

Basic FBA to BIP District Planning & Implementation Guide

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Basic FBA to BIP District Planning & Implementation Guide

This manual is to guide school districts in development of a comprehensive professional development plan to maximize benefits of the Basic FBA to BIP e-Learning modules (www.BasicFBA.com). The Basic FBA to BIP e-learning series can be an important component of a district plan to implement a system of function-based supports for students with persistent challenging behavior, however, the modules must be embedded within a comprehensive multi-year professional development plan.

The primary goal of the Basic FBA to BIP series is to train school-based personnel to conduct “Basic” functional behavioral assessments (FBA) and design, implement, and evaluate function-based behavior intervention plans (BIP). “Basic FBA to BIP” training methods are designed to **train school-based personnel with the capacity and flexibility in their role to conduct teacher interviews and classroom observations, facilitate behavior planning meetings and support teachers and staff with implementation.** The Basic FBA/BIP training methods are specifically **designed for use with students that exhibit consistent problems that are NOT dangerous and have not been adequately addressed through previous assessment and intervention.** Basic FBA to BIP trains the foundational skills of FBA/BIP with a focus initially on building skills to support students presenting with “Basic” rather than “Complex” needs. Repeated practice and fluency in the “Basic” FBA to BIP process provides the prerequisite knowledge, skills and experience necessary to progress to support more “complex” FBA to BIP cases through ongoing training.

One of the primary arguments for Basic FBA to BIP is the opportunity for earlier identification and support for students requiring behavior support. This is important not only for increasing our opportunities for success with the student, but also for engaging teachers and staff before they have experienced an extended period of frustration, which can make it difficult to solicit authentic cooperation of teachers and staff in FBA/BIP implementation.

The Basic FBA to BIP e-learning modules can function as a central training curriculum for a professional development plan. The modules can provide an efficient training resource for school districts to use to build school and district capacity for scaling up implementation of FBA/BIP. Content of the Basic FBA to BIP series provides a common language, process and framework for implementing function-based support in schools and across a school district, but the training modules alone are insufficient to support learners in attaining mastery and fluency with conducting FBA/BIP.

Even at the level of Basic FBA to BIP, individualized behavior support planning requires an array of knowledge and skills. The variability that behavior specialists can face across individual student cases, including the range of student, teacher, administrator and environmental circumstances do not often lend themselves to simple preconceived solutions easily attained through completion of a series of e-learning modules. ***The Basic FBA to BIP modules must be situated within a comprehensive professional development plan.*** The skills required to conduct an individualized assessment (FBA) and to facilitate a team through the design, implementation and evaluation of an individualized BIP ***require repeated practice, coaching and ongoing training across a range of FBA/BIP cases.***

Building a District Leadership Team

Use of the Basic FBA to BIP modules will be most effective when situated within a multi-year, district-level professional development plan. A first step is to identify a leadership team to plan and coordinate systems for Individual Student Behavior Supports (e.g. Tier 2 & Tier 3 SWPBIS). The Leadership Team might stand alone or could be a sub-committee of a District Leadership team focused on Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), behavior support, or climate and equity. The District Leadership Team for Individual Behavior Supports should include representatives across the range of stakeholders involved in programming to support students with challenging behavior. Below is a list of potential leadership team members:

- District Administrator (Superintendent, Special Education Director)
- District Behavior Specialists, Equity Coordinator, PBIS Coaches
- Behavior Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) and coordinators of other district/school behavior support efforts
- Building level behavior support staff (School Psychologists, Counselors, Social workers)
- Building Administrators (across school levels)
- Self-contained Behavior Classroom teachers
- Behavior Specialist/Expert from University or Regional Service Provider
- Representatives from local community and mental health support providers
- Paraeducators supporting students with behavior support
- Family representative
- Student representative

The focus of the District Leadership Team includes coordination and planning of systems to support the continuum of individual student behavior, social and emotional needs. This encompasses Tier 2 and Tier 3 systems of support, including general education, special education and wraparound supports.

Defining a Multi-Year Action Plan and Professional Development Plan

Using Data for Decision Making

One task of the leadership team will be to develop a multi-year action plan to build capacity for function-based support across the school district. This process should start by reviewing data to identify needs and to understand the current context of individual behavior support. For purposes of this document, the focus will be specifically on systems of Tier 3 Behavior Support. Data might address the following questions:

- 1) How many students in the school district would benefit from Tier 3 behavior support? (Sources of data might include ODR data and universal screeners for identifying students with elevated behavior support needs.)
- 2) How many students are currently receiving Tier 3 behavior support (e.g., # of students with individualized plans)?
- 3) What are the outcomes for those students receiving Tier 3 behavior support? (e.g. student outcome data from BIP/graphs)
- 4) What is the level of fidelity of implementation of Tier 3 behavior supports at the level of:
 - a. Individual Student (i.e., Fidelity of Implementation ratings for individual student cases)

- b. School System (e.g. scores on Tier 3-Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI))
- 5) What is the capacity for implementation of FBA/BIP and Tier 3 Behavior Support in the school district?
 - a. How many personnel are the skills and role responsibility and flexibility to conduct FBA/BIP in the school district relative to the number of students requiring support?

Earlier identification and support for students who would benefit from FBA/BIP depends on school district capacity and increasing the number of staff with training and the role flexibility to conduct FBA/BIP. A review of the data might serve the initial step of conducting an audit of current personnel and district capacity for supporting students requiring individualized Tier 3 levels of behavior support across district and school levels. For example, the MTSS framework suggests that 5-7% of students are likely to require intensive individualized behavior support. The team might consider, based on the identified percentages, how many students in the district are likely to require intensive individualized support plans (e.g., if a school district has 10,000 students, 5% is 500 students that the district might anticipate would require highly intensive levels of individual behavior support). Next, the team would consider what supports are currently available and how many district-level behavior specialists are available to support those students with the most intensive support needs.

Defining Roles

A next consideration is a multi-level plan for building capacity for behavior support. This plan should include development of job descriptions with clearly defined roles and responsibilities of 1) District level Behavior Specialists and 2) Building level Behavior Specialists, or those individuals identified to be trained to conduct Basic FBA to BIP in schools. This model is likely to look different for larger school districts (see Figure 1) and smaller school districts (see Figure 2). The district will want to differentiate the roles and expectations of District Level Behavior Specialists and School-level Behavior Specialists.

District Behavior Specialists. Many district-level behavior specialists describe their role as that of the firefighter responding to crises as they appear across the school district. The focus is often times working with complex behavior support cases involving students with IEPs often driven by meeting legal compliance. A more proactive model would focus on identifying students much earlier and implementing behavior support before challenging behavior becomes more resistant to remediation and potentially more severe. This requires a shift in the role and capacity of the District Behavior Specialist to one of Capacity Builder and Coach. The District Behavior Specialist would still be involved in more complex behavioral cases in the district, but a primary responsibility would be in providing training, coaching and technical support to school-level teams of behavior specialists.

District Behavior Specialists should have strong knowledge of and experience conducting FBA/BIP. When identifying persons for this role, *it is recommended that candidates provide evidence of previous FBA/BIPs and/or conduct an FBA/BIP as part of the interview and selection process.* Given these prerequisite knowledge and skills, a first step in preparing District Behavior Specialists would be to increase their knowledge and experience implementing the Basic FBA to BIP process by completing the training modules and leading the Basic FBA to BIP process across a number of cases in a variety of school. This will prepare them for the role of coaching teams to implement Basic FBA to BIP. District Behavior Specialists should have expertise in conducting complex FBA/BIP, coaching and supporting

school behavior specialists in FBA/BIP skills, and supporting school implementation of Tier 3 Systems of Behavior Support, but these are frequently skills that require additional and ongoing professional development.

Responsibilities of the District Behavior Specialist in this model include:

- 1) Facilitating District Leadership Team coordination and planning for Tier 3 Behavior Support Systems
- 2) Supporting School-level Behavior Specialists and Behavior Support teams through:
 - a. Training of Basic FBA to BIP
 - b. Coaching and providing technical support in the Basic FBA to BIP implementation
 - i. Modelling and providing feedback in FBA and BIP meetings and processes
 - ii. Providing feedback on completed FBA and BIP documents (e.g. FBA Interview, Observation, Behavior Intervention Plan, Implementation Plan, Point card)
 - c. Supporting implementation of Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavior support systems
- 3) Providing consultative support to school behavior support teams with Complex FBA/BIP cases

District Behavior Specialists can provide live feedback as school level specialists are completing each portion of the Basic FBA to BIP process (e.g. FBA interview, FBA observation, completing the Behavior Intervention Planning form, facilitating the Behavior Intervention Plan meeting, providing implementation support to teachers and staff, collecting data, and leading BIP Review meetings). It's particularly important during initial training with the Basic FBA to BIP e-learning modules, that the District Behavior Specialists prompt, encourage and support school-level specialists to complete the homework and provide timely and meaningful feedback. Collecting evidence of module completion is not sufficient, it will be important to monitor and support homework completion (FBA/BIP), and multiple opportunities to practice and build fluency across FBA/BIP cases with coaching and feedback. *It is our recommendation that the district specialist provide scaffolded coaching support to building-level behavior interventionists for at least the first three Basic FBA/BIPs completed following training.*

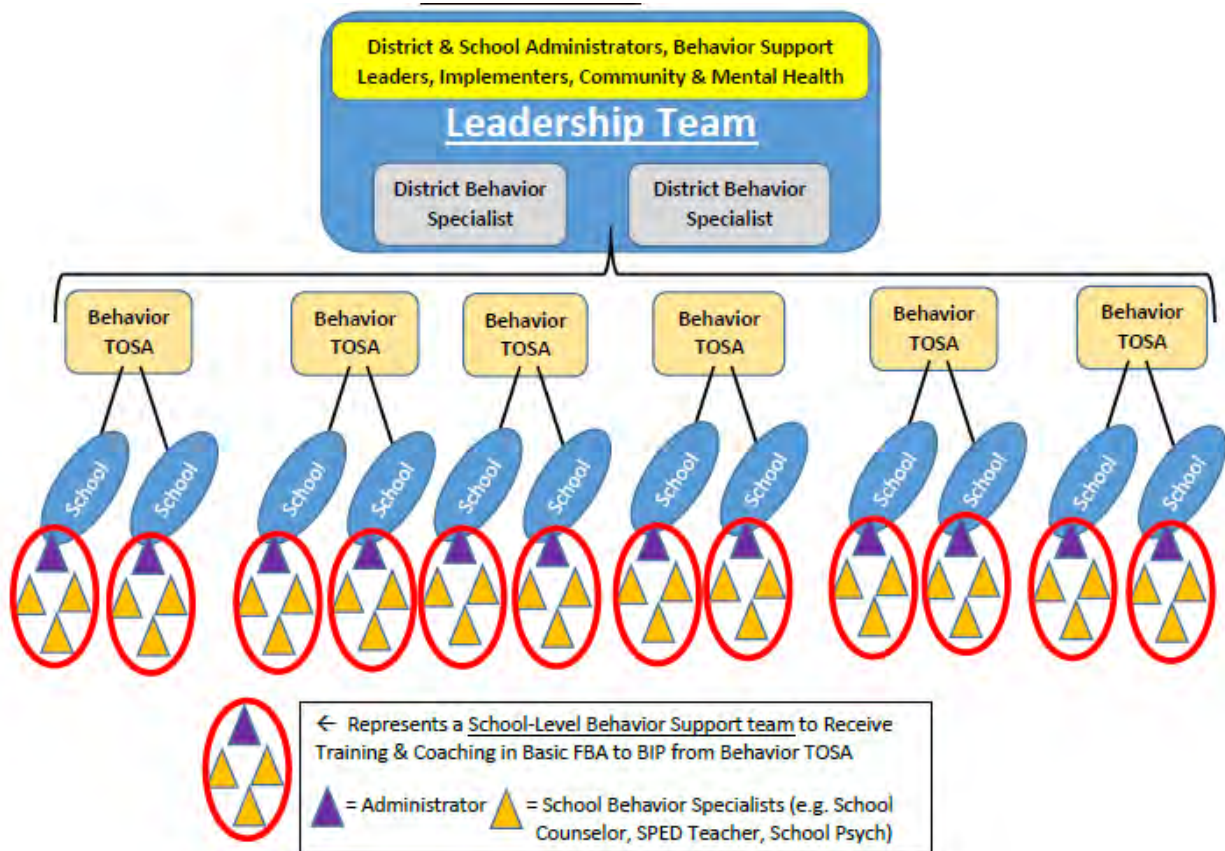
School-level Behavior Interventionists/Specialists. The key to increasing school capacity for function-based behavior support is training school personnel to conduct Basic FBA to BIP. It is critically important to identify and train individuals who have the capacity, role, and expectation to conduct all aspects of the Basic FBA to BIP process. Schools are encouraged to identify a team of people who are currently tasked with supporting students with challenging behavior, and who have the capacity to conduct FBA interventions, classroom observations, facilitate BIP meetings and support teachers and staff with implementation. It is critical for staff members with training in Basic FBA to BIP to have the necessary time allocated to carry out the responsibilities associated with FBA/BIP. School-level Behavior Specialists are often special education teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers. It can be difficult for classroom teachers to function in the role of a behavior specialist because they often do not have the role flexibility to regularly conduct the responsibilities included in FBA/BIP.

Building Administrators. A building administrator is also instrumental to effective implementation of Basic FBA to BIP in schools. The administrator will not be expected to regularly conduct FBA interviews and classroom observations, in part because of the bias an administrator can immediately bring into the classroom environment that could impact both student and staff behavior. However, it is important that the administrator has a strong understanding of the rationale for FBA/BIP,

the implementation process, and the role the administrator must play in the process. The administrator should go through the Basic FBA to BIP training series with the school-level team of behavior specialists. Active commitment and participation by the building administrator sets an important tone for supporting implementation of Basic FBA to BIP. The administrator plays a central role during Behavior Intervention Planning when they provide decision making authority that allows the team to effectively and efficiently decide on interventions and supports such as scheduling, personnel and resources. The administrator can also increase accountability for staff implementation of the behavior intervention plan because the administrator is more likely to have a supervisory role over participating staff to encourage plan implementation.

Before embarking on Basic FBA to BIP training, it's important that school district work with school leadership teams to assess school readiness and commitment. Moving forward with Tier 3 Behavior Support requires an authentic commitment to supporting students with persistent challenging behavior in the school. Working with schools and administrators to establish an authentic commitment to Tier 3 Behavior Support is a critical first step. Here is a link to a [School Readiness and Commitment form](#) outlining some of the important commitments.

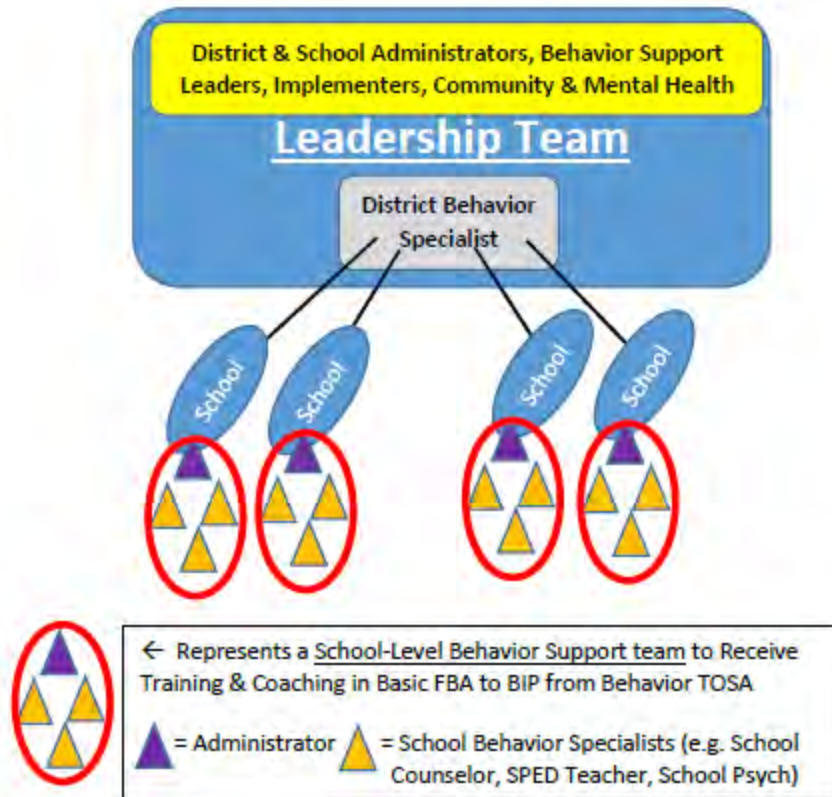
Figure 1. Example Model for Larger District Implementing Basic FBA/BIP.



Over time, larger school districts (see Figure 1) may need multiple District Behavior Specialists to train and support a team of Behavior TOSAs to develop skills in coaching and supporting school level teams through Basic FBA to BIP implementation and build skills toward conducting more complex FBA/BIPs.

In smaller school districts (see Figure 2), there may be a single District Behavior Specialist who directly trains and supports the School Behavior Support Teams through Basic FBA to BIP training and implementation.

Figure 2. Example Model for Smaller District Implementing Basic FBA/BIP.



Evaluation Planning

The District Leadership team and District Behavior Specialist should develop an Evaluation Plan that can help guide implementation of Tier 3 systems of Behavior Support and implementation of FBA/BIP. The plan should include measures of implementation fidelity, student outcomes, and scale of implementation.

Fidelity of Implementation Data

Measuring fidelity of implementation should occur across both the systems level and the individual case level. Specific questions could include:

- 1) Are schools implementing FBA/BIP with fidelity for individual student cases?
- 2) Is the District Professional Development effort improving fidelity of implementation of:
 - a. Tier 3 Systems in our schools?
 - b. FBA/BIP processes in our schools?

Systems Level. While FBA/BIP practices are important, it's also necessary to consistently examine the systems that support implementation of Tier 2 and Tier 3 systems in the school as a context

for supporting continuing implementation of individual behavior support. It is important for school teams to regularly (at least annually) examine the data systems and team processes that guide consistent, enduring implementation of Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports in the school. The Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI; www.pbisapps.org) is specifically designed to support school teams in assessing implementation of behavior supports systems and guiding development of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 systems. Teams should work with a coach to use the TFI as an action planning tool to guide implementation efforts.

