

Selecting Demonstration Schools for MTSS-B



Why start with demonstration schools?

High-fidelity implementation of MTSS-B requires expert training and ongoing coaching; monitoring, evaluation and data-based decision-making; system-level administrative support; and reliable funding and human resource capacity. Given the significant resources required, school districts may consider initiating MTSS-B in one or two demonstration schools in order to establish proof of concept before expansion district-wide. Small-scale installation at demonstration sites offers opportunities to test procedures and routines, closely monitor progress, identify successes and areas of challenge, and allows for a continuous quality improvement process while MTSS-B implementation is adapted to the local context.

How should we choose demonstration school(s)?

No perfect formula for choosing a demonstration schools for MTSS-B exists; decisions will vary depending on local context, need, and resources. However, district and community leaders should consider the following questions when selecting a demonstration school:

What school(s) have the greatest need?

One element of readiness is need – some schools are struggling more than others and suffering from higher rates of student concerns, and as such, they may be more motivated to initiate MTSS-B. Consider student and school risk factors such as:

- Community exposure to trauma and violence
- Office discipline referral/suspension rates
- School climate ratings
- School violence
- Substance misuse rates
- Staff morale/attrition

What school(s) have the greatest capacity for implementation?

The other element of readiness is capacity – installation at even the most motivated, high-need schools often fails due to lack of systems and infrastructure capacity. Consider system and infrastructure resources such as:

- Foundational understanding of the MTSS-B framework
- School administrator buy-in and support
- Teacher/staff buy-in and support
- Fiscal support
- Human resource support
- Data platforms, technology, and IT support

Use the **MTSS-B School Readiness Tool** in the MTSS-B Toolkit to guide your district's selection of demonstration schools.