

CENTER ON PBIS Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

TIER 2 DISTRICT-LEVEL SYSTEMS GUIDE

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Tier 2 District-Level Systems Guide

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The purpose of this practice guide is to assist district-level teams supporting and monitoring Tier 2 data, systems, and practices across schools in developing system features that facilitate durable implementation. These system features include procedures for teaming, training and coaching staff, engaging students and families, developing policy, and using data to evaluate overall effectiveness and individual student responsiveness to targeted academic and social-emotional-behavioral (SEB) supports. For guidance at the school level, see the *Tier 2 School-Level Systems Guide*.[1]



Introduction

Tier 2 is designed to support 10-15% of students with or at risk for developing more intensive SEB and/or academic concerns. Tier 2 practices (i.e., interventions and supports) are proactive, targeted, time-limited, and layered on top of Tier 1 support.[2] For an overview of Tier 2 foundational systems see Tier 2 (webpage).[3]

Most schools provide some form of Tier 2 practices (i.e., student-focused interventions and supports), often in the form of social or academic skills groups that focus on teaching and practicing specific skills with small groups of students. However, many schools struggle to implement and sustain systems that support consistent, effective, data-driven implementation of those practices. Similarly, districts commonly struggle to develop and implement a coordinated systems-based approach that uses available resources efficiently to achieve effective school-based implementation.

Prior to elaborating on or revising Tier 2 practices, districts are encouraged to assess their existing positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) or multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework. As part of this assessment, we recommend using the *District Systems Fidelity Inventory (DSFI)*.[4] District teams can utilize and build off existing **systems** (e.g., teaming structures, training, coaching), **data** infrastructure, and evidence-based **practices** when developing Tier 2. Because Tier 2 is layered on top of Tier 1, stronger implementation of Tier 1 is predictive of successful implementation of Tier 2 (Kittelman et al., 2021; Kittelman et al., 2025). For more information on Tier 2 readiness see the *Tier 2 Systems Readiness Guide*[5] and *When Do Schools Receive Tier 2 and 3 PBIS Training?*[6]

In this guide, we provide an overview of key Tier 2 district systems, including

- Tier 2 teaming
- Tier 2 implementation functions: training, coaching, and evaluation
- Tier 2 executive functions: partner engagement, funding & alignment, policy, and workforce capacity

For more information on these leadership team functions across all tiers and implementation levels (state, district, and school) see the *PBIS Implementation Blueprint*[7] (Center on PBIS, July 2023).

Tier 2 Teaming

The purpose of Tier 2 is to ensure that students who are at risk for developing more serious SEB and academic concerns receive support early through targeted practices, preventing the need for more intensive, individualized support. A district-level leadership team (District Tier 2 Team) plans and monitors Tier 2 support by maximizing resources, securing necessary training and coaching, and promoting better alignment of priorities and polices. This section will discuss the composition, purpose, and key activities of the District Tier 2 Team.

District Tier 2 Team Membership

We recommend that the District Tier 2 Team includes individuals representing a variety of roles (e.g., teachers, administrators, school psychologists, behavior specialists, community members, family members) across schools and the district. The size and roles included will vary across districts based upon context and resources. When planning team membership, we suggest prioritizing enhanced levels of expertise in the following:

- Capacity to coach or lead the District Tier 2 Team
- Applied behavioral and academic expertise
- Knowledge of Tier 2 data systems (may include information systems personnel)
- Authority to make administrative decisions for the district
- Knowledge of state and district policy, legal compliance, and ethical considerations at Tier 2 (e.g., notification/consent, limits to confidentiality)
- Knowledge of how PBIS/MTSS frameworks are implemented across schools
- Social, emotional, and mental health expertise and knowledge of related community supports and agencies
- Knowledge of SEB and academic benchmarks and evidence-based practices
- Knowledge of how to facilitate effective coordination of Tier 2 practices (e.g., social skills groups, self-management)

Some districts may form separate teams to oversee Tier 1 and Tier 2, whereas other districts may find it is more efficient to have a single district team that coordinates and leads implementation of the full continuum of SEB supports. It is feasible for the functions of a District Tier 2 Team to be managed within a comprehensive district team if adequate time is prioritized specifically to Tier 2 systems based upon where the district is in implementation (i.e., more time during initial development and implementation).