Individual Case Level. Fidelity at the individual case level can be understood on two levels: (1) the fidelity of behavior specialists in implementing the steps and practices of the FBA/BIP process (e.g. FBA interview, observations, Behavior Intervention Plan, Implementation Plan, Evaluation Plan) and (2) fidelity of implementation of each student's personal Behavior Intervention Plan. Both are important and worthy of measurement and monitoring. Since an initial emphasis is on training and supporting our School Behavior Specialists to implement the Basic FBA to BIP process, the emphasis here will be on monitoring the fidelity with which the behavior specialists are conducting elements of the FBA/BIP process with fidelity. Initially, measures of implementation fidelity should primarily be used through the provision of feedback to support skill development and build fluency of School Behavior Specialists. District Behavior Specialists can review FBA/BIP products and provide feedback to support School Behavior Specialists with developing skills and increasing fluency of FBA/BIP practices. Coaching tools are available that can be used to provide feedback on FBA/BIP products. Basic FBA to BIP provides [Coaching Checklists](#) that can be used as progress monitoring tools to support the continuing development of School Behavior Specialists FBA to BIP skills. [Coaching Checklists](#) are available for the homework tasks assigned with each module, coinciding with each step of the FBA/BIP process:

- A) FBA Interview – examines the extent each component of the interview was effectively completed
- B) FBA Observation and Summary of Behavior – examines the efficacy with which the ABC Observation was completed and the process of merging FBA information into a Summary of Behavior
- C) Behavior Intervention Plan – examines whether the competing behavior pathway and intervention suggestions are function-based and align with the FBA information collected
- D) Implementation Plan – examines the clarity of the implementation plan in identifying specific tasks to implement, who is responsible and a clear timeline for implementation
- E) Evaluation Plan and Data Collection forms – examines whether the data collection forms align with information on the competing behavior pathway and goals, and specifies who is responsible for each of the data collection tasks
- F) BIP Review - examines collection and presentation of data and whether review of data led to appropriate decisions

Another good tool for assessing fidelity of FBA/BIP is the Technical Adequacy Tool for Evaluation (TATE; here are links to the [TATE Scoring Guide](#) and [Scoring Rubric](#)).

The data from the coaching checklists or TATE can be used in two ways. First the data can help the district specialist provide individual feedback to School Behavior Specialists in training. The data also allow the district-level coach to identify patterns of mistakes being made across cases completed by the school behavior specialists to inform skills and topics to review and provide continuing training to

supplement the initial Basic FBA to BIP training.

A few simple, but important, measures of implementation fidelity can include whether the right participants are attending BIP Meetings, whether BIP Review meetings are happening, whether student outcome and whether implementation fidelity data are being collected and reviewed at meetings.

The compilation of this fidelity data can also be an important indicator of the effectiveness of the district level professional development plan and coaching and technical assistance supports.

Outcome Data

While the focus is on improving outcomes for individual students, the number of BIPs implemented in the district may be an important outcome of an effective professional development effort for FBA/BIP. There are a variety of measures that could be used to examine student outcomes, but the primary measure in Basic FBA to BIP is reviewing the data directly linked to each student behavior plan by reviewing the graphs presenting the daily point card data for the BIP. Are students making progress and/or meeting the 80% criteria as measured in their BIP? Other less direct measures might be the number of students being expelled, moved to more restrictive placements for behavior, or the rate of disciplinary infractions (e.g. discipline referrals, suspensions) students receive before and after implementation of the BIP. Another indicator might be student attendance.

Scale of Implementation

Scale of implementation can be a way to evaluate capacity building efforts within schools and across the school district. Measures might include:

- Number of FBA/BIPs completed
- The number of staff members completing FBA/BIPs
- The length of time between referrals for FBA and the beginning of the FBA/BIP process
- Type (or severity) of problem behaviors for which FBA is being conducted
- Number of students receiving individualized BIPs who do not have IEPs (e.g., prior to referral for Special Education in an effort to prevent special education referral)
- The number of FBA/BIP cases started by month, striving toward more cases beginning in the early school months, rather than waiting until later in the school year
- The number of discipline referrals or suspensions a student has received prior to starting the FBA/BIP process.

Over time, schools might also examine how the role of the District Behavior Specialist has shifted and if they are able to contribute more meaningfully to complex FBA cases due to increased capacity for implementing Basic FBA to BIP in the schools.

Maximizing Training with the Basic FBA to BIP e-Learning Modules

School districts should consider the most effective ways to make the e-learning modules available to trainees. First, as mentioned previously, be purposeful in identifying people for training who will have the time, capacity, flexibility and expectation to carry out the FBA/BIP process on which they are receiving training. Next, it's important to plan out a training schedule. The Basic FBA to BIP training sequence was

purposefully scaffolded to limit the amount of information presented at one time. Training in the entirety of the FBA/BIP process in a single training session is overwhelming, particularly when participants will not be able to immediately practice the skills and processes for which they were trained. For example, if a behavior specialist is trained on how to lead a team through the Implementation Planning process in a one-day FBA/BIP training, there is likely to be two weeks to complete the FBA before the trainee is ready to lead an Implementation meeting, which means they have to recall what they were trained on two weeks ago.

Basic FBA to BIP chunks out each component of the FBA/BIP process so that training should be closely followed by the opportunity to practice the skills trained in the module. For example, when someone is trained to conduct an FBA interview, it is best if that person applies the skills in practice within a day or two following training, rather than waiting for two weeks to go by, at which time they should probably go through the training again.

It is recommended that each module is scheduled a week or two weeks apart with an emphasis on completing the homework task assigned in that module prior to moving on to the next module. Module 1 doesn't have a homework task specifically related to conducting the FBA/BIP, except for the task of identifying a student and gaining consent, so that the participant can get started with the FBA interview immediately after completing Module 2 on FBA Interviews. It's also important that the training modules are not spaced too far apart, otherwise the FBA/BIP process gets too disjointed, and teachers and staff can get frustrated with the slow process. It's important that the District Behavior Specialist is assertive in their coaching role to ensure that completion of homework tasks is a priority.

Another consideration is the where and how of training delivery. The e-learning format provides great flexibility for when and how people can take the training, but focused engagement with the modules is important. It is not suggested that a link to the module be distributed via email with the suggestion or directive to complete the module on your own time. This may lead to "multi-tasking" (e.g. completing another work task, watching Netflix) while completing the modules, which is not going to provide the level of engagement necessary to garner the greatest benefit from the modules. Due to the highly interactive nature of the e-learning modules, it is encouraged that each trainee completes the modules individually, but it is encouraged that this be done in community during an assigned professional development time within professional hours. While completing the modules, periodic breaks to share important points, challenges, ask questions or check for understanding of module content can increase engagement and a sense of community in the training process. A District Behavior Specialist, or someone with more experience and expertise with FBA/BIP and the Basic FBA to BIP content are encouraged to be present to address questions and facilitate discussion of the module content. Training with the entire school team, or with multiple school teams, also provides the opportunity to provide feedback on homework from the prior week and answer any questions that might have surfaced during the process of completing the homework task. The modules usually take about an hour to 75 minutes to complete, so including time for discussion the trainings might best be scheduled for 90 minutes to 2 hours.

Trainings should also extend beyond completion of the seven Basic FBA to BIP e-learning modules. Reaching a level of mastery and fluency with FBA/BIP requires completing more than a single FBA/BIP. Ongoing trainings should provide an opportunity, encouragement and expectation to conduct additional FBA/BIP cases. The focus of training can shift toward reviewing specific cases and/or aspects of the

FBA/BIP process that require additional review and development across School Behavior Specialists.

It's also encouraged that, if possible, the training series begins early in the year. In order to (a) scaffold learning and try to set up trainees for success and (b) identify and begin addressing student behavior support needs as early in the school year as possible. Starting early in the year, also provides more opportunity for continuing practice with multiple cases across the year.

School-wide Training

As teams of behavior specialists are being trained in the Basic FBA to BIP modules they are encouraged to facilitate school-wide staff training in the Basics of Understanding Behavior (Module 1) and Function-Based Intervention (Module 4). The goal is to create a common language and framework across staff for understanding behavior and behavioral intervention. This should (a) provide teachers and staff with additional skills and tools for understanding and intervening when they are working with students engaging in persistent challenging behavior and, (b) increase teacher and staff ability to more effectively and efficiently participate in the FBA/BIP process for their students.

It is important to be strategic in planning this school-wide professional development. It is important that school leadership teams agree to this before they commit to participating in Basic FBA to BIP training, so that they can plan ahead for scheduling school-wide PD sessions.

Here are suggestions for planning the school-wide training for Basic FBA to BIP:

- Schedule a designated time to complete the modules during school PD
- Have a plan for encouraging and following up with homework
- Make sure to provide a context and rationale for the training so staff clearly understand the purpose of the training
- Train in smaller groups of staff (e.g. grade levels) when possible, assigning members of the School-level Behavior Support team to different groups with the opportunity to answer questions, facilitate discussion and follow up on homework task
- Build in time and opportunity to follow up with homework tasks in groups

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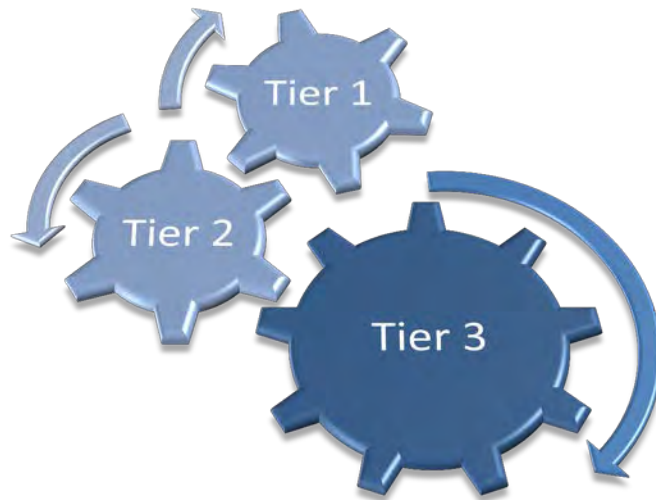
Nana korobi, ya oki

“Nana korobi, ya oki” is a Japanese proverb that means “Fall down seven times, stand up eight.” It is choosing to never give up, to maintain hope, and to always strive for more. It means that your focus isn't on the reality in front of you, but on a greater vision that may not be reality yet.

FBA/BIP and Tier 3 Behavior Support is critically important in our commitment to serving all students in our schools. This work is also among the most challenging and humbling work that we do in schools. Each individual case can provide a myriad of challenges ranging from teacher frustration and exhaustion to personality conflicts, from implicit biases to long-standing traditions of exclusionary practices. Throughout professional development, it's important to create an environment of accountability, but to

balance that with compassion, support and encouragement. This is true for the members of BIP teams in schools, but also for Behavior Specialists as they progress through this training. There will be disappointments and challenges when we struggle to work with some of our colleagues, or our students aren't responding. It's important to recognize and understand limitations in our schools to meet the vast needs presented by some Behavior Support cases. Most importantly, each challenge and disappointment needs to be embraced as an opportunity for learning and growth. "*Nana korobi, ya oki*" In the face of disappointment, it's important that Behavior Specialists stubbornly maintain the steadfast belief that the failure does not lie within the student and that they can support the student to be successful through the appropriate environmental and instructional supports. Individualized, function-based support gives many of our students and staff members their best hope for success in our schools.

A Blueprint for Tier 3 Implementation:



*A Results-Driven System
for Supporting Students
with Serious Problem Behaviors*

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

March 27, 2014

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A Blueprint for Tier 3 Implementation: A Results-Driven System for Students with Serious Problem Behaviors

Section 1: Foundation for Tier 3 Redesign-Rationale and Purpose

Overview of Tier 3 Redesign

Meeting the behavioral needs of students with serious problem behaviors, who require individualized, intensive supports (i.e., Tier 3 behavioral supports), continues to be a challenge for Florida and school districts across the country. The educational field has already established an effective process, utilizing a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and a function-based Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), to address serious problem behaviors. Unfortunately, the implementation of the FBA/BIP (Tier 3) process in educational settings often is of poor quality and compliance driven (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), 2004), and does not resemble the evidence-based components of technically adequate FBA/BIPs or a problem-solving approach. The remedy, therefore, is not to develop another process for districts to support students who need intensive, individualized supports, but to ensure that districts have the systems and supports needed to implement a Tier 3 support process that leads to improved student outcomes. To achieve this aim, a collaborative group of educators has been brought together to develop this **Blueprint for Tier 3 Implementation** that provides a foundation for district implementation of an effective, results-oriented Tier 3 process. Given that this will require significant systemic transformation, implementation of the Blueprint will coincide with state-led support and technical assistance activities to effect successful change. Finally, the Blueprint will first be piloted in a few demonstration districts that will produce refinements and resources to be used for statewide implementation.

Students in Need of a System of Tier 3 Behavioral Supports. Within a results-driven system, Tier 3 supports target **all** students in need of individualized, intensive strategies in order to sufficiently achieve or maintain desired student outcomes and prevent future problems. As such, Tier 3 supports are not based on categorical service options or requirements (e.g., whether a student has qualified for exceptional education services or meets criteria for a specific disability), but provide individualized, intensive supports matched to a range of specific student needs. The array of behavior problems requiring Tier 3 supports may include externalizing behavior problems (e.g., disruptive behaviors, aggression) and internalizing behavior problems (e.g., suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety). In addition, Tier 3 behavioral supports may be delivered to students whose behaviors may be impacted by trauma or crisis situations, whether they are of a temporary or permanent nature. Engagement in Tier 3 supports may also include collaboration with family members in gathering information to address challenging behavior at

school and/or development and implementation of behavior support across school and home settings. Finally, Tier 3 behavioral supports may be necessary for students who are transitioning from segregated placements (e.g., alternative schools, residential hospital treatment facilities) to less restrictive placements (e.g., neighborhood school).

System of Tier 3 Behavioral Supports-Definition. FBA is the process that drives a function-based BIP and provides the foundation for a systematic, coordinated, data-driven problem-solving process, which in turn ensures that interventions lead to improved student outcomes. As noted previously, Tier 3 supports are aimed at students in need of individualized, immediate or long-term supports due to the predominance of social-behavioral problems and/or mental health support needs. The array of supports at Tier 3 include increased, individualized assessment and intervention within a collaborative problem-solving framework and development of a support team with the requisite skills to assess, identify interventions, and plan for coordinated implementation and monitoring of supports. Regardless of the complexity of behaviors presented by students, this FBA and BIP process is crucial to: (a) understand the variables associated with or maintaining a student's behavior, (b) develop strategies to prevent challenging behavior, and (c) determine interventions that can teach and reinforce appropriate or prosocial behaviors.

The FBA/BIP process guides assessment, intervention planning, implementation, and monitoring of interventions within a data-based problem-solving framework. Foundational to the individualized level of intervention at Tier 3 is the importance of understanding *why* behaviors are occurring. The FBA/BIP process provides the student's team with information needed to analyze the problem behavior in a manner that links assessment to intervention and, thereby, informs the team as they identify which interventions are most likely to be effective for the individual student. This process can be used to target a range of social-behavioral, academic, and mental health concerns (e.g., anxiety, substance abuse, and trauma). In addition, the FBA/BIP process aligns behavior supports with contextual factors, taking into account the goals and strengths of the student and the strengths and resources of the setting.

The FBA provides a framework in which to gather information about possible functions of behavior; information that drives the development of an individualized intervention plan (Steege & Watson, 2009). The FBA is comprised of a variety of direct and indirect assessment methods including, but not limited to, direct observation of behavior in the classroom and interviews with teachers, staff, and the student. It focuses on current observations of behaviors and associated environmental variables (i.e., setting events, antecedents, and consequences) impacting a student's behavior, and thereby, guides individualized intervention planning. The

FBA/BIP process should not preclude a team from considering other important information (e.g., medical or psychological issues, etc.) when developing a comprehensive BIP to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of the student.

The BIP can include specific prevention and consequence-based strategies based on the FBA such as modifications to the classroom environment and/or instruction, teaching new behavioral and/or academic skills, and reinforcement of desired behaviors as well as a range of supports such as mental health services, trauma-informed care, person-centered planning, transition supports, suicidal risk assessments, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and medical treatment. In addition, given that there is a strong interaction between behavior and academic problems (McIntosh, Chard, Boland, Horner, 2006), Tier 3 behavioral supports often include interventions related to academic instruction. When applicable, Tier 3 supports involve coordination of individualized supports across systems (e.g., educational, medical, family, and community).

The FBA/BIP process described in this Blueprint guides the individualized intervention process within a Tier 3 system to meet the range of individualized social-behavioral and mental health needs. Later sections of this Blueprint detail the FBA/BIP process, but it is important to consider the FBA/BIP process as the core within a Tier 3 system of supports and assessment. In addition, other critical components that support the FBA/BIP process include: (a) attention to screening, progress monitoring, and other student outcome data, (b) employing multi-source, multi-setting, and multi-method assessment procedures, (c) use of assessment to identify evidence-based interventions, (d) use of a systematic, coordinated, data-driven Tier 3 problem-solving process, (e) coordinating systems of care when applicable, and (f) allocation of the necessary resources for effective and sustained implementation.

Tier 3 supports are provided within a three-tiered systemic model whose roots were formed in the public health literature and applied to educational systems (Greenwood, Horner, & Kratochwill, 2008; Institute of Medicine, 1988; Sugai & Horner, 2005; Walker & Shinn, 2002). This systemic approach provides a continuum of strategies that enables schools to identify and support the academic and behavioral needs of **all** students. Tier 1 provides core universal behavioral and academic instruction and supports to address the needs of all students while Tier 2 provides supplemental instruction and strategies to address the needs of some students who are at greater risk of having problems or may not respond to Tier 1 supports. Tier 3 represents individualized and intensive behavioral and/or academic support for students who have the most severe needs. Tier 3 supports differ from Tier 2 supports within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in their intensity, frequency, and use of individualized assessment (i.e., FBA),

which informs intervention (i.e., BIP). As such, supports at this level require the most resources (i.e., time, expertise, professional development) to facilitate the best chance for improved student outcomes. For students with significant problem behaviors, the FBA that drives a function-based BIP is the core Tier 3 process used within a team-based multi-step problem-solving framework. Similar to Tiers 1 and 2, a problem-solving team at Tier 3 uses consistent progress monitoring data to make decisions based on student outcome data, continuously cycling through the problem-solving process to determine the appropriate level of intensity warranted to facilitate success. It is important to note that tiers within the continuum are not considered static places, but that the level of supports provided to a student should be adjusted based on need. They should intensify when data show no improvement and fade back in intensity when data show improvement.

