens for brainstorming
- A whiteboard or big sheets of paper
- Coffee and bagels (optional)
- If meeting by Zoom, the ability to use breakout rooms

### Who you will need:

- An internal or external MTSS-B coach or other facilitator
- Your DCLT

## Step 1: Storytelling




- ✓ Split your DCLT into small groups of 3-5 each, as diverse as possible.
- ✓ Each member gets a few minutes to share a story about their organization's contribution to the DCLT, and what they think the purpose of the DCLT is.
- ✓ Ask them to envision what it looks like when the DCLT does its best work.
- ✓ Ask members to write their story details on paper (or appoint a notetaker if using Zoom and share notes on the screen).
- ✓ Next, ask participants to review the stories they have written as a group.
- ✓ Draw a circle around any specific place or person.
- ✓ Draw a square around any mention of the DCLT making a difference and taking action.
- ✓ Lastly, underline anytime something in the story changes for the better.



## Step 2: Sharing

Now it is time to share the group's stories.

- ✓ Bring the group back together.
- ✓ The facilitator should create a grid (see right) on a whiteboard, large piece of paper, or share on a Zoom screen.
- ✓ As each group shares their stories, have them place identified words and concepts on the chart. Patterns and similarities will emerge; group similar ideas together.
- ✓ Then identify common ideas from your stories and label them "Big Ideas."

<b>Our Cause</b> Who? What? Where?	 Circled items go here
<b>Our Actions</b> What we do	 Squared items go here
<b>Our Impact</b> Changes for the better	 Underlined items go here

## Step 3: Craft your statements

Move back into original small groups. Each group will write a mission statement that incorporates the Big Ideas identified in Step 2. All statements should include reference to cause, actions, and impact.

Things to remember:

- ✓ Don't worry about word choice at this stage.
- ✓ Keep it short (possibly fewer than 10 words).
- ✓ Keep it simple.
- ✓ Say it out loud.
- ✓ The disagreement test: If no one would disagree with your statement (things like "make the world better" or "act with integrity") then your statement is too generic.
- ✓ Don't hide behind clichés.

## Step 4: Sharing, take 2

- ✓ Merge small groups back into one large group.
- ✓ The facilitator writes each potential mission statement for everyone to see as each group shares it out loud.
- ✓ Identify the "Big idea" in each. Remember, the Big Ideas can be implied – they don't have to be stated directly.

## Step 5: A dose of vision

Now that you have several strong, simple mission statement possibilities, the moderator will ask the groups to share why they know the statements are important. And most of all, how they know that the mission can be achieved together? This is the final, most important test.

## Step 6: Jump

You don't have your final mission statement yet, but you're close. Appoint a subcommittee or final decision maker to finalize the wording. The final decision maker will present the final mission statement to the DCLT at a later date for refinement and final agreement.