District Tier 2 Team Purpose

The role of the District Tier 2 Team is to assess and monitor overall efficiency and effectiveness of the district's Tier 2 system. This includes providing guidance on selecting a continuum of Tier 2 practices that meet the identified needs of students, align to district priorities, maximize resources, and ensure schools have capacity to implement. In addition, the District Tier 2 Team (a) organizes and/or provides resources, training, and coaching to ensure schools implement with fidelity and (b) evaluates the effectiveness of Tier 2 systems and practices.

District Tier 2 Team Meeting and Activities

To effectively support Tier 2 systems, it is important for the District Tier 2 Team to meet at least monthly to first establish consistent systems and then to monitor the implementation of Tier 2 systems and the response of students. We describe these meeting functions and activities across three implementation phases: getting ready, getting started, and getting better (PBIS Implementation Blueprint; Center on PBIS, July 2023). Across phases, it is also critical that members of the District Tier 2 Team communicate with the District Tier 1 Team (unless they are the same) to ensure alignment and coordination of Tier 1 and Tier 2 implementation.

GETTING READY

During initial development, the District Tier 2 Team will need to assess current Tier 2 implementation across the schools in the district, review data to determine common student needs across schools, then define a process for selecting Tier 2 practices—evidence-based, targeted interventions and supports. Specific activities and resources to address these tasks may include:

- Schools completing a baseline assessment of Tier 2 implementation (e.g., Tiered Fidelity Inventory[8])
- School Intervention Map[9] to gather and organize data on the extent to which schools are utilizing Tier 2 practices
- Review of aggregate school data (e.g., office discipline referrals, suspension data, universal screening data) and community data (e.g., hospitalizations, suicide or threat assessments, juvenile justice contacts)
- The Hexagon Tool[10] for assessing key program indicators and implementing indicators

GETTING STARTED

During initial implementation, the focus of the District Tier 2 Team would transition to planning and providing training and coaching to schools to implement Tier 2 systems and practices with fidelity, supporting schools' use of data when making decisions about Tier 2 practices, and monitoring and evaluating overall implementation fidelity and effectiveness across schools.

GETTING BETTER

Beyond initial implementation, the District Tier 2 Team supports continuous improvement by continuing to monitor (a) school and community needs to revisit practice selection and match; (b) district, school, and practice implementation fidelity and effectiveness; (c) access and use of Tier 2 to ensure equitable access to, engagement, in, and benefit from Tier 2 practices; and (d) student, staff, and family experiences (i.e.,

social validity) to enhance the cultural and contextual relevance of Tier 2 practices.

Tier 2 Implementation Functions

Training

Coordinated training and coaching at the district level builds local capacity and supports accurate, durable, scalable implementation of PBIS practices (McIntosh et al., 2021; Sugai et al., 2016). To implement Tier 2 systems and practices effectively, school-based staff need the necessary knowledge and skills to support Tier 2 implementation based on their role. Though some training in Tier 2 may be more effectively coordinated at the school level (see Tier 2 School-Level Systems Guide),[11] when multiple schools in a district are implementing Tier 2 it may be more efficient to develop and deliver districtwide training for school teams, building administrators, facilitators and coordinators, and/or school staff. Training may be provided by an internal or external coach with expertise in PBIS, Tier 2 systems, implementation science, and data systems.