A Results-Driven Tier 3 System. A shift to a results-driven Tier 3 system will involve substantial systemic change to ensure that **outcomes** for all students who require intensive, individualized intervention are maximized. Foundational to Tier 3 redesign is the significant shift from the traditional focus on compliance procedures (e.g., completing an FBA/BIP form) to demonstrations of improved student outcomes (e.g., tracking the progress of students receiving Tier 3 supports to show improved behavioral and academic outcomes). The student outcomes that may be tracked include observable behaviors that are also measurable (frequency, duration, intensity, permanent products, etc.), and thereby, provide quantifiable information about increases in desired behaviors (e.g., academic performance, social skills) and decreases in negative student outcomes (e.g., targeted problem behaviors, suspensions). As such, monitoring student outcomes is an essential component of the Tier 3 process and determining if the adoption of Tier 3 redesign practices result in intended academic, social, and emotional improvements for students with behavioral issues. Monitoring of student outcomes is also critical because data-based decision making guides the problem-solving process at both the individual student and at the systems (school, district, and state) level as educators make important decisions about the adoption of evidence-based practices. The Tier 3 redesign process proposed in this Blueprint is consistent with the data-based problem-solving approach necessary to MTSS in which student outcome data are essential to:

- Supporting data-based decision making and problem solving
- Determining sufficiency of implementation integrity
- Facilitating identification of, as well as the process of, implementing any adjustments that need to be made to Tier 3 practices
- Maximizing resources and ensuring efficient supports are provided to all students
- Evaluating the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions
- Evaluating the equity of services and supports provided to students

- Evaluating the effectiveness of Tier 3 practices
- Determining eligibility for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services and evaluation of individual education programs.

In sum, Tier 3 redesign as proposed in this Blueprint involves a results-driven, problem-solving approach in which student outcome data guide the intervention planning, implementation, and evaluation process foundational to achieving improved behavioral and academic outcomes for all students receiving Tier 3 supports (see Figure 1). Ensuring that all students with behavioral issues have access to effective supports that result in meaningful outcomes will require alignment of federal, state, district, and school systems as well as consideration of contextual factors, such as community resources, values, funding, and policies that impact adoption and implementation.

Figure 1. Model of Tier 3 Redesign

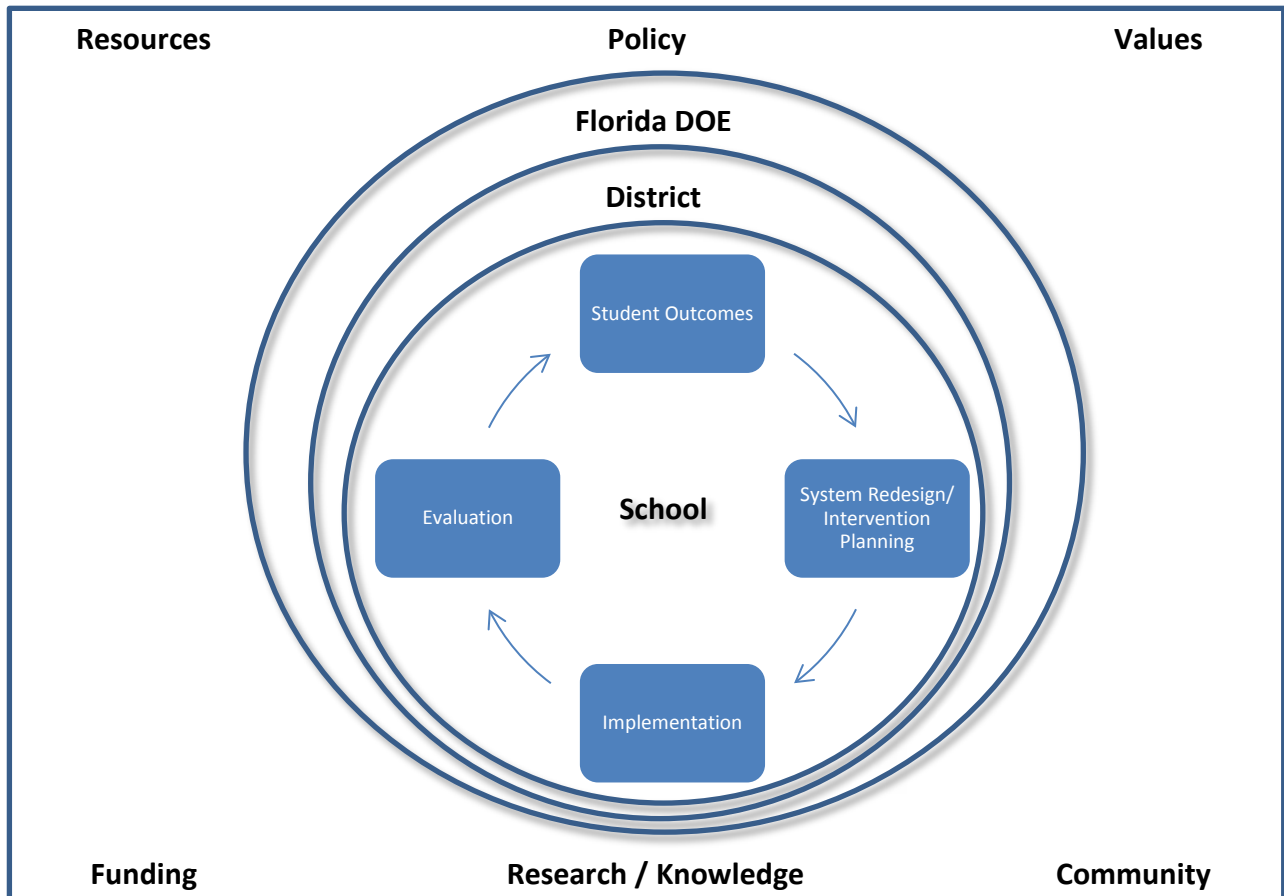


Figure 1. Tier 3 redesign described within this Blueprint is driven by student outcomes and framed within a data-driven problem solving process. The primary aim of the Tier 3 redesign process is to ensure that all students receiving Tier 3 supports are demonstrating improved behavioral and academic outcomes. To achieve this aim, supports across state, district, and school systems must be aligned, contextually relevant, and continuously evaluated.

Rationale for Tier 3 System Redesign

OSEP Background for Change. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is currently re-conceptualizing its accountability system to shift the balance from a system focused primarily on compliance to one that emphasizes results (see <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/rda/index.html>). As a result, OSEP believes it is critical that ESE resources be aligned to support improved educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities. Although the move to an accountability system built on results and not just procedural compliance may be several years away, the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES) believes that such a system is consistent with the recent emphasis on articulating and promoting an MTSS for both academic and behavioral success for all students. In addition, BEES believes that Florida should proactively initiate steps towards a results-driven accountability system, as described in this document.

Research Supporting a Need for Change. Students with serious problem behaviors are at the greatest risk of school failure, leading to marginalized lives including a high drop-out rate, poor job outcomes, limited income, and a pattern of failure persisting into adulthood (Coie & Dodge, 1998; Emerson, Kiernan, & Alborz, 2001; Olweus, 1991; Patterson & Fleishman, 1978; USDOE, 2001). Data from the National Longitudinal Study-2 (Wagner, Cameto, & Newman, 2003) show that students receiving ESE services under the emotional disability/behavior disorder category have the poorest academic outcomes and highest dropout rates of any disability category. In addition, when students' problem behaviors continue without effective intervention, research shows that they experience persistent peer rejection, negative interactions with teachers, and minimal community inclusion (Dunlap, Strain et al., 2006). Furthermore, disruptive student behavior has been credited with teacher job dissatisfaction and is a primary contributing factor to teacher attrition (Egyed & Short, 2006; Liu & Meyer, 2005).

Tier 3 supports, however, are not limited to students who qualify for exceptional student education or exhibit externalizing problem behavior (e.g., aggression, conduct problems, or antisocial behavior). Schools are charged with ensuring that all students can engage in learning, which means supporting a range of what are often complex behavioral needs. In America, approximately one in five school-aged children and adolescents has a diagnosable mental health problem, yet most do not receive services and supports required (Center for Disease Control, 2013; Costello, Mustillo, Erkanli, Keeler, & Angold, 2003; Greenberg et al., 2003). Despite anxiety and depression being among the most common mental health problems to occur during childhood and adolescence (CDC, 2013; Doll, 1996; SAMSA, 2008), students with internalizing behavior problems are more likely to go unnoticed and receive fewer services than those students

with externalizing symptoms (Bradshaw, Buckley, & Ialongo, 2008). According to the 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, a large percentages of American high school students are also involved with a myriad of high-risk behaviors including substance abuse, violence, and risky sexual behavior (Eaton et al., 2012). In addition, 15.8percent (12.1percent in Florida) of high-school- aged respondents reported that they seriously considered committing suicide and 7.8percent (6.9 percent in Florida) reported having attempted suicide during the 12 months prior to the survey. In Florida, suicide is currently the third leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of five and 24 (Florida Annual Vital Statistics Report, 2012). Some of the behavioral and academic challenges that students are facing may also be related to having experienced one or more traumatic events. While some children recover quickly after a traumatic experience, many experience negative, often long-term, consequences including low academic achievement, difficulties in family relationships, and engagement in high-risk behaviors (Costello, Erkanli, Fiarbank, & Angols, 2002; Hodas, 2006; Ko et al., 2008).

Several disturbing patterns related to school use of discipline with students who have disabilities currently exist that show a need for more equitable and effective behavioral supports. First, there is a pattern of disproportionality in expulsions and suspensions of students with disabilities. A recent report from the Civil Rights Project (Losen, 2011) stated that although students with disabilities represented 12 percent of the sample, they are twice as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions than students without disabilities. This trend is also evident in Florida where suspension and expulsion data for students with disabilities point to systems' issues. In 2012-2013, the Florida Department of Education reported three school districts had disproportionality scores over 3.0 (i.e., a student with disabilities is three times more likely to be suspended or expelled than a student without disabilities) and 25 districts had scores over 1.0 (i.e., higher probability of suspension or expulsion of a student with disabilities). The data for disproportionality by race within the population of students with disabilities is even more striking. In 2012-2013, 19 districts had suspended over three times more African-American or Black students with disabilities (i.e., > 3.0 disproportionality in comparison to all students with disabilities) with nine of the 19 districts having disproportionality levels above 6.0 (i.e., African-American students with disabilities were six times more likely to be suspended in comparison to all other students with disabilities). These disproportionality issues cause even more concern given the US Department of Education's recent publication "Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline" which calls for schools to build staff capacities and continuously evaluate their discipline policies to ensure fairness and equity and promote achievement for all students (USDOE, 2014).

Another national issue that is mirrored in Florida schools is the use of restraint and seclusion techniques as a way of responding to individual student behavior. During the year 2012-2013,

the Florida Department of Education reported 9,472 restraint incidents involving 4,086 students with disabilities and 3,024 seclusion incidents involving 1,237 students with disabilities. When comparing seclusion and restraint incidents reported in the previous year, seven districts had an increase in seclusion incidents with two districts having more than a 100percent increase while 22 districts had an increase in restraint incidents with eight districts reporting more than a 100percent increase. Although recent efforts by many districts have resulted in substantial decreases in restraint and seclusion incidents, the prevalence of these techniques is still a source of concern to the Florida DOE.

A third disturbing pattern is the overuse of non-function based punitive strategies such as reprimands, physical and verbal redirects, corporal punishment, and exclusionary practices (Skiba & Rausch, 2006; Sprague & Horner, 2006) to address behaviors. In December 2012, Deborah Delisle, the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, provided testimony to the “Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline” hearing before the United States’ Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights. She described a national pervasive pattern of schools using primarily punishing strategies (i.e., suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement agencies) for addressing problem behaviors. Furthermore, Ms. Delisle provided data indicating that students who are recipients of these exclusionary methods come into contact with juvenile justice systems at a much higher rate than do students who do not receive punitive discipline. Most disturbingly, national data indicate that the use of exclusionary strategies is disproportionate and underscores the importance of culturally responsive behavior management (Kaufman et al., 2010; Raffaele Mendez, & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Sugai, O’Keeffe, & Fallon, 2012; Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin, & Swain-Bradway, 2011). For example, African-American students are 3 ½ times more likely to be suspended or expelled compared to their Caucasian peers. Furthermore, students with disabilities are more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions than their non-disabled peers. Even more alarming, the recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report (2009) showed that the use of seclusion and restraint procedures in schools are more pervasive than previously thought and have resulted in injuries and deaths to students as young as four years of age. Thus, the need for evidence-based, contextually and culturally relevant, individualized behavior support interventions embedded within a multi-tiered support system to improve problem behavior of students with, or at risk for, disabilities, is urgent; particularly for students who are underserved by universal and supplemental interventions (i.e., students with emotional and behavioral disorders; students with developmental disabilities, students with serious internalizing and/or externalizing behavior problems).

The FBA/BIP Process. Although the process known as FBA to guide the development of a BIP for addressing severe problem behaviors of students has been included in the various iterations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) since 1997, no consistent guidelines or clear standards for effective practices and essential components exist, leaving the interpretation and establishment of FBA/BIP procedures to states and districts, which often produce inconsistent and low-quality processes and products yielding minimal to no positive behavior change (Conroy, Katsiyannis, Clark, Gable, & Fox, 2002). There is a wealth of convincing research showing that BIPs developed from FBAs are more effective in producing positive student behavior change than non-function-based interventions (e.g., Filter & Horner, 2009; Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005; Newcomer & Lewis, 2004). Furthermore, research has shown that when non-function-based interventions that have been ineffective are modified to include strategies linked to behavioral function, they become effective in decreasing problem behaviors and increasing appropriate behaviors (Carter & Horner, 2007, 2009; March & Horner, 2002).

The latest research on FBA/BIP effectiveness is encouraging as it is extending the original research done in highly controlled settings with individuals who have significant cognitive and developmental disabilities to students with and without disabilities in authentic and diverse school settings. For example, a randomized controlled trial was recently conducted in Florida and Colorado comparing outcomes of students in grades K-8, who received a standardized FBA/BIP process with the outcomes of students who received typical behavior supports offered in school settings. The sample included students with and without disabilities and was conducted in diverse classroom settings including general education. The process, Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR), used a collaborative approach that built function-based intervention plans matched to hypotheses and provided coaching support to teachers to enhance implementation fidelity. Results from the study showed that students who received the PTR intervention improved their behavior, social skills, and academic engagement significantly more than their counterparts who did not receive the intervention (Iovannone et al., 2009). Of equal importance, almost all teachers were able to implement the behavior intervention strategies with a minimum of 80percent fidelity.

While the recent extension of research definitively shows the effectiveness of FBA/BIPs for adequately improving student behaviors, there is less research showing that implementation of FBA/BIP practices and processes in schools, without researcher involvement, yield effective outcomes. One issue that has generated research is whether school personnel produce technically adequate FBAs or BIPs. Technical adequacy refers to the degree that the FBA/BIP includes the essential, evidence-based components that contribute toward their substantive

quality. Several studies conducted in the last few years show that often the FBA/BIP process in schools is riddled with poor technical adequacy (Blood & Neel, 2007; Cook, Crews, Wright, Mayer, Gale, Kraemer, & Gresham, 2006; Van Acker, Boeson, Gable, & Potterton, 2005). A more recent study by Cook et al. (2012) explored whether typical school personnel could be trained to develop technically adequate function-linked behavior support plans with minimal researcher involvement. In addition, the study examined whether plans that included more essential components resulted in better student outcomes than plans missing components. Finally, the authors also explored the link between quality of behavior support plans and fidelity of implementation. Results of the study indicated that: (a) school teams could develop behavior plans that included evidence-based components with minimal researcher involvement; (b) plans that included more essential components were significantly more effective in improving student behavior than plans missing components; and (c) support plans that included more essential components were implemented with higher fidelity than plans missing components and were associated with improved student outcomes. Although there still needs to be additional research to address effective implementation of FBA/BIP procedures in school settings, initial studies suggest that FBA/BIP processes can be implemented effectively by school personnel and, when implemented with fidelity, they are highly effective at addressing a diverse range of individualized needs.

Variables Impacting School Efforts. There are many variables impacting school efforts in implementing an effective and efficient Tier 3 system of support for students (Adelman & Taylor, 1998; Mayer, 1995; Sugai et al., 2000; Walker et al., 1996). First, the Tier 3 behavior process is acknowledged to be complex, requiring a variety of skills and expertise. The state and districts have struggled with providing the appropriate intensity of training that is needed for schools to implement the FBA/BIP process without the reliance on outside experts. Surveys and reviews of training methods used in instructing school personnel to conduct FBAs show an overreliance on basic awareness level PowerPoint presentations, such as those used during one-shot in-services or multi-day training institutes, which have not proven sufficient in generalizing knowledge to using new practices (Conroy et al., 2000; Fixsen et al., 2005; Scott, Liaupsin, et al., 2005). To encourage acquisition of skills that transfer into daily use, a comprehensive array of professional development strategies are needed including role play and modeling, reflective evaluation, experiential job-embedded activities in a wide variety of settings, coaching and performance feedback, linking of practices to student outcomes, and ongoing support (Fixsen et al. 2005; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Shellady & Stichter, 1999; Van Acker et al., 2005).

Second, part of the challenge facing schools is applying a process that was originally researched on individuals with severe disabilities in clinical settings to the context of typical school environments (Nelson, Roberts, Mathur, & Rutherford, 1999). In a 2007 special issue of

Behavior Disorders, Scott and Kamps described the future of FBA/BIP implementation in schools for students with emotional and behavior disorders by discussing existent contextual considerations in schools that impact the willingness of educators to implement effective FBAs. The primary barrier discussed was educators' perception that FBAs and BIPs require too many resources in time and skills to do the process effectively and with fidelity. Unfortunately, implementing an incorrect, inconsistent process commonly seen in schools does not lead to positive behavior change for students (Sasso, Conroy, Stichter, & Fox, 2001; Scott & Kamps, 2007). Thus, there are two primary questions for consideration. First, what adaptations are needed so that the FBA/BIP process is feasible for use by school practitioners who may not have the level of skills possessed by those in behavioral clinical settings? Second, if the process is adapted so that it is simpler and more efficient for use by school practitioners, how can the effectiveness of the process be ensured? There is a need to balance feasibility and quality so that school personnel will consistently implement a technically sound FBA/BIP process. As noted by Terrance Scott "FBA, when implemented insufficiently, is neither effective nor efficient" (Scott et al., 2004).

