

Systems Implementation Support Promoting Positive Student Behavior: Early Childhood Alignment

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MTSS

- Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), have emerged as effective frameworks for addressing student needs and improving student outcomes.
- MTSS has been consistently associated with positive outcomes for students, such as improving problem behaviors and achievement
- In Nebraska, MTSS (NeMTSS) has been implemented in schools at high rates.
- Little is known about effective MTSS implementation practices across the PreK to elementary continuum.

NeMTSS Implementation Support

- The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) supports schools to improve student behavior outcomes through an integrated school-wide systems change approach.
- Supports include:
 - Leadership
 - Professional development
 - Technical assistance

Targeted Implementation Support

- A small (n=5) cohort of districts are receiving targeted implementation support.
- Support is provided by a team of regional implementation support specialists that includes early childhood MTSS facilitators.
- Specific support includes:
 - Team start up support
 - Promoting and monitoring implementation fidelity
 - Facilitating team sustainability and accountability
 - Providing technical assistance and problem-solving
 - Delivering prompts and reinforcement of action plans
 - Improving public relations and communications
 - Link to outside supports
 - Providing content expertise
- All supports encourage a systems change approach aligned across PreK and elementary school

Results: Implementation *Facilitators*

- Competency
 - EC Facilitator team includes a broad range of experience and expertise.
 - Birth through Grade 3
 - Prevent, Teach, Reinforce, Foundational Literacy, MTSS Workshops
- Organization
 - System-wide efforts support district organizational coherence along the MTSS continuum of support.
 - Systems builds to connect PK to K+, Utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD data, Decision Rules
- Leadership
 - Regional Teams that include EC Facilitators increase school leader capacity to connect preschool evidence-based practices and those of K+.
 - Communities of Practice, Using PK data for informed decision-making and planning,

Results: Implementation *Barriers*

- Competency
 - Staff turnover both on our EC MTSS team and in our school and community programs slows the work and progress of school teams.
- Organization
 - Nebraska preschools take many forms resulting in organizational barriers.
 - budgetary gaps and restrictions
 - data collection and equity
 - Underdeveloped communication and collaboration systems unintentionally affects the potential systemic growth and connection.
- Leadership
 - Many school leaders lack early childhood experience contributing to disjointed practices and relationships.
 - chasm between leadership and early childhood educators
 - gaps in professional learning support
 - system-wide procedures may exclude early childhood educators, students and families

Key Takeaways

- Public investment in early childhood-elementary alignment is needed to ensure equitable systems development.
- Educators may need to assess and address expertise, attitudes, and beliefs about the inclusion of early childhood in broader school systems.