TRAINING FOR THE DISTRICT TIER 2 TEAM

We recommend the District Tier 2 Team receives training in Tier 2 prior to or concurrently with school teams in order to support the development, integration, and alignment of Tier 2 systems. Initial training should include:

- Tier 2 data, systems, practices, outcomes, and rationale
- Integration and alignment of Tier 2 with Tier 1, Tier 3, and other related initiatives
- Establishing training, coaching, and evaluation systems
- Assessing and building capacity to sustain high-fidelity implementation of Tier 2 districtwide

After initial training, the District Tier 2 Team may benefit from ongoing training on the following topics:

- Annual booster training on Tier 2 data, systems, practices, outcomes, and rationale
- Integration and alignment of Tier 2 with Tier 1, Tier 3, and other related initiatives
- Data collection systems and data-based decision making
- Implementation of current and new Tier 2 practices with fidelity
- Other topics as indicated by data

TRAINING FOR SCHOOL TEAMS

When all or a portion of schools in a district are preparing to implement Tier 2 PBIS, it is advantageous for the District Tier 2 Team to be involved in coordinating and providing initial Tier 2 training to School Tier 2 Teams. This may range from (a) the District Tier 2 Team planning and providing training to school teams itself to (b) partnering with an external technical assistance provider to support coordination and delivery of training, depending on the internal capacity and expertise within the district. Recommended Year 1 training content for school teams is detailed in the Tier 2 School-Level Systems Guide. Following initial training, School Tier 2 Teams may benefit from ongoing training on the same topics listed above, focused on implementation at the school level.

TRAINING FOR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators play a central role in ensuring the accurate and sustained implementation of PBIS; therefore, their commitment to providing the necessary resources, support, and authority to implement Tier 2 is critical. Actively participating in trainings as a member of their district's or school's team increases the skills and knowledge of administrators, signals a strong commitment to Tier 2, and ensures the team has administrative authority when planning implementation. The District Tier 2 Leadership Team includes both district and school administrators. Typically, only one of several administrators in a school participates on each School Tier 2 Team. In addition to participating in team trainings, it is recommended that school administrators receive training alongside other administrators in the district, coordinated by the District Tier 2 Team. Organizing training and technical assistance for administrators across a district (a) ensures all administrators across buildings and programs are familiar with Tier 2 systems and practices, (b) supports consistency of implementation across locations, and (c) provides opportunities for problem-solving common barriers.

Training on the following may be beneficial:

- How Tier 2 systems and supports fit within their PBIS/MTSS framework, including integration and alignment with Tier 1, Tier 3, and related initiatives
- Data systems for identifying students in need of Tier 2 practices; monitoring their equitable access to, engagement in, and benefit from Tier 2 practices; and monitoring systems-level and practice-specific fidelity
- Resources needed to implement Tier 2 and the plan for training and coaching staff
- District policies and procedures and laws relevant to Tier 2 practices

Training for district and school administrators is planned and delivered by the District Tier 2 Team utilizing expertise within the district. While building their own capacity to provide trainings, District Tier 2 Teams may collaborate with state or national technical assistance providers to support training. Training should reflect evidence-based practices and be consistent with district and state policies and practices.

TRAINING FOR INTERVENTION FACILITATORS & COORDINATORS

Intervention facilitators and coordinators are responsible for implementing, coordinating, and often coaching others in implementing Tier 2 practices. Depending on the practice, facilitators and coordinators collect and analyze fidelity and outcome data related to the practice or support others in collecting these data. Since there are typically a small number of facilitators and/or coordinators for each practice in each school, ongoing training is most efficiently coordinated and provided at the district level. Training should include:

- Implementation of the practice (i.e., intervention or support)
- Coordinating with students, family, and staff to support implementation and generalization of skills
- District policy and procedures related to Tier 2 practices (e.g., notification/consent process, limits to confidentiality)

- Use of data collection tools for monitoring implementation fidelity and students' equitable access to, engagement in, and benefit from Tier 2 practices
- Data-based process for fading students from the practice

Providing training to intervention facilitators and coordinators at the district-level has the added benefit of creating a community of practice in which individuals share information and strategies and learn from one another (Wenger et al., 2002). This model provides a supportive environment in which coordinators can share celebrations, barriers, and resources. It also supports consistent implementation of the practice across schools and can help to identify and address systemic barriers to equitable access, implementation fidelity, and/or outcomes.