Third, systemic variables impact the implementation of an effective Tier 3 process. Conceptually, Tier 3 supports are designated for the students, who need the most intensive level of support in order to succeed, which, by definition, requires more time and resources. However, if a school implements a multi-tiered system of supports with fidelity, Tiers 1 and 2 should reduce the number of students requiring more intensive services characteristic of Tier 3. When there are too many students that appear to require Tier 3 supports, delivery of those supports will be diluted, resulting in an increased frequency of compliance-driven FBAs/BIPs, increased reliance on reactive strategies, and potentially, decreased access to less restrictive educational settings. Another issue confronting schools is how to efficiently and effectively address the various levels of behavioral intensity and needs within Tier 3, from students with problem behaviors that are clearly the result of contextual issues (e.g., academic deficits, classroom learning environment) to students who have multiple complex needs (e.g., physical, mental health, family/environmental, etc.). The "one-size fits all" approach of using the same paper-driven, non-function-based FBA/BIP process to address these multiple levels of intensity will not effectively meet student needs. This situation is not unique to Florida and has resulted in a growing number of professionals suggesting the notion of multiple levels of Tier 3 supports matched to student needs (Scott, Alter, Rosenberg, & Borgmeier, 2010). A Tier 3 continuum consists of processes that become increasingly formal and complex as student needs intensify, beginning with a "brief" consultation-based functional assessment process to a team-based functional assessment to a wraparound approach. Each process uses the underlying behavioral principles of assessing the functional relationship between problem behavior and the

environment. This approach may resolve the barriers of time and resources to feasibly and efficiently conduct technically adequate FBAs and develop effective function-based support plans.

Finally, as pointed out in a recent article by Cook and Odom (2013), the implementation of evidence-based strategies (FBA, BIP, coaching, problem-solving, etc.) consists of multiple dimensions that affect the impact of the support system. Adopting a framework developed by Russell Glasgow and his colleagues, the authors argued that any approach to implementation has to understand the interaction of five factors that impact success for schools: *Reach x Efficacy x Adoption x Implementation x Maintenance*. Where *Reach* is the percentage of the population that comes in contact with the practice, *Efficacy* measures the number of students who are successful with an evidence-based practice, *Adoption* is the percentage of teachers who use the practice, *Implementation* refers to the percentage of the adopters who use the practice with fidelity, and *Maintenance* refers to the percentage of teachers who continue to use the practice. These five factors that impact the success of any systems change effort are also impacted by a variety of “drivers” that include leadership, teaming, training, coaching, evaluation, and system support. The interactions of these five factors and other systems’ drivers point to the need for a comprehensive systemic change effort that goes beyond providing training, developing new compliance forms or delivering technical assistance to assist with one student in one classroom. A fundamental reorganization of Tier 3 systems of support will be necessary to produce a results-driven system that generates real and lasting academic and social success for all students, particularly those students with behavioral challenges.

Statement of the Problem

In Florida schools, students with serious problem behaviors are not satisfactorily succeeding academically, behaviorally, or socially within our current education system because we have not fully implemented a multi-tiered system of supports that effectively addresses the essential factors and drivers. In sum, the problem is *not* an absence of evidence-based FBA/BIP processes or sufficient options for evidence-based behavior interventions. Rather, it is assisting schools to shift from implementing compliance-driven FBA/BIP processes to function-based problem-solving processes driven by student outcomes. The challenges faced by schools are three-fold: (a) there is a need for clear guidelines for developing a results-driven system that is conceptually systematic yet practical and efficient for school application, (b) there is a dearth of trained personnel, who can implement this support system with fidelity, and (c) there is a need to provide ongoing supports to districts that will ensure implementation and sustainability of evidence-based, culturally responsive processes that improve outcomes for all students.

Process for Producing the Change

In response to this problem, BEESS identified a team of school, district and state personnel, related professionals, and agency and family representatives to work intensively beginning in March 2013 and charged the team with the following mission to support BEESS and FDOE in:

- Maintaining a commitment to procedural safeguards (compliance), but also advocating for and supporting a system that provides evidence of results (outcomes) for students with intensive behavioral needs;
- Providing districts and schools with a Blueprint to support their move towards this “results-driven” system;
- Providing targeted and effective supports to schools and districts from discretionary projects such that planned changes can be effective and efficient;
- Supporting a multiyear change process from initial planning, to piloting, and to full implementation and sustainability; and,
- Providing initial and ongoing incentives to districts to implement evidence-based practices and achieve improved student academic and behavioral outcomes.

Goals

The goals of this project are ambitious, but critical for assuring the future academic and social success of Florida students with problem behavior and include:

1. Developing a clear vision and imperative for moving beyond compliance to developing a results-oriented Tier 3 system for students with behavioral challenges.
2. Identifying and defining the critical components of such a system.
3. Creating this blueprint to guide a District Leadership Team in engaging in a problem-solving systems change approach for the development of a results-driven Tier 3 system for students with behavioral challenges.
4. Describing and developing a statewide system to provide technical assistance to District Leadership Teams that will communicate, train, and support districts through the systems- change process.
5. Producing a wide array of desired outcomes that include:
 - a. Systems Level
 - i. Development of systematic, consistent processes for delivering Tier 3 behavior supports that can be implemented with integrity and fidelity;

- ii. Increased technical adequacy of FBA/BIPs;
- b. Teacher Level
 - i. Increased fidelity of intervention implementation;
 - ii. Social validity ratings showing acceptability of the process;
- c. Support staff Level:
 - i. Increased capacity to coach and model effective and efficient intensive supports for teachers and with students;
- d. Student Level
 - i. Improved behavior (decrease of problem behavior, increase of replacement behavior);
 - ii. Decrease in number of district restraint/seclusion incidents;
 - iii. Increased student engagement;
 - iv. Improved graduation rates and academic success.

How to Use the Blueprint

This **Blueprint for Tier 3 Implementation** is intended to provide districts with a guide for engaging in problem solving, action planning, and systems change as a district moves from a compliance-driven Tier 3 system to a results-driven Tier 3 system. This Blueprint is the first of many planned resources to assist districts with this systems-change process. The provision of training, technical assistance, data systems, etc. from BEESS and discretionary projects will accompany the planned implementation of this Blueprint. In addition, the move to a results-driven system will be made with awareness that achieving this degree of systems change will require foundational, effective teaming methods, and common structured problem-solving and action planning processes from district level teams with assistance from state resources. As a result, the systems change is expected to be a 3-5 year process in most districts.

This Blueprint has been organized in such a way as to coincide with a problem-solving process and to support districts in addressing critical issues for implementation. This Blueprint also provides suggestions for how to make the necessary systems changes and resources that can assist districts in that process. Districts will not be left unsupported in this change process. BEESS and its funded discretionary projects addressing behavior (FLPBS, FDLRS, FIN, SEDNET, CARD, etc.) have been preparing to provide technical assistance to the districts in problem-solving, professional development, and other areas as identified by the district leadership team. This Blueprint is a starting point and map for designing a results-driven Tier 3 system. Because BEESS considers this move to a results-driven system to be a priority, resources and supports will be available to support districts through the Tier 3 redesign process.

Multi-tiered prevention and intervention models. The foundation for this Blueprint is rooted in a three-tiered, prevention framework designed to improve student outcomes through the implementation of systematic, coordinated instruction, and intervention. This multi-tiered framework provides the foundation for the Tier 3 redesign and focuses on increasing the capacity of Florida school districts to develop data-based systems to improve the behavioral (and academic) outcomes of *all* students.

The three-tiered framework and the core concepts of this prevention-focused model (e.g., progress monitoring, data-based problem-solving, implementation integrity, etc.) are used throughout this Blueprint when describing several different areas of Tier 3 redesign. The three-tiered framework in this Blueprint is used to describe a continuum of:

- 1) Supports for ALL students (often referred to as a Multi-Tiered System of Supports),
- 2) Increasingly intensive levels of support within Tier 3 for those students with the most intensive needs, and
- 3) Technical assistance options by the FDOE to increase district capacity to implement the system changes required for Tier 3 redesign.

The underlying logic and core features of the three-tiered model *remain the same* (see Figure 1) regardless of whether the model is being used by districts to support schools, schools to support students, or by the FDOE to support districts. In all three of these applications of the three-tiered framework, increasing the intensity of service is the fundamental approach used to match the wide range of student needs and the wide range of supports to professionals needed to improve the outcomes for ALL students.

While this blueprint is focused on Tier 3 system structures needed to implement and ensure successful behavioral outcomes for students, the Tier 3 system redesign recommendations listed are consistent with improving academic performance as well. Instruction and interventions for all students are implemented using a data-based problem-solving process that matches the intensity of supports to meet student needs (both strengths and weaknesses). The effectiveness of the instruction and intervention is evaluated continuously using ongoing progress monitoring of the target behaviors and fidelity of the intensive supports. In some cases, students receiving intensive supports to improve behavior may also be in need of additional instruction and interventions to improve academic performance. Because such a strong research base exists to support the relationship between academic and behavior factors, a data-based problem-solving process should be used to investigate the degree to which a reciprocal relationship exists between

behavior and academic concerns. If such a relationship does exist, then the outcome of the problem-solving processes should focus on the integration of academic and behavior instruction and intervention supports to improve student performance. Although not the focus of this paper, it is important for the reader to consider how behavioral supports at Tier 3 are designed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness while ensuring alignment and coordination with academic expectations (i.e., Tier 1 standards) and academic supports provided at similar or lesser intensities. One potential strategy for coordinating multiple service needs is to cross-reference the tiered supports provided for a student across several content areas of which behavior is an area of focus.

Figure 2. Core Concepts of Three-Tiered Results-Driven Systems within Tier 3 Redesign

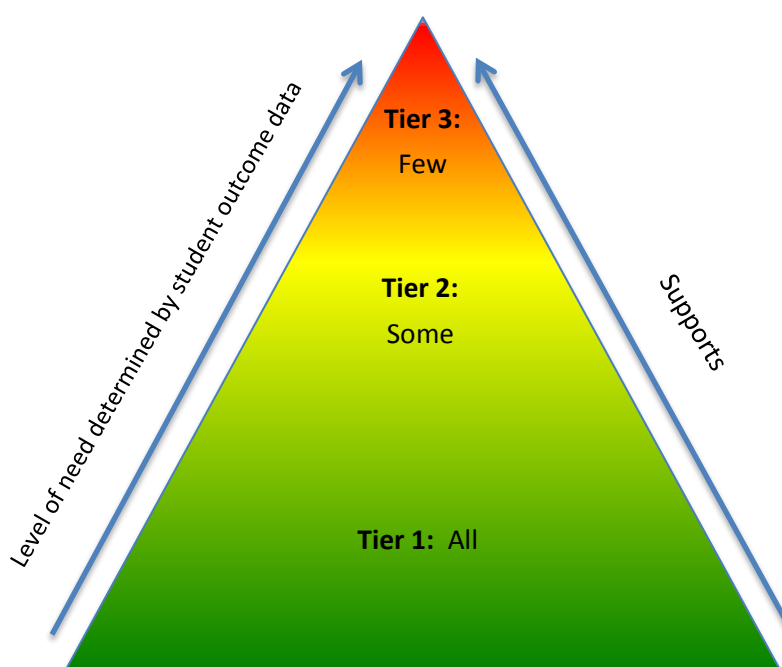


Figure 2. The three-tiered prevention framework is applied throughout this Blueprint for building systems that improve outcomes for students in need of intensive behavior supports and for FLDOE to support FL districts in Tier 3 redesign. The three-tiered model involves a continuum of supports that increases with need. The need for additional support is driven by student outcomes.

While this blueprint is focused on Tier 3 system structures needed to implement and ensure successful behavioral outcomes for students, the Tier 3 system redesign recommendations listed are also consistent with an academic performance focus. A data-based problem-solving process is used for an investigation of a reciprocal relationship between behavior and academic concerns allowing then for the integration of instruction & intervention supports matched to complex student needs. The effectiveness of all supports is monitored continuously using ongoing

progress monitoring methods matched to the target(s) and intensity of supports. In some cases, students receiving intensive intervention supports for behavior concerns may also be in need of intensive intervention supports for specific academic content areas. Although not the focus of this paper, it is important for the reader to consider how behavioral supports at Tier 3 are designed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness while ensuring alignment and coordination with academic expectations (i.e., grade-level standards) and academic supports provided at similar or lesser intensities.

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Section 2: Barriers for Implementing an Effective Tier 3 System for Behavioral Supports

Having addressed the rationale and goals for implementing effective Tier 3 systems for behavioral support, it is important to next identify some of the common barriers to implementing an effective Tier 3 system. The primary factors that impede implementation of Tier 3 behavior supports can be organized under two categories: systemic and skill-based. Systemic barriers include factors present in the infrastructure of the district and/or school process that prevent meaningful changes to be made to the way Tier 3 supports are provided. Skill-based barriers include factors that relate to the level of expertise necessary for school-based personnel to implement Tier 3 behavior supports effectively. Addressing and resolving both systemic and skill barriers will enhance the likelihood that a district will improve their Tier 3 supports. Table 1 provides a description of the primary barriers for Tier 3 implementation and research support for identification of the barrier. Section 3 of this Blueprint will provide guidelines for districts to consider in addressing the barriers.

Table 1: *Barriers Impacting Implementation of Tier 3 Behavior Supports*

Barrier	Current Status	References
Systemic		
Training staff to support students with severe behavior problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers reporting they are unprepared to deal with behavior problems • School/teacher use of reactive, punitive practices as primary response to problem behaviors (e.g., in-school, out-of-school suspensions, crisis plans, zero tolerance policies, school to alternative education placements to prison pipeline) • Focus on student traits, family dynamics, and ethnicity/race rather than engaging in problem-solving process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005 • Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education, 2006, August • Fenning & Rose, 2007 • Hatt, 2011 • Raible & Irizarry, 2010 • Nicholson-Crotty, Birchmeier, & Valentine, 2009
Adult behavior change process	Lack of practices that impact adult willingness to change practices and implement interventions with fidelity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few compelling motivators for change and to implement new strategies • Dearth of positive outcomes contingent upon implementing new strategy • Absence of rationale and support for change from leaders • Training and coaching activities do not consistently address: (a) training within actual context; (b) obtaining input from the adult who will be implementing the strategies, (c) providing manualized scripts of interventions; (d) coaching adults through a variety of methods including modeling, role playing, performance feedback; and (e) planning for events that may cause failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coddling, Feinberg, Dunn, & Pace, 2005 • Noell, et al., 2005 • Sanetti, Fallon, & Collier-Meek, 2013 • Sanetti, Kratochwill, & Long, 2013
System and district supports	Educators are not consistently provided with the necessary level of support (e.g., resources, professional development) to enhance fluent implementation of Tier 3 behavior supports including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luiselli, Putman, & Sunderland, 2002 • Nelson, Martella, & Galand, 1998 • Scott, 2001

Barrier	Current Status	References
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines and structures allowing time for staff to: (a) practice implementing trained strategies, (b) meet/network to review cases and problem-solve, and (c) provide coaching support to guide individuals implementing strategies through performance feedback • Clear processes and procedures supported by leadership (district and school) that provide structure and incentives for performance • Team-based problem-solving processes using data to develop effective interventions that result in positive outcomes for students and decrease the need to refer students for special education services • Multiple trainings for different groups and purposes developed and provided (e.g., overview for administrators identifying supports and resources essential for staff to implement effective FBA process). • Provision of professional development that takes into consideration how it is delivered, who receives training, and what levels of training are required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Alter, Rosenberg, & Borgmeier, 2010 • Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000
Continuum of Tiers 1 and 2 supports	Schools not consistently providing a multi-tiered system of behavioral supports that are accessible for all students based upon level of behavioral support need. Without a continuum of Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and a problem-solving process for making data-based decisions, more students will appear to require Tier 3 supports than there are resources available, and schools will respond reactively rather than preventively, resulting in overuse of punitive strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010 • McIntosh, Brown, & Borgmeier (2008)
Skill Based		
Complexity of Tier 3	Districts may not have skilled staff to implement the FBA/BIP process with adequacy. Current training methods (e.g., in-services, one-shot presentations) have not adequately addressed the level of professional development and coaching support necessary to build skill capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conroy, Clark, Fox, & Gable, 2000 • Scott & Kamps, 2007
Culturally responsive practices	Districts may not have skilled staff to support students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds and to ensure (monitor) equity and implementation of culturally and contextually relevant practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher, & Ortiz, 2010 • Fallon, O’Keeffe, & Sugai, 2012 • Sugai, O’Keeffe, & Fallon, 2012 • Vincent, Randall, Carteledge, Tobin, & Swain-Bradway, 2011
Technically adequate application of skills to authentic settings	The field continues to struggle with determining how to apply the FBA/BIP process that was originally implemented and studied in clinical settings by highly skilled professionals to authentic school settings by typical practitioners, who may have a considerable diversity in level of skills. The process must be efficient, feasible, and effective and may require schools to re-conceptualize Tier 3 as a continuum of support intensity within the tier.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Alter, Rosenberg, & Borgmeier, 2010 • Scott & Kamps, 2007

Section 3. Recommendations for Improving a Tier 3 System for Behavior Supports: **Addressing the Barriers**

Ensure All Educators Have an Appropriate Understanding of a Tier 3 System of Behavior Supports

A Tier 3 system is built on the conceptual foundation that students need multiple levels of behavioral support matched to their level of behavioral needs. Behavioral needs may include social, mental health, academic, and/or other individualized support needs. School-based teams use problem-solving processes to address behavior concerns across the continuum of tiers including Tier 1 (all students and staff), Tier 2 (some students and staff), and Tier 3 (few students and staff) with supports being provided based on data showing student response to behavior interventions.

To address the issues of realistic and feasible implementation of Tier 3 supports in school settings, the education field is starting to rethink the notion that intensive Tier 3 behavior supports is a “one-size fits all” process. An alternative structure is being offered that considers a continuum of increasingly intensive levels of Tier 3 supports that match individual student needs (Scott, Alter, Rosenberg, & Borgmeier, 2010). At an entry level, the FBA is conducted in a brief, efficient method, often as a consultation approach with a facilitator and teacher(s) (and student, particularly at the middle and high-school level) working together to identify contextual events related to behavior occurrences through indirect methods and developing a behavior intervention plan that focuses on teaching appropriate replacement or alternative behaviors that get naturally reinforced (i.e. with the function) and addressing environmental features that will prevent behavior plan failure and increase success. The efficient approach may be a functional way for schools to address less complex individual student needs in a timely fashion. The second level of FBA would involve an increasingly comprehensive team approach that addresses students who have chronic and durable behavior issues. Team-based FBAs would require more resources for activities as well as use both direct and indirect methods of gathering FBA data and would include strategies that address antecedent events, teach and reinforce new behaviors, and discontinue reinforcing problem behaviors. The third level would be dedicated to support a small subset of students within Tier 3 whose behaviors are impacted by multi-faceted and complex physical, mental health, environmental, and behavioral issues. These students’ needs may best be met through a “wrap-around” process in which a team collaborates on an individualized plan of care that is implemented and evaluated consistently across time. It is important to note that collaboration with community, medical, or mental health agencies occurs at the first indication of need and may occur for some students who do not require Tier 3

supports. Whereas level 3 within Tier 3 refers to an ongoing wrap-around process of comprehensive planning and intervention for some students in need of individualized, intensive supports that involve systems (e.g., public health, mental health, medical, foster care, juvenile justice, etc.) beyond the school, family, and student.

All of the levels include FBA-driven support plans and multi-step processes for making decisions based on data with each successive level intensifying in process, supports, and resources. Table 2 provides a description of the features that are common across all three levels of Tier 3 and Table 3 provides an overview of the primary Tier 3 features and their presentation within each of the Tier 3 levels.

Table 2. *Features Common across all Three Levels of Tier 3*

Category	Features
Team	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one person with knowledge of the student and the behavioral context and curriculum, including academic instruction and intervention (e.g., teacher, parent) • At least one person with knowledge and proficiency in MTSS/problem-solving framework and behavioral principles underlying FBA/BIP • Someone with knowledge of school/district resources and policies • Family member(s) in discussions regarding behavior function and support strategies across home and school settings, student preferences/interests, and intervention history • A plan for collaboration when additional expertise is needed (e.g., social work, mental health, medical)
FBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target behaviors (academic, social, emotional, etc.) identified and defined in measurable and objective terms • Replacement/alternative behaviors identified and defined in measureable and objective terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replacement/alternative behaviors may include: (a) functional equivalent replacement behavior (e.g., teach the student to ask for a break if escape is the function); (b) academic skill (i.e., teaching specific academic strategy if problem behavior occurs due to an academic skill deficit); (c) communication strategy (e.g., teach the student to communicate for help when confronted with a difficult task); or (d) self-management strategy (e.g., teach student ways of managing their behaviors in response to difficult situations) (Bambara, 2005). • FBA conducted that(doesn't make sense) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifies antecedent events triggering behavior incidents ○ Identifies consequences or responses that immediately follow problem behavior ○ Identifies if the student has the prerequisite skills to perform desired behavior • Hypothesis or summary statement developed based on FBA data
BIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple component intervention/support plan developed that is linked to the hypothesis and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional method to teach and reinforce replacement/alternative behavior ○ Interventions that prevent problem behavior by modifying the environmental events identified in hypothesis ○ Interventions that change responses of others to problem behaviors so that the problem behavior is no longer effective in obtaining reinforcing outcome (i.e., function-obtain/escape) ○ Intervention that has home components as appropriate • Determining if replacement/alternative behavior is a skill or performance deficit • Consideration of culture and context in the selection/development and implementation of interventions • Access to a continuum of supports (e.g., school-wide, classroom, etc.) • Integration of academic and behavioral supports • Intervention plan matches teacher context, is feasible for implementation, and is acceptable to the teacher or implementer

Category	Features
Progress monitoring and follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline for follow-up (reviewing data, making decisions) • Plan for providing coaching and support to the implementer(s) • Data plan and decision rules to determine effectiveness of intervention that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student behavior data ○ Student academic data ○ Teacher implementation fidelity data • Plans for extending behavior interventions to ensure generalization of skills across multiple environments (e.g., school, home, community)

Table 3. *Continuum of Tier 3 Features across the Levels*

Feature			
Teaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team is small in size • May only consist of a school-based consultant and teacher • Problem-solving process is used • Family input is sought • Student is included when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team size expands to include multiple people within the school, the family and the student • Team roles and responsibilities defined • Consensus process established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team size expands to include people from all areas of student's life who are vested in ensuring student is successful • Outside agencies and other supports are enrolled • Problem-solving process is used as foundation • Includes person-centered planning models to develop a vision and targeted goals that lead to a wrap-around system of supports for the student
FBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering of FBA information through primarily indirect methods (e.g., within structured meeting) with a hypothesis developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both indirect and direct methods of gathering FBA data used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the FBA, other data collected may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength-needs assessment • Goals/vision reflecting voice of student and family • Personal, family, and community resources • Other assessment information to identify additional areas of need or conditions that inform intervention (e.g., medical exam)
BIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan developed within the FBA meeting • Primary intervention focuses on teaching and reinforcement strategies suggested by the hypothesis • Plan addresses contextual/environmental factors that enhance success and minimize failure of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple component plan developed that links to the hypothesis. • Safety plan developed if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full range of intervention options considered • Action plan that addresses goals developed from vision
Progress Monitoring and Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for collecting student outcome data • Plan for collecting fidelity of intervention implementation • Plan for following up with team within reasonable time frame (e.g., three weeks) to review response to intervention • Decision-making structure established for determining next steps based on response to intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to fidelity and student outcome data, social validity, and alliance between facilitator of process and implementer of plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome measures broader than student change in behaviors (e.g., quality of life) • Coordination of multiple agencies planned including consistent follow-up to determine progress in action steps to meeting goals derived from vision

The success of a multi-level system within Tier 3 will be contingent upon several systemic variables. First, it will be more likely to be effective if a school is implementing effective Tier 1 and 2 systems of supports that will meet the need of most of the students (approximately 95percent). Second, within Tier 3, schools will want to establish clear decision rules for determining what level of individualized support will be necessary to meet the needs of students identified as needing Tier 3 supports. Finally, a data tracking system that can provide school teams with information that describes how students are responding to interventions along with how accurately interventions are being implemented will be vital for making sound decisions on intervention steps.

Ensure Educators at All Levels of the System Have Appropriate Beliefs, Skills, and Knowledge Necessary to Implement and Sustain an Effective Tier 3 System

Although IDEIA mandates the conditions under which FBA/BIPs are to be conducted in schools, it does not provide any further guidance on the components that should be included in a technically adequate (i.e., high quality) FBA/BIP (refer back to page 9 for an explanation of technical adequacy). This absence presents challenges to school districts in determining the skills that are necessary for typical educational personnel to conduct effective FBA/BIP processes. The research literature does, however, provide guidance on the content and the skills that would be necessary to facilitate a team-based FBA/BIP within the framework of a multi-tiered system of supports. The skills required map under four distinct categories: collaborative skills, data-driven problem-solving skills, application of factors enhancing systems change, and behavioral content and application skills.

Collaborative Skills. A team-based approach that incorporates input from multiple people of various disciplines and expertise enhances the likelihood that a more effective support plan will be developed and implemented. A team leader or facilitator who is a competent collaborator will guide the team members through the problem-solving process. To do this well, both teaming and interpersonal skills will be vital. Teaming for students receiving Tier 3 supports will often include involvement of family members and potentially other support providers outside of school. When interventions are to be implemented across multiple settings (e.g., home, school), it will be particularly important to involve these parties. Table 4 provides an overview of the specific competencies needed in both collaborative categories and references that support the competencies. The final column provides guidance on other areas within this Blueprint that overlap with the area of collaborative skills.

Table 4. *Collaborative Skills Necessary to Implement and Sustain an Effective Tier 3 System*

Category		
Effective teaming/ meeting strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulating purpose and maintaining team focus • Establishing norms • Using effective questioning strategies to gather information, get clarification, and gain consensus • Using variety of techniques to get input from all relevant team members • Establishing methods to deal with conflicts and resistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benn, Jones, & Rosenfield , 2008 • Rosenfield, 2008 • Scott, McIntyre, Liaupsin, Nelson, Conroy, & Payne, 2005
Interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays effective communication skills including questioning techniques • Shows effective listening skills to understand other team members' perceptions • Poses questions to team that effectively address adult behaviors necessary to identify and define problems, analyze problems, develop behavior interventions for implementation, and evaluate outcomes • Demonstrates skills that build trust, acceptance, and follow-through from team members • Follows through on commitments and responsibilities • Presents sincere desire to understand and improve situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benn, Jones, & Rosenfield, 2008 • Rosenfield, 2001
Effective family engagement strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts input and works cooperatively with family members • Shares information regarding behavior support strategies • Works with families to develop and adapt interventions across settings • Displays awareness of cultural and language differences and their effect on teaming and intervention strategies • Collects and analyzes data on extent of family engagement in Tier 3 processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferguson, Jordan, & Baldwin, 2010 • Minch, 2012 • Spielberg, 2011 • Weiss, Bouffard, Bridglall, & Gordon, 2009

Data-Driven Problem-Solving Skills. The multi-step problem-solving process is the framework used within the multi-tiered system of supports to make decisions about interventions and their impact on outcomes. There are numerous models of problem-solving processes that include a series of steps; however, all versions have data-based decision making at the core. Within the Tier 3 redesign process, the data-based decision-making competencies include those related to individual and systemic data measures. Table 5 provides the data-driven problem-solving competencies for an effective Tier 3 system.

Table 5. *Data-Driven Problem-Solving Skills Necessary to Implement and Sustain an Effective Tier 3 System*

Category		
Systemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of multiple methods for early identification of students who are at risk of needing Tier 3 supports • Displaying knowledge and application of MTSS continuum of supports to match appropriate level of support to student needs • Analyzing and using progress-monitoring data to make decisions (data from multiple levels including individual student, classroom, school, district) • Identifying appropriate decision points (e.g., acceptable fidelity measure, adequate student progress) and guiding team to make decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burke, Davis, Hagan-Burke, Lee, & Fogarty, 2014 • Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2010 • Shinn, 2002 • Stecker, Lembke, & Foegen, 2008 • Walker, 2010 • Walker, Cheney, Stage, Blum, & Horner, 2005
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using data to identify and differentiate skill vs. performance deficits • Using data to identify teacher/classroom management or instructional problem vs. individual student problem • Triaging to match intensity of supports to student needs including the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intensity, chronicity, durability of problem behavior(s) ○ Number of target behaviors ○ One clear function vs. multiple functions ○ One-two antecedents vs. multiple antecedents ○ One discrete behavior versus chain or multiple behaviors within one response category ○ Student communication skills (e.g., nonverbal compared to grade level verbal abilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irvin, Horner, Ingram, Todd, Sugai, Sampson, & Boland, 2006 • Levin & Nolan, 2000

Application of Systems Change Knowledge. To have new practices implemented with fidelity and sustained, it is important to have knowledge of the factors impacting how organizations (i.e., schools and districts) and individuals (i.e., educators) accept and apply new strategies. Two primary categories related to systems change are knowledge of implementation science and knowledge of adult behavior change. Implementation science addresses issues around adoption of evidence-based interventions and the variables that need to be present to enhance widespread implementation. Similarly, knowledge of adult behavior change identifies the factors that affect implementation at the individual or implementer level. Table 6 provides the skill set necessary within each category to promote adoption, generalization, and sustainability of Tier 3 behavior supports.

Table 6. *Systems Change Skills Necessary to Implement and Sustain an Effective Tier 3 System*

Category		
Knowledge of implementation science and variables impacting implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze systemic data to identify current status and needs of multiple systems including individual, classroom, school, and district • Use data to help determine changes needed that match needs • Use data to sustain implementation and build capacity • Define and develop coaching systems • Develop pilot (e.g., selecting first cohort for change process, training cohort, evaluating outcomes, refining) processes to initiate changes • Identify supports necessary to enhance ongoing implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman & Wallace, 2005
Knowledge of adult-behavior change theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of professional development that includes opportunities for practice with feedback paired with ongoing coaching support • Development of implementation plans that match the teacher/implementer’s intervention actions with the context and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify specific intervention steps ○ Identify logistics of implementation (when, how often, how long, where, etc.) ○ Identify potential barriers to implementation ○ Identify coping strategies to resolve barriers • Fluency with strategies that increase implementation intention and sustained self-efficacy including providing models and role-plays • Development of strategy guides that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction ○ Step-by-step instructions ○ Research support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanetti, 2013 • Schwarzer, 2008

Behavioral Content and Application Skills. There is a considerable body of research showing that behavior interventions built from the information on FBAs are more effective in decreasing problem behaviors and increasing appropriate behaviors than plans that do not consider the conditions under which behavior problems occur (e.g., Filter & Horner, 2009; Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005; Newcomer & Lewis, 2004). The skills required to effectively conduct and implement the FBA/BIP process within schools include understanding of behavioral principles and specific skills directly related to conducting an FBA/BIP within an academic environment. The FBA framework provides a foundation for not only behavioral and mental health supports, but also academic instruction (Daley, Witt, Martens, & Dool, 1997; Kupzyk, Daly, & Young, 2012; Lentz & Shapiro, 1986; Shapiro, 2004). Table 7 provides a summary of the skills required in the two categories.

Table 7. *Behavioral Content and Application Skills*

Category		
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Behavioral principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and define target behaviors (both problem and replacement/alternative behaviors) in measurable and objective terms • Identify and analyze contextual events in which student's behavior occurs • Identify, collect, and analyze an array of individualized behavior measures including direct and indirect methods • Conduct preference/reinforcer assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gresham, McIntyre, Olson-Tinker, Dolstra, McLaughlin, & Van, 2004 • Newcomer & Lewis, 2004
Specific Skills for Conducting and Implementing FBA/BIPs within an academic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of components necessary for technically adequate FBA/BIP • Identify environmental events, including motivating operations, and their relation to behavior occurrence and non-occurrence • Ability to use both direct and indirect methods to gather information from relevant team members • Fluency in use of multiple behavior (social, emotional, and academic) measurement methods and tools to evaluate response to intervention • Summarize/synthesize FBA information into a data-linked hypothesis that is based on observable, alterable, and testable conditions • Select/develop multi-component behavior interventions linked to the hypothesis (includes interventions to prevent problem behavior occurrence, teaching replacement behaviors, and reinforcing with function so that problem behavior is no longer reinforced) • Develop task analyses or treatment/intervention protocol • Identify when more expertise is needed (e.g., functional analyses, medical, suicide risk assessment, mental-health, trauma-informed care, substance abuse treatment, social services, family supports, etc.) • Identify when and how to supplement FBA/BIP with reinforcer assessment for additional motivators beyond function • Developing implementation plan including coaching methods to train and mentor teachers/teams to implement interventions • Developing fidelity measures • Identify when wrap-around approaches are needed and when to seek additional expertise to facilitate team in developing wrap-around supports including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitating person-centered plans ○ Communicating with multiple agencies to enlist enrollment for supports ○ Communicate with administrators to allocate/commit necessary resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood & Neel, 2007 • Flannery, Newton, Horner, Slovic, Blumberg & Ard, 2000 • Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005 • Kennedy, Long, Jolivet, Cox, Tang, & Thompson, 2001 • Noell, et al., 2005

Ensure that Educators at the School Level have Sufficient Professional Supports to Implement, Sustain, and Evaluate Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Practices to Result in Improved Student Outcomes

In order to adequately implement a Tier 3 system for behavioral support, it is important for districts to have an infrastructure and culture that promotes adequate skill development and retention for all teachers and school staff engaged in these supports. These professionals bear significant responsibility for developing, implementing, sustaining, and evaluating the effectiveness of evidence-based practices that result in improved student outcomes. As the need for supports at this level are varied and often complex, a system of professional development provides an overarching understanding of a multi-tiered system of support as well as delivers highly effective training and coaching to build and strengthen critical skills. There are several features that will help to ensure high-quality professional development for teachers, educational assistants, and other support professionals at Tier 3.

Identify Professional Development Needs. Planning for professional development activities will be most effective when data are used to determine: (a) what support needs are present in the school, (b) staff skill sets and current ability to address these support needs, and (c) progress made in developing these skill sets with the addition of professional development components.

Student outcome data are vital to planning professional development. Such data might include incidents of restraint/seclusion, office discipline referrals, suspensions or expulsions, police contacts, over-representation of populations and number, frequency of out-of-district placements or segregated placements, or social and emotional screening/teacher referral data.

Important outcome data for professionals could include pre/post evaluation of knowledge of the topic, formative assessments of mastery of learning objectives, skill proficiency checks, ongoing fidelity of implementation of supports, and attitudes (i.e., social validity reports) regarding the support and its underlying philosophy.

The needs identified through student and professional outcome data will help schools to identify systems-change goals leading to specific learning or performance objectives and a general trajectory for professional development. These objectives are clearly stated and measurable so that districts can determine the effectiveness of the professional development support and future professional development needs.

Professional Development Delivery Options. Traditional short-term in-service training sessions are inadequate for teaching the higher level skills required for serving students with severe and complex behavior challenges (Blood & Neel, 2007; Scott & Kamps, 2007). Comprehensive training models are necessary so that the extensive skill sets related to intensive,

individualized supports are integral parts of ongoing professional development efforts at the district and school levels. Follow-up after initial training will help to ensure that these skills are assimilated into authentic school professional practices.

There are multiple methods that can be utilized to deliver trainings, depending upon the desired professional skill acquisition goals and level of implementation. Districts/schools have some flexibility in determining the methods for delivery, though there are critical features that will maximize skill development, no matter the mode involved. Face-to-face training is generally most common and often ideal as it encourages active participation. Web-based and virtual training methods, when set up with the proper features, can also be very effective in engaging the learner. The latter is most effective and efficient when it includes in-program assessments and feedback.

Success with any method may be maximized by piloting it with a smaller audience and then refining it prior to widespread scale-up. Piloting can help schools and districts gather quick feedback on the impact of the training and identify potential gaps in comprehension and skill development. It can also help those designing trainings to ascertain the general receptiveness of the audience and potential need to reexamine the contextual fit of the intervention or the way in which information is conceptualized and presented to the learner.