TRAINING FOR ALL SCHOOL STAFF

There is a common misperception that Tier 2 practices are provided by specialists, outside of the classroom, and are outside the purview of classroom teachers. In fact, supporting Tier 2 practices across school settings is critical for students to become fluent in skills targeted by Tier 2 practices and generalize them across contexts. Therefore, it is necessary for all school staff to recognize and possess competency in their role in supporting Tier 2 practices. It may be most efficient for the District Tier 2 Team to develop training materials school teams can use to deliver training to their staff. In smaller districts, the district team may also coordinate and provide training to school staff. At minimum, all staff should receive training to understand:

- How Tier 2 systems and supports fit within the MTSS framework,
- Guidelines for entering and exiting Tier 2 practices and the process for requesting assistance for a student to receive Tier 2 practices, and
- Core components of standard Tier 2 practices across the district, rationale, and their role in supporting implementation in the classroom.

Individual schools may provide additional training and coaching to staff in Tier 2 practices specific to the school.

Coaching

Training is necessary but insufficient to attain implementation with fidelity (Fixsen et al., 2005; Massar et al., 2023). Coaching helps individuals and teams build fluency with new skills and procedures and generalize and adapt Tier 2 practices and systems in ways that support durable, scalable implementation. Coaching may be provided by an internal or external coach with expertise in PBIS, Tier 2 systems, implementation science, and data systems.

COACHING FOR THE DISTRICT TIER 2 TEAM

The District Tier 2 Team benefits from coaching to (a) support data-based problem-solving and evaluation activities and/or (b) build internal capacity in particular areas of expertise. The frequency of coaching can be adapted to needs and often requires more frequent coaching in the exploration and installation phases of implementation and less during the implementation and adaptation phases (Massar et al., 2023).

District teams may benefit from coaching related to:

- Establishing evaluation routines to assess the overall reach, effectiveness, and fidelity of Tier 2 systems (see Evaluation and Data Systems section)
- Using data to guide decisions related to resource allocation and professional development
- Supporting integration and alignment of Tier 2 systems with Tier 1, Tier 3, and related initiatives
- Exploring and installing new Tier 2 practices matched to common needs
- Building a community of practice or coaching network within the district

COACHING FOR TIER 2 SCHOOL TEAMS

Tier 2 school teams will likely benefit from regular support from a coach with expertise in PBIS, Tier 2 systems, implementation science, and data systems. Coaching may be provided on site during school-based Tier 2 team meetings and/or through a cohort model in which coaching is provided to a group of Tier 2 school teams or Tier 2 school-based coaches from each team. Providing coaching through a cohort model, across schools, has the benefit of maximizing efficiency as well as fostering a community of practice in which individuals from different schools celebrate successes, problem-solve barriers, and learn from one another.

School teams may benefit from coaching related to:

- Implementing Tier 2 practices with fidelity
- Using data to identify students in need of Tier 2 support
- Functionally matching students to Tier 2 practices
- Monitoring student progress and implementation fidelity of Tier 2 practices
- Interpreting data to make decisions about continuing, adapting, or fading practices
- Interpreting data to make decisions about the effectiveness of Tier 2 systems and practices

For more information about school-level coaching needs, please see the Tier 2 School-Level Systems Guide.[12]

Evaluation & Data Systems

The installation of evaluation and data systems are critical for effectively supporting students on Tier 2 practices. These systems help to facilitate the identification of students for Tier 2 and decision making for individual students (e.g., when to modify or fade from Tier 2 practices) and the overall health of Tier 2 systems (e.g., monitoring the number of Tier 2 practices; number of students participating in Tier 2 practices; and equitable access, participation, and effectiveness of Tier 2 practices; Center on PBIS, 2023). In addition, these systems assist Tier 2 teams in identifying areas for improvement to prioritize with training and coaching; engaging staff, families, and community partners in developing and evaluating Tier 2 practices; and acknowledging staff for their implementation efforts (Center on PBIS, 2023).