Whatever the mode of delivery, the following design features will maximize payoff for learner engagement:

- Utilize contextually appropriate language and avoid jargon when possible
- Ensure professional development strategies are more effective by including active participant responding. Related strategies for use during lecture presentations include guided notes and response cards or remote clicker devices (e.g., iClicker)
- Ensure modules are small enough to allow for timely completion and to keep the learner focused. If a more complex or longer session is required, consider breaking modules up into brief sections with short breaks
- State in observable and measurable terms what the learner will be able to do when a module is completed, as learning objectives are crucial. Study guides can be especially helpful for learning participants
- Include a variety of examples and non-examples, to help define the breadth of a concept and to define minimal differences for the learner.
- Present content systematically (i.e., simple to complex, reiteration), providing opportunities to build fluency in recognition of key terms and definitions. Fluency can be supported via traditional paper or internet-based (e.g., Quizlet.com) flash cards

- Include knowledge mastery assessments and skill proficiency (step-by-step checklists) assessments as elements to bolster learning
- Develop a clear protocol for coaching implementation of interventions and supports as this is critical for ensuring fidelity of procedures (see section on Use of Coaching in Professional Development)

Professional Development Delivery, Facilitation, and Maintenance. Professional development is most effective when there is a dedicated trainer. Ideally, this is a professional whose primary job role involves frequently conducting or facilitating teams through the FBA/BIP process or related activities to address mental and physical health issues within schools. Such professionals have achieved mastery in the skills that they are teaching and may have completed a related train-the-trainer course. They are able to vary both the mode of delivery and language used to describe the concepts in multiple ways. They are also able to make accommodations, where appropriate, to best fit the context of the target environment and implementing personnel.

As mentioned previously, a comprehensive system of professional development also includes mechanisms for data collection and analysis to ensure that training matches needs and that delivery of training results in changes in teacher behavior, and ultimately, student behavior. Therefore, implementation includes mechanisms for gathering and analyzing the data. In order to provide dynamic support, facilitators are aware of changes in trends and of behavior that appear unresponsive to the current intervention, so that training and coaching can adapt to these needs.

Use of Coaching in Professional Development. Traditional methods of training through lecture-style presentation, without opportunity for feedback, discussion and reflection, yield poor results in new skill acquisition (Knight, 2009). Beyond mastering concepts and principles, effective training models also include small group or individualized face-to-face sessions with skill demonstrations followed by practice and feedback in role play and actual skill use in natural settings (Learning Forward, 2011). These *coaching* methods provide opportunities to engage in newfound skills following training with additional scaffolding. This support is an important aspect not only for initial skill acquisition and initial implementation, but for continued maintenance of skills and consistent support (Noell, Witt, Gilbertson, Ranier, & Freeland, 1997). Literature on coaching indicates that it positively impacts teacher attitudes, assists in the transfer of training to practice, increases fidelity of implementation, leads to increased maintenance of skills, increases collaboration, and is widely regarded by teachers as beneficial.

Instructional coaching can be provided through a variety of methods. One of the most common and highly preferred methods is face-to-face support in the classroom. In some cases, small group coaching can also be highly effective when participants are engaged in providing similar supports. While face-to-face interaction and direct exposure to the classroom environment can be beneficial in helping coaches to understand the dynamics of the situation and can aid in establishing a collaborative relationship between coach and teacher, this method of coaching is not always an option. In such conditions, remote coaching can occur using technologies that apply internet-based audio-video connections that support real-time observations and feedback.

Frequency of instructional coaching may vary considerably from school to school, as well as from classroom to classroom. Much of this variation goes back to data-based decision-making and allocating resources where needed. For coaching to be most effective, however, access to coaching support is ongoing, with intensity of support varying with identified needs and trends in data. It is ideal for there to be a coach on campus at all times (internal coach), however, when required due to logistical and other concerns, an itinerant (external) coach can be utilized.

Step-by-step *proficiency checklists* (i.e., job aids, task analyses) can be used throughout training and coaching activities to aid in the teaching and maintenance of critical skills. These checklists can also be used to encourage self-checks by participants in natural settings. Follow-up observations by supportive professionals can reinforce and sustain peak performance integrity and help identify and address any impediments to correct use of procedure. A sequenced set of skill performance objectives can be built into a highly effective coaching system. The above features can support a strong professional development framework that can address the range of competencies required for Tier 3 problem solving.

Instructional coaching generally involves professionals with expertise in a particular area who then work closely to enhance instruction and support practices with the ultimate goal of positively impacting student achievement. With regards to Tier 3 support, this expertise involves a basic understanding of function-based behavior assessment and planning, including simple antecedent strategies, teaching strategies and replacement behaviors, as well as consequence strategies. In addition to this content knowledge, an effective coach will also have knowledge of pedagogy and sufficient interpersonal skills to both impart knowledge and work with teachers in refining skills to best fit the classroom and students. For students with mental health, substance abuse and/or medical needs, coaching may also include ensuring access to highly skilled professionals that can inform the team about effective strategies to integrate into a behavior intervention plan.

Table 7.1 *Coach Attributes and Skills*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of how students learn • Understanding of instructional practices available • Understanding of adult learning processes • Understanding of the culture of the school and need for contextual fit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of function-based behavior assessment and intervention procedures • Ability to alter intervention for various developmental levels • Ability to identify mental health, substance abuse, medical support issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Willingness to collaborate • Problem-solving skills • Flexibility • Supportiveness • Tactfulness • Approachability
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The ideal coach will have sufficient skills to provide assistance to classrooms in a professional and friendly manner, and have the observational skills and capacity to analyze the current behavior of implementers and the frequency and degree in which it either maintains or diverges from a plan of support. Lastly, the ideal coach will have a general understanding of the culture of the school, classrooms within the school, and the need for contextual fit of interventions in those environments. Table 7 provides an array of attributes and skills of an ideal coach.

Systems Coaching. Instructional coaching can be an important factor in ensuring implementation at the classroom level. However, such efforts will have difficulty sustaining without attention to systems level factors. In that effort, coaches can be utilized as systems leaders and change agents at both the instructional level and the organizational level (Fullan & Knight, 2011). Systems coaching is a set of activities that provide dynamic support and facilitation to develop the capacity of school leadership teams to implement multi-tiered systems of support for academics and behavior (March et al., 2012).

While systems coaching requires many of the same skill sets as instructional coaching (pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and interpersonal skills), systems coaching focuses problem solving on systems issues versus individual student issues and includes skills that benefit these applications. Such additional skill sets may include: (a) the ability to use various data to solve systemic change issues, (b) facilitation skills for effective team-based collaborative planning and problem-solving, (c) ability to impart knowledge specific to organizational change and innovation content, (d) ability to support behaviors aligned with this innovation, and (e) the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of actions pertaining to systems change.

In order for schools to implement multi-tiered systems of support for behavior, both individual level and systems level support are best attended to concurrently. Systems coaching allows for instructional coaching to be delivered more effectively and efficiently. Instructional coaching is necessary to support staff to produce valued academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for students.

Multiple Levels of Competency. School teams will include or have access to professionals with varying degrees of competency. Some students served by problem-solving teams will present severe and complex behavioral and other support needs that will require the involvement of professionals with higher levels of competency. For the majority of students served by problem-solving teams, two levels of competency are typically sufficient.

- Team member competency: Each school team may include multiple members with competency in gathering the basic information that is necessary for an FBA.
 - Related skills may include, but are not limited to, reviewing existing records, listing and prioritizing behaviors of concern, conducting structured open-ended FBA interviews, and recording basic antecedent-behavior-consequence sequences.
 - Team members who have the additional competencies as described below gather such information for interpretation.
 - Competency in these skills might be acquired and demonstrated through limited professional development activities presented by highly qualified professionals utilizing essential design features described earlier (clear objectives, active participation, learning checks/assessments, coaching, etc.).
- Team facilitator/coaching competency: Each school team should also include at least one member with basic competency (as described above), plus have: (a) capacity to facilitate a team problem-solving process, (b) knowledge of behavioral principles (i.e., relationships between behaviors and environmental events), and (c) supervised practical experience in conducting FBAs and implementation of BIPs in schools.
 - Related skills may include, but are not limited to, the basic competencies described above, plus defining behaviors, identifying basic patterns in antecedent-behavior-consequence sequences, preparing hypotheses based on direct observations and structured interviews, measurement (e.g., practical direct observation strategies and tools, reliable sampling methods, using external supports for data recording, using supplemental methods such as rating scales).
 - In some situations, team facilitators may need to gain competencies in, or access to, skilled professionals who can address areas such as trauma-informed care, mental health concerns, substance abuse, and medical issues.
 - Competency in these skills might be acquired and demonstrated through comprehensive professional development activities presented by highly qualified professionals. Such training would likely include study assignments and explicit instruction (equivalent to graduate-level coursework), with supervised tasks with coaching.

- Multiple resources that may be useful for related professional development activities are included in the Resources section.

As noted above, problem-solving teams with the above levels of competency may successfully serve the majority of students. However, teams will sometimes encounter more complex or severe behavior challenges that may require the support of someone with advanced competency in behavioral, medical, mental health or substance abuse support. This topic is addressed in a later section.

Systemic Support for Professional Development. To build momentum toward making positive changes in Tier 3 behavior intervention, it is important to consider the significant benefits of building competency for Tier 3 problem-solving teams and capacity for intervention competency and support at the district, school, and classroom levels. There are a number of system variables that will enhance the likelihood of implementation of effective strategies for professional development and coaching. These include: (a) gaining buy-in from top administration, (b) dedication of resources, (c) matching with other district initiatives, (d) clear linkage between behavior and academic performance, (e) scheduling training and other initiatives for the school year, (f) school readiness to support changes in teacher behavior, (g) commitment conveyed from administration/leadership, and (h) commitment to initiatives until the goal is attained.

When applicable, school districts can develop creative solutions and identify additional resources in order to build competency to provide Tier 3 supports. Possible alternatives include:

- Districts may expand access to related courses by capitalizing on internet-based course delivery and Learning Management Systems (LMS). Some types of LMS (e.g., Moodle, Adobe Connect) can support continuous availability, interactivity, self-pacing, and/or repeatability.
- Collaborating with other school districts to develop and share in a professional development program that meets mutual needs. For example, districts could agree to develop separate modules for courses that develop basic and moderate competencies.
- Establishing collaborative professional development agreements with local universities or distance learning programs.

Professional development support can be linked to District Improvement and Assistance plans and School Improvement plans, providing opportunity for integration of these systemic changes with other efforts throughout the school or district. This will also help to provide structure for ensuring ongoing attention and growth. Lastly, districts can link professional development in Tier 3 behavior intervention strategies with credit for in-service education,

continuing education, or possibly university credit. District or school recognition of successful implementation can also be a motivating factor for teachers and professionals (e.g., Problem Solving Teams of Excellence).

All of these systemic support features bolster the idea that positive student behavior and academic performance are both valued by schools and that success in one leads to success in the other. With this in mind, proper attention to systemic implementation of professional development brings better quality and integrated opportunities for teacher and professionals' growth in Tier 3 support implementation, which can then lead to both decreased student problem behavior, and increased academic achievement.

Ensure Provision of Appropriate District and School Resources and Infrastructures to Implement, Sustain, and Evaluate Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Practices

One of the primary responsibilities of the district is to provide schools with the necessary support to implement the described components of a Tier 3 system with fidelity. However, the district leadership team will be aware that the capacity to implement an efficient and effective Tier 3 system at the school level is most likely related to the district's commitment to supporting each school in developing a continuum of multi-tiered system of support. If a school does not implement a Tier 1 system for all students and a Tier 2 system for groups of students who need additional assistance, it is unlikely that the school will have the resources (time, personnel, funding, etc.) to implement the Tier 3 systems described in this Blueprint. While districts have a legal imperative to implement a Tier 3 system, the effectiveness of that system will likely hinge on the integrity of the district's efforts to implement Tiers 1 and 2 across all schools. Therefore, each district is encouraged to evaluate and install, if necessary, effective Tier 1 and 2 supports as the district begins to redesign its Tier 3 supports.

A wide range of school and district supports will be necessary if schools are to implement Tier 3 with fidelity. School leadership teams will need professional development to create a culture of appropriate data use and problem solving. Data will be necessary to identify students at risk, students who are responding to interventions and those who are not, and the degree to which evidence-based strategies were implemented with fidelity. Leadership teams may also require data on the degree to which problem-solving processes were implemented effectively and efficiently to address targeted student needs. Professional development for school leaders will also target developing effective MTSS teaming structures at the entire school level and within grade levels, identifying and accessing additional training and professional development needs and/or resources for the school's implementation efforts, and utilizing data systems that support

the essential characteristics of school implementation listed above: teaming, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Schools with effective leadership may be able to provide a wide range of internal supports to implement many components of MTSS with fidelity. However, it is unlikely that a school will have the resources, capacity, or approval to develop or purchase effective progress monitoring and data collection tools for Tier 3 without district level buy-in. In fact, districts may need to develop, purchase, or utilize free data resources to address all three tiers of MTSS as in Table 8 below:

Table 8: *Possible Data Sources to Support MTSS for Behavior*

Tier 1		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office discipline referrals • Attendance • In-school suspensions • Out-of-school suspensions • Restraint/seclusion • Fidelity of Tier 1 implementation • Classroom management system (minors incidents) • SESIR • Climate surveys • Social, Emotional and Behavior Screening Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Progress Monitoring systems • Intervention- specific monitoring systems • Fidelity of Tier 2 Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic direct observation data systems (frequency, duration, rate, etc.) • Direct behavior rating scales • Time sampling data systems • Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence Observations • Interviews • Surveys • Checklists • Record Reviews/Permanent Products • Fidelity of Tier 3 Implementation

Only having access to a range of data across the three tiers is not sufficient for implementing MTSS at all levels. The data will need to support schools in data-based problem solving at Tier 3 by answering some critical questions, such as:

1. How many students (what percentage) are receiving Tier 3 supports and at what level of Tier 3?
2. How are all, or selected, students progressing as a result of their Tier 3 supports?
3. Are there different outcomes based on type of student, classroom, school, etc.?
4. Are some interventions more effective or able to be implemented easier than others?
5. Are there critical factors or barriers that are impacting our capacity to implement evidence-based interventions with fidelity?

District support will also be needed to develop, or assist schools with accessing, user-friendly data systems that: (a) are easily learned, (b) require little time for data entry, (c) measure the range of data sources listed above, and (d) quickly produce a range of reports (e.g., graphs, tables, etc.) that support the school's problem-solving process.

Professional development, resources, and technical assistance for coaching will also be critical for the success of an MTSS system at each school. While districts may identify “coaches” at each school, it is also probable that a range of coaching functions will be disbursed across school leadership teams. Members of those teams will want to get training in problem-solving, team facilitation, using data for decision-making, facilitating FBAs and BIPs, coaching teachers to implement with fidelity, and evaluating the success of the school’s MTSS activities. A commitment to organizing professional development activities within the district calendar and to supporting schools to allocate time within their school calendars for problem-solving, teaming, and data collection and analysis will also be critical to the success of Tier 3 supports.

Finally, districts will develop and use, for formative and summative purposes, a district evaluation plan specific to their Tier 3 system of behavior supports. This plan will be reflected in the DIAP and each school should address their efforts at MTSS for behavior within their School Improvement Plan (SIP).

**Ensure District Policies, Practices, Manuals, and Teaming Structures
Align to Support Effective Redesign, Implementation, and Evaluation
Of Tier 3 System Supports for Behavior in All Schools**

Districts have an important responsibility to ensure their policies and procedures clearly articulate the professional practices required of all relevant employees to support schools in implementing and evaluating a Tier 3 system of support for behavior. Districts are encouraged to carefully plan and organize all activities that will support Tier 3 practices and have a positive impact on student behavior. Such activities may include but would not be limited to: (a) reviewing all current staff roles and responsibilities specific to their positions in relation to required redesign changes for Tier 3, (b) ensuring all professionals who have responsibilities in the redesign and/or implementation of Tier 3 changes have clearly communicated expectations and success criteria to guide their involvement in the redesign/implementation process, (c) developing district manuals that specifically describe teaming structures needed to support effective Tier 3 activities and guide best practices in providing Tier 3 supports, and (d) reviewing current evaluation structures and resources in the district in comparison with necessary structure and resources for evaluating the ongoing success of a Tier 3 behavior support system.

Districts that are effective in redesigning, implementing and evaluating Tier 3 behavior practices across schools will have publicly conveyed the philosophy, rationale, and urgency for providing effective behavioral supports to all students across a multi-tiered system of support. Educators will need guidance and clear communication to ensure appropriate understanding of a Tier 3 system for behavior support. For example, just because a student may be receiving Tier 3

supports for behavior does not imply that the student is in ESE. In fact, Tier 3 is much broader than ESE and should be conceptualized as matching to the student's need; not placement, label, or disability. In addition, it is critical that districts develop a seamless and consistent system of Tier supports for all students, including those receiving ESE services and those who are not receiving ESE services. Seamless and consistent systems allow all students to have access to comparable levels and types of supports regardless of a student's "diagnosis," disability, placement, or complex behavioral challenges.

Critical features of an effective district leadership team with this philosophy include being multi-disciplinary, engaging in ongoing cross-departmental collaboration, and developing a strategic plan that: (a) integrates academic and behavior supports as part of the implementation of an MTSS, (b) monitors implementation progress across all schools, and (c) evaluates the relationship between implementation of MTSS and its impacts on student outcomes across all tiers. The function of this team is to preserve best practice by establishing/enforcing district policies and procedures that support the implementation of Tier 3 practices within an MTSS in schools through a multi-disciplinary approach. The results of the team directly impact implementation of Tier 3 supports within schools through coaching, professional development, resource allocation, etc.

Districts with effective leadership teams (as described above) have the ability to establish competent school teaming structures necessary to produce better outcomes for students. Critical features of school teaming structures include the following:

- MTSS teams have multi-disciplinary/cross-department membership that includes an administrator, a coach/behavior representative, and members with basic/foundational knowledge of problem-solving. The team includes those implementing supports at Tier 3, so that they have input in decisions about interventions on the particular student(s).
- Access to and involvement of (as needed, based on individual need and predetermined decision rules) external expert-level supports to assist with behavioral problem-solving and planning.
- MTSS teams receive training in problem-solving and the coach/behavior representative receives ongoing training for improved behavioral expertise.
- MTSS teams support implementation of a multi-level Tier 3 approach that is aligned with services and supports provided within Tier 1 and Tier 2.
- MTSS teams are provided with criteria of best practice in problem-solving and receive recognition for excellence in problem-solving.

- MTSS teams monitor implementation progress of Tiers 1 and 2.
- MTSS teams evaluate effectiveness of Tiers 2 and 3 in a context of Tier 1 improvements (i.e., student progress to goals in Tiers 2 and 3 results in those students improving to goals at Tier 1).