School teams are unlikely to select and install their own evaluation and data systems. To facilitate this, district teams have an important role in identifying, encouraging use of, and providing professional development on the implementation of these

systems (Van Horn et al., 2024). Once these systems are selected, district team members may receive training on these data systems (e.g., PBISApps' PBIS Assessment[13]) for the purposes of training individual school teams on their use for data collection and data-based decision making. Alternately, districts may opt to develop and build their own data system to support Tier 2 decision-making (e.g., using Google sheets, Excel, tracking logs, etc.). Districts should consider the resources (e.g., time, personnel) necessary to build and maintain an accurate data system that meets the following criteria:

- Facilitates real-time decision making
- Allows for efficient data entry and retrieval
- Produces effective data visualizations (e.g., flexible graphs) to facilitate data-based decision making
- Is readily accessible to all who need access

District team members may initially support Tier 2 school teams by helping to install the data systems, serving as a data analyst when generating reports, and facilitating data-based decision-making (Bastable et al., 2020). In addition, district team members may help to facilitate sustained use of these data systems by (a) providing ongoing training and coaching to school teams and (b) requiring the teams share their school-level data for district-level decision-making (e.g., Tier 2 practice enrollment data, percent of students that were successful on a Tier 2 practice; Center on PBIS, 2023; Van Horn et al., 2024). Three types of data sources helpful for evaluating the successful implementation of Tier 2 practices across the district include student outcome, system and practice fidelity, and student and practice capacity data. Each data source should be able to be disaggregated to monitor equitable access, engagement, and benefit from Tier 2 support across student groups.

OUTCOME DATA

At the district level, student outcome data is useful for tracking the number of students experiencing success on Tier 2 practices. District Tier 2 Teams can also track what kinds of data decision rules school teams are using to maintain, modify, or fade existing Tier 2 practices for students. Student outcome data may include office discipline referrals, course performance, school attendance, response to the intervention (e.g., improved skill performance), and behavior ratings (e.g., daily progress report). Similar to Tier 2 school teams, district teams often rely on data systems to summarize student outcome data. Some Tier 2 practices have built-in progress monitoring tools. For example, school teams can summarize the number of students receiving Check-In/Check-Out (CICO) and their performance through behavior ratings. In addition, other centralized programs may help to connect student academic, behavior, and attendance data to provide District Tier 2 Teams with an overall measure of student progress. These data sources are also useful for internal evaluation by the District Tier 2 Team to identify areas for improvement and action planning for school teams.

At the school level, Tier 2 teams are responsible for asking (and answering) the questions below. District Tier 2 Teams will want to review and answer these same questions across schools to monitor the overall health of Tier 2 systems and identify needs and model

demonstrations that can be used to plan training and coaching.

- How many students are accessing Tier 2 practices?
- Are those practices effective and resulting in meaningful change?
- Are Tier 2 practices implemented as designed?
- Is our referral system efficient and effective?
- Are our Tier 2 systems equitable in terms of access, engagement, and benefit?

FIDELITY DATA

District fidelity data systems are key for evaluating whether Tier 2 school teams have reached the capacity to effectively implement Tier 2 practices to produce desired outcomes. These data systems assist district teams in assessing whether Tier 2 school teams are implementing Tier 2 practices (e.g., CICO, behavioral contracts, small SEB skills groups) with consistency and high-fidelity. When district teams identify an area of need (e.g., inconsistent implementation of a Tier 2 practice during the first 2 weeks of students receiving intervention), the district team can use this data to provide targeted training and coaching to members of the Tier 2 school team to improve implementation.