Districts will need to support their schools in not only establishing effective teaming structures for Tier 3 supports but also improving accountability of implementing such practices by establishing implementation manuals and inclusive of evaluation protocols. District manuals that specifically describe the policies and procedures as well as provide examples of effective teaming structures needed to support Tier 3 activities are essential for consistency, maintaining alignment of expectations of district and schools, and for guiding best practice in providing Tier 3 supports. Districts may need to evaluate their current policies, manuals, and practices/procedures to determine if the following critical features are in place:

- Clear communication of rationale and urgency for change
- Proactive, preventative, strengths-based focus
- Multi-disciplinary team
- Data-based problem-solving as the way of work
- Student-centered
- Youth and family involvement
- Community involvement
- Comprehensive evaluation of effectiveness

Professional development with ongoing coaching to ensure implementation and evaluation of the critical features will be necessary at both the district and school level. The district will need to be consistent in the supports and structures established in order to support schools. School staff will need to be trained in order for successful implementation at the student level. An established district calendar with identified training days specific to supporting the implementation of MTSS is necessary. Districts may want to consider accessing common state-wide training curricula or expanding the job responsibilities of current positions when redesigning Tier 3 supports. By adjusting district policies and practices/procedures for Tier 3 support, the expectations for effective behavioral support practices at the school level must be adjusted to maintain a seamless alignment.

Section 4: Options for Monitoring System Improvements in the Redesign, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Tier 3 System of Behavior Supports

A shift to a results-driven Tier 3 system to support students with behavioral issues requires significant systems' change to ensure that outcomes for all students who require intensive, individualized intervention are maximized. Given the scope of the anticipated systems' change needed for Florida school districts to align their practices with those described within this Blueprint, FDOE and BEESS have committed to providing the necessary technical assistance, including professional development and coaching, to build district capacity. In addition to supporting the implementation of evidence-based Tier 3 practices and systems with fidelity, Tier 3 redesign will require careful monitoring by the state and districts to verify that the practices presented within this Blueprint occur and function as intended (i.e., result in improved outcomes for students with behavioral issues). As noted throughout this Blueprint, redesign of a Tier 3 system of behavior supports builds on a model that emphasizes prevention and early intervention through a multi-tiered system of support that ensures that all students access a continuum of supports. Thus, evaluation of Tier 3 improvements must consider the effectiveness of Tier 1 and 2 supports.

Implementation of Tier 3 system improvements should in no way be a barrier to compliance with procedural safeguards. Instead, Tier 3 system changes ensure the integration of evidence-based practices that support improved student outcomes and existing state or district procedural compliance practices. BEESS, FDOE, and the Tier 3 Redesign Committee are committed to maintaining all procedural safeguards whether they apply to all or a portion of students receiving Tier 3 supports (e.g., IDEA, Section 504). Monitoring the implementation and impacts of a redesigned Tier 3 system of supports will, however, require a shift in how the state and districts have traditionally monitored systems change. Rather than monitoring compliance with Tier 3 processes (e.g., procedures), monitoring of Tier 3 systems change will focus on demonstrations of student success by measuring student outcomes. This section of the Blueprint will detail essential features and a framework for monitoring Tier 3 redesign and implementation by the state and district teams.

Student Outcomes within Result-Driven Tier 3 Systems. In a well-integrated Tier 3 system, student outcome data guide important educational decisions. The importance of monitoring student outcomes is twofold. First and foremost, documentation of student outcomes is necessary for verifying that the resources allocated and practices adopted as part of the Tier 3 systems change process have, or have not, generated the intended effect of improving outcomes for students with behavioral issues. Second, monitoring student outcomes is an essential component of a Tier 3 system of supports because data-based decision-making guides implementation of evidence-based practices. As such, evaluation of the effectiveness of redesigned Tier 3 systems of supports within districts will focus primarily on student outcomes

that demonstrate a reduction of negative educational outcomes (e.g., office discipline referrals, suspensions, restraint or seclusion, targeted behavior problems, etc.) and an increase in desired educational outcomes (e.g., attendance, academic performance, social skills, etc.). In short, student outcome data are essential to:

- Supporting data-based decision making and problem solving
- Determining sufficiency of implementation integrity
- Facilitating identification of and the process of implementing any adjustments that need to be made to Tier 3 practices
- Maximizing resources and ensuring efficient supports are provided to all students
- Evaluating the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions
- Evaluating the equity of services and supports provided to students
- Evaluating the effectiveness of Tier 3 practices
- Determining eligibility for Exceptional Student Services and evaluation of individual education programs


State Monitoring of District Tier 3 Systems of Behavior Supports: A Three-Tiered Approach. District level buy-in and commitment coupled with technical assistance from the state will lay the foundation for redesigning Tier 3. As districts and schools begin the process of revising the Tier 3 system of supports, BEESS and FDOE will play vital roles in ensuring that technical assistance is well coordinated and sufficient for supporting district leadership teams in building capacity for results-driven Tier 3 systems of behavior supports. The transition from a compliance-driven to a results-driven Tier 3 system will involve a multi-year change process beginning with piloting and moving to full implementation, then to sustainability, and finally ongoing improvement.

Tier 3 systems of support described in this Blueprint will involve not only implementation of evidence-based Tier 3 practices, but as importantly, monitoring the impact of Tier 3 practices on student outcomes. Aligned with the shift towards developing a multi-tiered system of evidence-based practices that improve student outcomes, state monitoring of Tier 3 behavior supports can follow a similar, three-tiered framework in which the level of state-provided support to districts is determined by district need as measured by student outcomes. The logic and principles that guide this three-tiered framework for state supports are conceptually similar to the three-tiered continuum of student supports.

Table 9 provides a summary of a tiered framework for the state to support and monitor district Tier 3 redesign. Within this framework, student outcome data guide the intensity and frequency of state provided support and monitoring, which increases for those districts

demonstrating insufficient student outcomes. Tier 1 supports for all districts include professional development and coaching on Tier 3 redesign and evaluation of student outcomes for the purpose of determining additional supports needed by districts (i.e., districts submit student outcome data to the state several times throughout the year). The frequency with which data are submitted varies depending on the type of data (e.g., graduation rates may be reported annually whereas data on restraint and seclusion may be reported continuously). For those districts that demonstrate sufficient student outcomes for students receiving Tier 3 supports, no additional state supports or monitoring activities would be required. Alternatively, those districts whose student data do not demonstrate sufficient student outcomes over time are provided with additional supports and monitoring matched to the needs of the district.

Table 9: *Tiered Framework for Monitoring Tier 3 Behavior Support Systems by FDOE*



State Monitoring	
<p>Across multiple years, district Tier 3 student outcomes indicate a need for intense training and technical assistance</p> <p>Intensive evaluation and frequent progress monitoring by measuring student outcomes and implementation fidelity</p>	<p>Intensive state support provided through a comprehensive planning and problem-solving service delivery approach to guide systemic changes needed to improve Tier 3 outcomes while also developing the district team's capacity to use a problem-solving framework to guide long-term change and improvement</p> <p>Participation in BESS ESE Monitoring and Assistance is required</p>
<p>During initial year of implementation, district Tier 3 student outcomes indicate need for technical assistance to improve student outcomes</p> <p>Evaluate implementation fidelity of Tier 3 practices in the district and increase frequency of monitoring student outcome progress</p>	<p>Analysis of student outcome data and information on fidelity of implementing Tier 3 evidence-based practices</p> <p>Action plan for improving Tier 3 behavior supports is required and likely linked with their District Improvement and Assistance Plan (DIAP) and SIP</p> <p>Additional support and technical assistance is available by the state and discretionary projects</p>
<p>District demonstrates sufficient student outcomes for students receiving Tier 3 behavior supports</p> <p>Screening by measuring student outcomes</p>	<p>Professional development and coaching provided on Tier 3 redesign</p> <p>District-developed formative and summative evaluation plans are recommended, but not required</p>

This tiered framework for monitoring student outcome improvements will ensure that districts receive matched supports for improving/modifying their Tier 3 systems and improving student outcomes while maximizing state resources. Monitoring student outcomes for all students receiving Tier 3 supports (i.e., regardless of disability status, race/ethnicity, English language proficiency, etc.) will also ensure that outcomes are not only achieved, but also equitable.

The call for redesigning Tier 3 behavior supports involves systems' change at not only the district level, but also the state level. The state's capacity for coordinating and developing the practices and supports needed for Tier 3 redesign will require many of the same features as at the district level (e.g., FDOE and BEESS leadership, data-based decision making, etc.). As systems for monitoring redesign of Tier 3 supports are developed at the state level, the state will provide districts with specific guidelines and details of a monitoring and support process (e.g., which student-outcome data will be monitored).

District Monitoring of Tier 3 Systems of Behavior Supports. Essential to the success of redesigning Tier 3 systems of behavioral supports in Florida, will be the *alignment* of supports across all levels of the system: state, district, and school. While the focus of monitoring Tier 3 redesign at the state level is on student outcomes, district and building-level teams will need to develop comprehensive systems to support and monitor not only student outcomes, but also implementation of Tier 3 practices.

For Tier 3 practices to be implemented with fidelity, implementation must be supported by districts through systematic planning, application, and monitoring of implementation. Thus, data systems will be essential as districts engage in a problem-solving framework in which effectiveness of Tier 3 practices are determined through monitoring of student outcomes and implementation data. Evaluating implementation is necessary for determining: (a) if a practice is being implemented as intended, (b) if any changes need to be made to support implementation of the practice, and (c) in combination with outcome data, if a practice has been effective. Without implementation data, connections between Tier 3 practices and outcomes cannot be evaluated and the problem-solving process intended to guide Tier 3 redesign will very likely be hindered.

As described throughout this Blueprint, a system of Tier 3 practices requires a well instituted problem-solving framework and data systems to facilitate decision-making. Given the importance of data-based decision making within a problem-solving framework, districts will need to develop data systems (see Ensure Provisions of Appropriate District and School Resources and Infrastructures to Maintain Consistent Educator Supports Specific to Implementing, Sustaining, and Evaluating Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Practices) and strategically approach planning for implementation. It is unlikely that a district could implement the practices within this Blueprint all at once. Instead, districts will have to give careful consideration to the needs of their students and the factors likely to impact implementation within their schools. As districts embark on redesigning their Tier 3 systems and implementing Tier 3 practices, they will need to consider important questions related to prioritization,

implementation, and evaluation. Table 10 includes possible questions to guide districts as they begin planning for implementation of Tier 3 practices.

Table 10: *Possible Questions to Guide Districts for Implementation of Tier 3 Practices*

Task	
Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What percentage of students are identified as needing Tier 3 support? Are there schools where the percentage is significantly higher? • What is the gap between expected and current student outcomes (e.g., attendance, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspensions, academic performance, etc.)? • Are there schools or grade levels where the gap between expected and current levels of performance is more or less significant? • Are there subgroups (i.e., gender, race or ethnic group, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, English language learners, etc.) for which the gap between expected and current levels of performance is more or less significant? • Are expected (evidence-based) Tier 3 practices sufficiently occurring? • How are Tier 3 redesign practices at the school level being supported by the district and are these supports for school-level practices sufficient? • Which school-level and district issue(s) will be prioritized because they impact the most on the student-focused priority area, are most foundational, and/or are immediately actionable?
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources and materials will be required for evidence-based practices to be sufficiently implemented? • Do the implementers have the skills needed to implement the practices? • Do the implementers have the motivation needed to implement the practice? • What professional development and coaching will be required? • What data will be used to determine if the practices have been implemented as intended? • What student outcomes do we expect to improve and how will we collect the appropriate data to confirm outcomes are improving? • What criteria will be used to determine if additional supports are required to improve implementation? • What additional supports may be provided to improve implementation?
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the practices implemented as intended? • What student outcomes resulted from implementing the selected practices? • What steps need to be taken to ensure that the practices will be maintained or what steps need to be taken to improve the practices?

Monitoring Tier 3 systems improvement will vary from district to district and can encompass implementation of any number of the practices included in this Blueprint. Table 11 provides an overview of essential Tier 3 practices that districts may focus on when developing their district-specific plan for improving and implementing Tier 3 systems. Because all of the practices in the table below are considered essential to a Tier 3 system, the success of any one of these practices is strongly related to the success of other essential Tier 3 practices (i.e., all essential practices are needed for a Tier 3 system to function as intended). Thus, it is likely that districts will observe that implementation of one essential Tier 3 practice impacts the functioning of other essential practices within their Tier 3 system of supports. Furthermore, it is also critical that, once a practice is established within a district, that practice is maintained, and if needed, modified to maximize the effectiveness of the Tier 3 system of supports. This ongoing process of

implementation in which practices are evaluated and modified to meet the needs and improve the outcomes of all students is achieved through ongoing data-based decision-making within a problem-solving framework. As such, districts will need data to evaluate and monitor implementation of essential practices (i.e., actions and activities of the district) of a results-driven Tier 3 system.

Table 11: *Critical Features for District Monitoring*

Using A Results-Driven, Problem-Solving Approach, How Will The District Monitor:	
Essential Practice	Critical Features
Implementation of data systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data management systems • Procedures and policies for collecting, managing, and reporting data • Data are shared with Tier 1 and 2 teams
Data-based evaluation and decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data are used to guide intervention planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Screening ○ Progress monitoring ○ Formative evaluation ○ Summative evaluation ○ Diagnostic evaluation • Protocols for data-based decision-making/decision rules • Decision points communicated to schools to determine who receives access to Tier 3 • Data for decision making are collected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student outcome data ○ Implementation data ○ Social validity data • Use of multiple assessment methods, sources, and settings • Gap between current and expected outcomes determines intensity of (level) of support
Technically adequate FBA/BIP processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBA includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying and defining problem and replacement/alternative behavior ○ Multiple behavior measurement targets ○ Multiple measurement methods (on a continuum), sources, and settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting Events, Antecedents, Consequences ○ Data are used to verify function of behavior ○ Hypothesis statement about consequences maintaining behavior • BIP includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Link to hypothesis from FBA ○ Instructional methods ○ Antecedent and consequence strategies ○ Feasible and acceptable interventions ○ Coaching/training, resources and other supports ○ Progress monitoring (outcomes and implementation) plan ○ Timeline and assigned responsibilities
Teaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols and procedures • Appropriate representation of team members with necessary skills for problem-solving facilitation • Consistent, timely, and productive meetings • Process for determining need for, and accessing, additional expertise
Collaboration between all service providers and/or agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for documentation and monitoring collaboration, communication, and/or wrap-around • Additional resources allocated by administration as needed • Person-centered planning
Multiple tiers of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiers are clearly defined

Using A Results-Driven, Problem-Solving Approach, How Will The District Monitor:	
Essential Practice	Critical Features
Intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students receiving Tier 3 supports have access to the general education setting (i.e., Tiers 1 and 2) • Decision points and procedures for matching appropriate level of support to student needs are established • Procedures for accessing additional or fading supports are established
Professional development and coaching supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-driven process to identify needs, set goals, and develop a professional development plan • Professional development planning process has been established • Feedback and outcome data are reviewed to further identify coaching/ professional development needs
Tier 3 support systems (i.e., student outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral student outcomes • Academic outcomes
Compliance with procedural safeguards and applicable regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff adhere to all regulations and policies • Changes and/or new regulations as policies are communicated in a timely manor • Tier 3 redesign incorporated into school improvement plan
Infrastructure for Tier 3 redesign is established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District leadership and school-level team • Roles and responsibilities clearly defined • Policies and procedures • Consistent, timely, and productive meetings • Information & data are shared between staff and teams is timely in order to facilitate data-based problem solving
Culturally responsive practices / Staff understanding that learning is mediated by culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 3 redesign plan emphasizes culturally responsive practices to meet the diverse needs of all learners • Curriculum, instruction, and supports reflect the school community's diversity (i.e., sociocultural, linguistic, racial/ethnic, and other relevant characteristics) • Resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) are specifically allocated for the planning and delivery of evidence-based instruction and intervention that reflect student diversity and result in learning opportunities for all students • Ongoing professional development and coaching support is provided to build capacity of interventions across all tiers to accommodate student diversity • Data are collected and analyzed on how intervention efforts are impacting student performance across various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups • Data-based problem-solving informs how patterns of student performance vary across various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups are addressed • Active recruitment and collaboration with family and community members that represent the diverse population of the school
Family collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined and monitored • Active participation of family members in problem-solving process • Outreach is provided to unresponsive families • Behavior intervention plans increase skills of families to support

Section 5: Considerations for Determining When Additional Expertise is Necessary

Within Tier 3 redesign, school teams can build their capacity to support most of the students requiring Tier 3 supports. There may be situations, however, where additional expertise and

coordination with family, school, health care, mental health, and other community-based service providers are important for improving student outcomes. Collaboration with individuals from community, medical, or mental health agencies should occur at the first indication of need and may occur for some students who do not require Tier 3 supports (e.g., a phone consultation between a teacher and case worker). For some students, however, collaboration may be an ongoing (wraparound) process of comprehensive planning and intervention involving multiple systems (e.g., mental health, social services, health services, substance abuse, juvenile justice, vocational and or recreational services, etc.) (Duchnowski & Kutash, 2009; Eber, Sugai, Smith, & Scott, 2002; Kazak et al., 2010; Walker, et al., 1996).

Figure 3: *Gradations of Individualized Tier 3 Support*

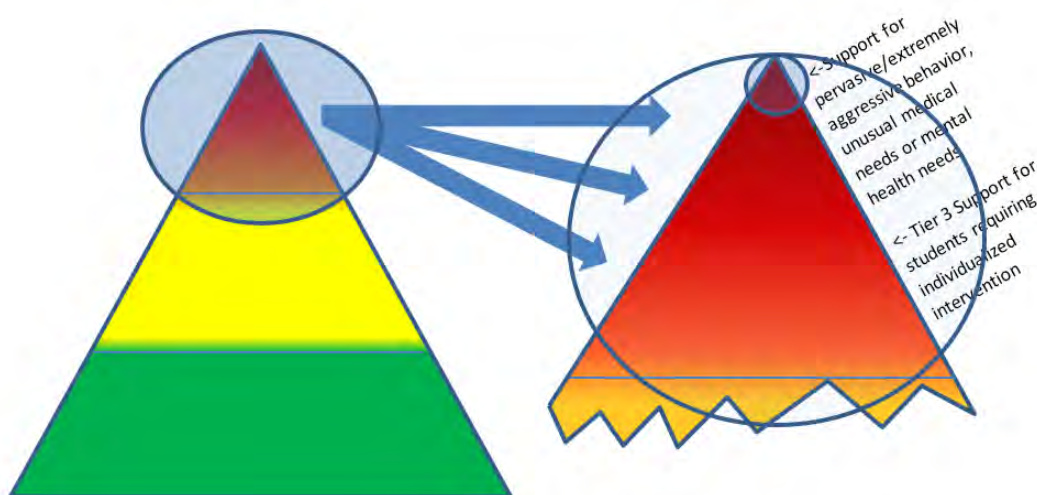


Figure 3: Even within the scope of individualized behavior support, there is a continuum of support services to meet the needs of the student. All Tier 3 behavior supports include individualized, function-based interventions; however, schools may come across students who present challenges that may require additional assistance and expertise, sometimes requiring partnership with outside collaborators to help problem-solve and identify specialized interventions and supports.