To design relevant training and coaching, the district team will need to review multiple data sources including:

- **District systems-level fidelity:** District teams can evaluate whether they have the capacity to support Tier 2 school teams (e.g., training, coaching, identifying local implementation demonstrations) by reviewing their internal implementation fidelity data from standardized tools (e.g., DSFI). At Tier 2, the TFI 3.0 provides school teams with an accurate assessment of their ability to track the proportion of students receiving Tier 2 practices, the proportion of students experiencing success, whether there is a standardized process for identifying students in need of Tier 2 practice and selecting and matching Tier 2 practices to specific student needs.



- **School systems-level fidelity:** District teams also evaluate whether school teams are implementing Tier 2 systems with high-fidelity to support implementation of Tier 2 practices. District teams can establish the evaluation schedule for schools to complete the Tier 2 domain of the TFI 3.0 and support teams to complete for higher ratings of reliability. Aggregating TFI 3.0 data can help the

district assess overall capacity to implement Tier 2 in schools (e.g., identify whether Tier 2 school teams are comprised of the individuals necessary to support implementation of Tier 2 practices, whether they meet regularly, have a standard meeting minute format and agenda, and team operating procedures). To fully evaluate school systems across the district, additional data sources from schools (e.g., team meeting agendas, meeting minutes, action plans) may be useful in identifying support needed to build capacity across schools in the district.

- **Practice fidelity:** Practice fidelity data are helpful for identifying patterns when students are struggling to participate in Tier 2 practices and whether certain practices are being implemented with fidelity. If particular practices are not being implemented with fidelity across students, coaches can provide training or coaching. District teams may request Tier 2 practice fidelity data collected by school teams through point cards, practice checklists, or web applications (Kittelman et al., 2023).

STUDENT AND PRACTICE CAPACITY DATA

District teams can use student and practice data from schools to evaluate the overall health and capacity to scale up Tier 2 practices for students across the district. For example, they can assess the percentage of students (overall and by different demographic groups) being supported on Tier 2 practices. District teams can also assess the number of Tier 2 practices being implemented and the percentage of students supported across those practices.

These types of data can be especially useful for identifying future areas to target with training and coaching for school teams and the allocation of resources (e.g., funding, data systems) to enhance the scale up of Tier 2 practices across the district (Kittelman & Horner, accepted for publication). Types of data useful to enhance Tier 2 practice scale up include tracking the number of students receiving Tier 2 practices, the number of students per Tier 2 practice, and the length of time students participate in Tier 2 practice. Resources like the Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (MO SW-PBS) Advanced Tier Spreadsheet[14] and Tier 2/Tier 3 Intervention Tracking Tool[15] can be particularly helpful for tracking the number of students and practices implemented within and across schools.

Tier 2 Executive Functions

Partner Engagement

A key feature of PBIS is the involvement of student, family, and community partners in the design and implementation of practices (Minke & Anderson, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006). When teams support and empower families as equal decision-making partners outcomes improve for students, families, and educators (e.g., Mapp & Hong, 2010; Smith et al., 2020). Including family and community as equal partners on the District Tier 2 Team helps to ensure that Tier 2 systems and practices are accessible, reflect and respect community and cultural values, and integrate other sources of support (e.g., community-based mental health, physical health, after school care, coaches).

The District Tier 2 Team is responsible for defining district policy and procedures to encourage student,

family, and community engagement at the school level. Their voices will be valuable in providing guidance to schools on procedures such as:

- **Selecting and defining Tier 2 practices:** Making space for students, families, and community members to have an equal voice in the selection process confirms the fit of practices with cultural values and community supports. Creating family friendly practice descriptions to raise awareness of supports and family participation in practice implementation will also be critical.
- **Student identification process:** Involving students, families, and community partners in planning the universal screening process can help identify and address potential concerns early on. Seeking feedback from families and students on the format of request for assistance forms can help ensure the processes are accessible. Having community partners engaged in the planning can help determine data decision rules and define a single system of school and community-based supports.
- **Monitoring & communicating student progress:** Students, families, and community partners can provide recommendations for family and student friendly monitoring and communication procedures that can be used to shape district guidance.

Funding and Alignment

As with implementation of any initiative, there will be upfront costs associated with implementation of Tier 2 systems and practices. Even though research shows that these initial costs are offset by the long-term savings resulting from improved student outcomes (e.g., increased instructional time, reduced exclusionary discipline practices; Swain-Bradway et al., 2017), district teams will want to be strategic in their investments of resources to support implementation of Tier 2. Costs associated with resources to support school-level Tier 2 teams can be categorized as:

- **Personnel costs:** At the district-level, personnel costs for Tier 2 implementation are likely to come in the form of (a) coordinating implementation activities (e.g., developing action plans, embedding Tier 2 training and coaching into district calendars, identifying external content experts for training if needed), (b) providing training for Tier 2 school teams (e.g., number of days/hours of training, stipend or funds for training during non-contract days for school teams, hiring substitute teachers for training days), and (c) ongoing training, coaching, and evaluation (e.g., attending Tier 2 school team meetings, generating Tier 2 data reports and graphs; Bastable et al., 2020; Center on PBIS, 2023).
- **Data systems:** Costs associated with data systems may include the District Tier 2 Team identifying data systems to monitor the implementation fidelity of Tier 2 practices and impacts on student outcomes. Costs may include the purchase of specific data system technologies and training required for district and school teams to become fluent with the data system (Center on PBIS, 2023).
- **Materials:** Depending on the Tier 2 practices selected and encouraged by the district Tier 2 Team, there may be costs associated with materials needed for implementation. As an example, there may be costs related to purchasing practice workbooks, curriculum, and standardized data collection measures (Kittelman et al., 2022).

Although costs are likely to be higher in the short term, identifying ways to align Tier 2 practices and systems within existing practices and systems can help to offset initial costs. Alignment activities may include engaging in resource mapping activities across Tier 2 initiatives targeting different student outcomes (e.g., mental health, academic, social-emotional-behavioral; Center on PBIS, 2023). By identifying and cataloging existing Tier 2 practices and systems, the District Tier 2 Team can identify ways to integrate new Tier 2 practices within existing teaming structures and leverage existing data systems. For example, the District Tier 2 Team can provide feedback to school teams on how to leverage existing resources to support implementation of a new Tier 2 practice utilizing existing personnel, materials, and data systems.

Policy

Federal, state, or district policies can impact implementation of Tier 2 in schools. Therefore, district teams must be familiar with these policies in order to align policy and practice. For example, federal guidance encourages access to function-based supports throughout the continuum of support, including Tier 2, based on indicated need regardless of a student's disability status (e.g., OSERS, 2024). Thus, district teams may decide to provide training to all staff on understanding function of behavior to support functionally matched practices at Tier 2. District teams also play a critical role in aligning related initiatives to facilitate efficient, effective implementation in schools. For example, a district may choose to integrate systems supporting tiered behavioral supports with tiered academic supports for an integrated MTSS. The



district team would play a critical role in determining the logistics (e.g., integrated data collection system, re-examining teaming structures, planning and delivering training of personnel) of this process.

A district team could use the following checklist to support effective implementation of policies and associated practices:

- Are policies and practices aligned?
- Are adequate resources (e.g., funding/personnel, materials, PD, coaching) allocated to enact the policy with fidelity?
- Are district policies regularly shared publicly and explicitly with all stakeholders (e.g., schools, family, community)?

- Is a process in place for stakeholders to provide feedback on implementation, barriers, facilitators, and potential adaptations to policies and practices to fit the local context?
- Is a process in place to monitor implementation fidelity and outcomes of the policy at the district level?

Workforce Capacity

As discussed in the Training section of this guide, one of the responsibilities of the District Tier 2 Team is to assess and build districtwide capacity to sustain high-fidelity implementation of Tier 2. A simple way for district teams to estimate the need for Tier 2 practices is to calculate 10-15% of the student population. This is the number of students estimated to need Tier 2 support when Tier 1 is implemented with fidelity (see Figure 1). The District Tier 2 Team can then examine available resources to calculate a serviceable base rate, or the number of students who could reasonably be served in Tier 2 with the current resources available (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). The district's current resources could include personnel, curriculum, materials, scheduling flexibility, team stability, and other factors supporting implementation of practices. Table 1 guides district teams through this process.

As a team, complete the chart below with your district's enrollment data to assist you in estimating the number of students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

Once district capacity has been assessed, the district team can consider how to leverage implementation functions (e.g., training, coaching, and evaluation) to build the skills of personnel across the district to address needs and/or how to adjust hiring practices to obtain personnel with the necessary experience. Finally, the District Tier 2 Team can build capacity by organizing the infrastructure to support effective implementation of Tier 2. The working capacity of the system can be maximized by prioritizing coordination of teams and integration and alignment of resources and practices. Similarly, allocating personnel and FTE to facilitate activities (e.g., including coaching in job duties, allocating adequate time for training) will help to ensure the smooth operation of implementation functions.

Figure 1. Calculating Projected Need

As a team, complete the chart below with your district's enrollment data to assist you in estimating the number of students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

Total Student Enrollment	**1% =**	**5% =**	**Tier 3**
	10% =	**15% =**	**Tier 2**
	80% =		**Tier 1**

Then complete the projected needs statement that follows:

_____ Public School District has a total student population of _____. Based on the expected percentages in tiered practice, approximately __ - __ students may need targeted (Tier 2) supports. It is possible that __ - __ students may need intensive (Tier 3) support.

Table 1. Calculating Serviceable Base Rate

Staff with expertise in:	Current Capacity (Staff and FTE)	Additional Resources (e.g., curricula, materials, training structures)	Serviceable Base Rate (how many students can existing resources support?)
Implementing Tier 2 Practices • Function-based support • Developmentally appropriate, evidence-based SEB practices • Adapting practices to be culturally relevant • Coordinating with students, family and staff • Supporting staff implementation through training & coaching			
Data-Based Decision Making • Supporting staff implementation through training and coaching • Monitoring outcome data • Designing, collecting, using fidelity data to monitor implementation			
Community Supports • Forming collaborative relationships with community partners • Accessing relevant evidence-based practices and services (e.g., mental health, SEB, academic)			

Summary

District commitment to Tier 2 strengthens consistent and sustainable implementation across schools. Because Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports share many of the same systems and resources, districts can leverage many structures for teaming, training, coaching, evaluation and data systems to ensure coherent, efficient implementation across both tiers. The Center on PBIS has developed guides to support team planning and problem-solving at the district and school levels across Tier 2 and Tier 3. These provide guidance for addressing important systems issues such as teaming, training, coaching, evaluation and data systems critical to developing and implementing an effective and efficient Tier 2 system.

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Embedded Hyperlinks

1. https://www.pbis.org/resource/tier-2-school-level-systems-guide
2. https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-1
3. https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-2
4. https://www.pbis.org/resource/dsfi
5. https://www.pbis.org/resource/tier-2-systems-readiness-guide
6. https://www.pbis.org/resource/when-do-schools-receive-tier-2-and-3-pbis-training
7. https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-implementation-blueprint
8. https://www.pbis.org/resource/tfi-3
9. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-B1PiqYbu7b5QEndfV0xezpZ695-vSyb/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=106585566960302482862&rtpof=true&sd=true
10. https://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resource/the-hexagon-an-exploration-tool/
11. https://www.pbis.org/resource/tier-2-school-level-systems-guide
12. https://www.pbis.org/resource/tier-2-school-level-systems-guide
13. https://www.pbisapps.org/products/pbis-assessment
14. https://pbismissouri.org/tier-2-and-tier-3-data-tools/
15. https://nepbis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Midwest-Tracking-Tool-Dec.-2015.docx