Although it is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of situations in which additional expertise may be necessary, generally this will include students who have very intense behavioral, psychological, mental health, medical, or life situational issues that can be internalizing (e.g., extreme anxiety or severe depression) or externalizing and contribute to or exacerbate the problem behaviors displayed in schools. Table 12 provides examples of situations that may result in teams calling in additional expertise, either from within the school district or from outside agencies and professionals. Please keep in mind that many students will present across multiple conditions. That is, a student with serious problem behaviors can have a chronic illness, significantly impactful life situations and psychological disorders all interacting with each other, adding complexity and the need for a well-coordinated, individualized problem-solving process. It is important to keep in mind that all students continue to have access to the

full continuum of behavior supports while receiving Tier 3 supports

Table 12: *Examples Of Conditions Or Behaviors That May Require Additional, Expertise.*

Intense Behavioral Problems			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme self-injurious behavior endangering health/well-being • Intensive physical aggression toward peers or adults or property causing bodily harm or significant property destruction • Behavioral problems are so intense and resistant to interventions and student is at risk for more segregated placements and/or being incarcerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicidal ideation or suicidal attempts • Engaging in seriously threatening behaviors that are unlawful and may result in incarceration • Personality or psychotic disorders • High-risk sexual behavior • Post-traumatic stress • Significant substance abuse related disorders (e.g., alcohol, drugs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychosomatic illnesses (e.g., extreme headaches or stomach problems due to stress) that contribute to or exacerbate internalizing or externalizing • Sleep disorders • Frontal lobe damage • Seizure disorders • Enuresis • Encopresis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness • Food deprivation • Traumatic situations (e.g., abuse-sexual, physical, psychological) • Exposure to savage acts (e.g., war, murder, rape) • Extreme poverty • Foster care placements or unstable home placement

*Note: Some of these example may fall under multiple domains (e.g., encopresis may involve behavioral health or medical intervention)

It is important for teams or districts to have established consistent processes that assist them in identifying: (a) when they may need additional expertise, (b) the skills or specific expertise that is required, (c) whether that expertise is available within their district or requires consulting with an outside professional, (d) methods for accessing additional expertise, and (e) procedures for coordinating and collaborating with internal or external professionals and integrating the activities within the continuum of school-based behavioral support. Generally, in a well-functioning Tier 3 system, only a small percentage of students will require the team to seek additional expertise.

The scope of this issue is broad and contingent upon individual student presentation as well as school and district variables. Therefore, it is a challenge to address each and every issue that teams may experience. This section instead will first provide general guidelines and considerations for developing a district/team plan to address those students who have the most challenging and complex behaviors that may need additional expertise. Secondly, this section will address specific considerations for when more in-depth functional assessment procedures are needed to understand problem behavior and develop more effective interventions.

General Guidelines and Consideration for Developing a Plan for Accessing Additional Expertise

Identifying Situations in Which There is a Need for Additional Expertise. Generally, there

will be three primary situations in which teams may find the need to seek further expertise.

- There may be some students who have had a behavior support plan implemented, based on an FBA, to meet their behavioral needs, and they are not showing the desired progress. Through the problem-solving process, the team would have already reviewed data and ensured they had adequately defined and analyzed the problem and developed and implemented appropriate supports. Some of these cases may need a more in-depth FBA or a functional analysis, or other assessment (e.g., medical) to help understand the context of the problem behavior.
- Other cases may have competing variables that need to be addressed to enhance success of behavior interventions (refer to Table 12 for examples).
- Third, a very small percentage of children with severe and persistent problems and impairment in multiple domains of functioning require an intensive level of coordinated supports across school, home, and community systems (i.e., wraparound). These students may, initially or within the problem-solving process steps, be identified as presenting issues so numerous, complex, or unique that additional professional expertise is required. These are students who may need immediate access to Tier 3 supports that may require intervention options that are not routinely provided to most students (e.g., medical intervention, etc.).

Identifying the Skills or Specific Expertise Required. Once the team has determined that additional expertise is needed, it is important to define the specific competencies or proficiencies that are being sought. This will assist the team/district in determining whether the expertise wanted is available within or outside of the school district. For example, a team may have a student needing Tier 3 supports who has a mental health condition (e.g., extreme anxiety) and a substance abuse problem that contribute toward the behavior problems as well as life situations making it difficult for the family to access and provide basic life needs (e.g., food, shelter). Although the team has highly qualified professionals, they identify that additional expertise is needed to assist in developing a behavior plan of support for the student. The areas in which they need assistance are: (a) specific mental health/psychological expertise evidence-based interventions for anxiety; (b) possible medical/psychiatric expertise; and (c) community agencies/supports to address family situation issues.

Methods for Accessing Additional Expertise. After identifying the specific areas of expertise that may be needed by the team to develop an effective plan of support, the team then determines whether the expertise is available within the district or if outside professionals will need to be recruited. There are several considerations for how the district may plan for this step.

A master list could be prepared that identifies internal professionals who hold specific licenses and/or certifications in competency areas. The list could be updated regularly (e.g., once a year) to ensure teams will have the most accurate information. If the expertise being requested is present within the district, it is beneficial to have an established procedure on how the expertise will be requested. In most districts, school personnel have multiple job responsibilities and providing additional expertise to teams ad hoc would be an “add-on” to their plate. Thus, the district may want to develop a procedures that describe: (a) who in the district should be contacted to request the additional expertise, (b) how the expertise is requested (e.g., specific referral form), (c) how the request will be approved (e.g., through a district team that reviews each referral request and comes to consensus on approval), and (d) the timelines for responding to the requester. Furthermore, the district will want to consider how the internal staff being requested will be provided release time from their current responsibilities so that the staff can become fully engaged on the team for the specific student. Finally, the plan will describe how the additional expertise will be contacted. This will include who will contact the person initially as well as throughout the process and how communication will continue to flow between the additional person(s) with expertise, school team, and district.

Similarly, if it is determined that the expertise requested is not available within the district, there will be a process for accessing outside professionals that may parallel the internal process. A district will want to consider how teams will request outside expertise and most importantly, the district will want to consider the decision points that will be used to approve the requests. Decision points will be essential given that most, if not all, outside expertise will require additional monetary expenditures. Decision points may include cost to benefit ratios such as the impact on the student, classroom, and school if the additional expertise is or is not provided as well as short-term and long-term outcomes expected upon accessing outside professionals. Regardless of whether the additional expertise is accessed from within or outside of the district, careful consideration should be given to short-term and long-term outcomes for not only an individual student, but the team. Additional expertise may also be utilized to help build the capacity of the team or other systems to support similar interventions in the future.

Procedures for Coordinating and Collaborating with Internal or External Professionals and Integrating the Activities Within the Continuum of School-based Behavioral Support. A well-developed district plan will describe how the communication and information will be conducted when using additional expertise. There are several considerations for features to include in the plan. First, the district will want to describe the behaviors and responsibilities expected from the additional expert. This is especially important when the district accesses outside expertise. Some considerations for the district to include related to roles

and responsibilities include who the main point of communication contact will be, accountability data required, consents and confidentiality agreements, and written report timelines.

Secondly, the district may want to designate someone to be the primary coordinator or liaison between the team and the person(s) with additional expertise. The roles and responsibilities of the primary contact will be defined and will be clear to the team as well as to the professional who is providing the expertise. The person who serves as the coordinator is typically one who has competencies in collaboration and communicating effectively. The coordinator is also a person who is knowledgeable about district resources, policies, and procedures. Having an understanding of the problem-solving process and integrating additional supports into the context of the school is also a key consideration in selection of a coordinator. This may include understanding the school and student/family culture. The coordinator may also be someone who is skilled in working with families. Finally, the coordinator is someone who is organized and reliable in meeting timelines.

It is important to remember that the iterative problem-solving cycle continues to be implemented when additional expertise is involved. This includes following up once a plan has been implemented and determining whether the interventions are effective and continuing to use data for making decisions.

Considerations for More In-Depth Functional Assessment Procedures. There may be cases in which the team, through the problem-solving process, has developed a function-based behavior support plan that has been implemented with fidelity but has not been effective in reducing problem behaviors. If the student is still not making sufficient progress after the plan has been implemented with fidelity, the team may want to consider whether their FBA provided sufficient information or whether their hypothesis is accurate. It is possible that they may not have identified all of the antecedent events or have not determined why the antecedent events are triggers for problem behaviors. Or the team may not have accurately identified the function of the problem behavior. In these cases, the team may decide to conduct a more thorough FBA and modify the BIP to match the revised FBA information. To assist with conducting a more thorough FBA and in helping confirm hypotheses, the team may seek support from a professional, either internal or external, who has expertise in advanced behavioral techniques. The team would use the same procedures described earlier in this section to determine when expertise is needed and procedures for accessing the additional expertise.

Identifying Skills Needed for In-depth FBAs. When behavior support requires this level of intensity, certain competencies will be necessary so that the professional can effectively work

with teams in the school to develop specific interventions that fit the context of the classroom and larger school environment. Primarily, the team will want to access professionals who have an advanced understanding of, and experience with, the following competencies.

- *Facilitating and collaborating with teams.* Most often, the professional will be joining a team who has already been established and engaged in problem-solving processes. The person who fills this expert role will be one who is able to join in with an existing team and guide the team in developing strategies that utilize the advanced skills that also match their context.
- *Applied behavior analysis skills.* The professional will have advanced competencies previously described in the *Professional Development Section*, as well as additional skills in conducting functional analysis procedures within a natural context and using applied behavior analysis procedures for developing instructional procedures, both for teaching the student replacement behaviors and for training classroom personnel to implement procedures.

Increasing Team Effectiveness Through the Use of Functional Analysis Procedures.

Most functional behavior assessments in schools are *indirect* (i.e., based on interviews) and/or *descriptive* (i.e., based on naturalistic observations). These basic forms of assessment provide an estimate regarding the hypothesis for why the behavior occurs. Such measures are sufficient in many cases in identifying the probable function of behavior and developing effective behavior plans; however, in the case of the most extreme behavior or behavior that is not responsive to intervention that is aligned with the perceived function, more elaborate analysis may be beneficial. Such analyses can provide validation that a perceived function is correct or may provide evidence that the student engages in the behavior for a different reason. Functional Analysis (FA) involves direct testing of the hypothesis, by systematically varying the presentation to a student and response to a behavior. Since FA procedures present conditions that trigger problem behavior performance, FA should only be attempted by someone who is trained in FA techniques and has had experience in using the procedures in schools. Despite this caveat, FA can be safely and effectively utilized in the classroom environment. One important benefit is that FA procedures can be more expedient than other methods since they can begin after limited information gathering and can require less time to complete. Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of FA procedures that can be embedded in natural classroom routines and can be useful in addressing high risk and low-frequency behaviors, which are difficult to address with indirect and descriptive assessments.

Increasing Team Effectiveness Through the Use of Intensive Intervention Procedures.

Recent research suggests that, with knowledge of the function of a behavior, teachers can often come up with interventions that address students' behaviors. While teachers and corresponding teams are competent in developing many of these interventions, additional expertise may be requested to assist the team in developing individualized, intensive Tier 3 supports that are effective and efficient for severe and complex problem behaviors. For example, specialized intervention procedures are available for identifying, teaching and increasing replacement behaviors, including functional communication training strategies. Advanced skills can be applied for identifying reinforcers for some students. Thorough understanding of motivating operations can yield interventions that precisely manage setting events, antecedents, and consequences so that progress is accelerated.

Recruiting Additional Expertise to Assist. School districts may have staff that have the necessary competencies to provide additional expertise to the team. As described earlier in this section, districts may want to develop a resource list of internal professionals who have advanced skills in behavior interventions and FBA and who could be recruited to provide additional team support. The district may also want to develop a plan to contact external expertise similar to the ones described earlier. It may be helpful for the district to identify outside agencies and professionals who may have the needed competencies and who could become collaborators in the process. Professionals with desired competencies may be recruited from community agencies and local universities. It is also possible that districts may want to collaborate with other districts and share resources by pooling funds and sharing professionals with expertise.

There may be cases in which a district may decide that they want to increase the competencies of current staff who may then provide advanced behavioral expertise to problem-solving teams. Having a cadre of internal professional with competencies may be very helpful for districts that are experiencing a higher frequency of the following:

- Exclusionary disciplinary procedures, including suspensions, removals, etc.
- Crisis prevention, response, and management strategies (e.g., restraint or seclusion, student or staff death/s, shooting or stabbing, rape/sexual assault, campus accident, etc.)
- Severe behaviors that result in police contact or Baker Acts
- Teacher dissatisfaction and turnover
- Parent dissatisfaction, formal complaint, mediation hearing, attorney or advocate involvement, or litigation

Another meaningful advantage of building internal advanced competency is the opportunity to establish a local network of consultative resources for the most problematic behaviors in the

district. This type of network supports an enhanced level of capacity for identifying effective solutions to behavior changes. Consultants also have the benefit of *peer review* opportunities and mutual support when faced with the most severe behavior challenges.

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Appendix A: Web-Based Resources

The following are web-based resources that may be helpful in conceptualizing, planning, and realizing effective intervention at Tier 3 and for integrating supports at this level within multiple tiers of support. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but provides information from valued and trusted sources, all of whom share common interests in providing information on evidence-based practices and systems that provide support all students.

Evidence-based Practices in Education

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

<http://cecp.air.org>

The Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice supports and promotes a reoriented national preparedness to foster the development and the adjustment of children with or at risk of developing serious emotional disturbance through the production, exchange, and use of knowledge about effective practices.

Collaborative for Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (CASEL)

<http://www.casel.org>

CASEL provides resources to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

Committee for Children

<http://www.cfchildren.org/>

This website provides social and academic resources, including Second Step and Bullying Prevention programs.

Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

<http://ies.ed.gov/>

IES' mission is to provide rigorous and relevant evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and share this information broadly.

John Hopkins University, Center for Social Organization of Schools

<http://www.jhucsos.com/>

The center conducts programmatic research to improve the education system, develops curricula and provides technical assistance to help schools use the center's research

What Works Clearinghouse

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/findwhatworks.aspx>

The IES What Works Clearinghouse is a database of interventions across a variety of domains that have met or exceeded rigorous standards to be considered evidence-based.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

White paper on MTSS for behavior:

http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/pdfs/RTIB%20Guide%20101811_final.pdf

Florida Response to Intervention resources: <http://www.florida-rti.org/>

This website provides a central, comprehensive location for Florida-specific information and resources that promote system-wide practices to ensure highest possible student achievement in both academic and behavioral pursuits, including:

- Guiding Tools for Instructional PS: http://www.florida-rti.org/_docs/GTIPS.pdf
- Parent video on MTSS: <http://www.florida-rti.org/parentResources/videos.htm>
- Further parent-focused resources that districts can use: <http://www.florida-rti.org/parentResources/floridaTools.htm>
- MTSS common language/understanding document: http://www.florida-rti.org/educatorResources/MTSS_Book_ImplComp_012612.pdf
- MTSS Myths and Truths: <http://www.florida-rti.org/parentResources/myths/index.htm>
- FDOE's MTSS model: <http://www.florida-rti.org/floridaMTSS/mtf.htm>

RTIB Database: <http://www.flrtib.org/>

The RtI:B Database was designed for the sole purpose of supporting effective school and district level problem solving. Created by the group that developed Florida's model of MTSS for behavior, the database allows users to analyze systems-level and individual issues at Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

RTI Action Network

<http://www.rtinetwork.org/>

The **RTI Action Network** offers information and resources related to the implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI) in school districts, in an effort to guide educators and families in the large-scale implementation of RTI.

RtI Online training course: <http://www.florida-rti.org/introCourse/>

System Coaching Guide:

http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/resources/topic/building_capacity/index.html

Behavior Intervention

Intervention Central

<http://www.interventioncentral.org/>

This website provides teachers, schools and districts with free resources to help struggling learners and implement Response to Intervention and attain the Common Core State Standards.

Safe and Responsive Schools Project

www.indiana.edu/~safeschl

The Safe and Responsive Schools Framework is an approach to improving the behavior of students at school, and to preventing school violence.

University of Connecticut Center for Behavioral Education and Research

<http://www.cber.uconn.edu/>

The purpose of **CBER** is to conduct and disseminate rigorous research that improves educational and social outcomes for all children and youth in schools.

Positive Behavior Support

APBS

<http://www.apbs.org/index.html>

APBS is an international organization dedicated to promoting research-based strategies that combine applied behavior analysis and biomedical science with person-centered values and systems change to increase quality of life and decrease problem behaviors.

Florida Positive Behavior Support Project

<http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/>

Florida's PBS hub, whose purpose is to increase the capacity of Florida's school districts to address problem behaviors using Positive Behavior Support.

OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

<http://www.pbis.org/>

The TA Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports has been established by the Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education to give schools capacity-building information and technical assistance for identifying, adapting, and sustaining effective school-wide disciplinary practices.

Progress Monitoring

AIMSweb

<http://www.aimsweb.com/>

This website provides a complete web-based solution for universal screening, progress monitoring, and data management for Grades K-12.

DIBELS Data System

http://ctl.uoregon.edu/resources/web_dds

The **DIBELS Data System** is used to enter student performance results and create powerful reports at the student, class, school, and district level for timely decision making and improved student outcomes.

Direct Behavior Ratings

<http://www.directbehaviorratings.com/cms/>

This website provides information on the use of direct behavior ratings for assessment, communication, and intervention.

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature

<http://ctndisseminationslibrary.org/PDF/nirnmonograph.pdf>

This monograph summarizes findings from the review of the research literature on implementation of practices and programs

National Center of Educational Outcomes

<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/NCEO/>

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) provides national leadership in designing and building educational assessments and accountability systems that appropriately monitor educational results for all students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs).

Research Institute on Progress Monitoring

<http://www.progressmonitoring.org/>

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funded the Research Institute on Progress Monitoring (RIPM) to develop a system of progress monitoring to evaluate effects of individualized instruction on access to and progress within the general education curriculum.

Addressing Disproportionality and Inclusion

Equity Alliance: <http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/>

Equity Alliance is devoted to research and school reform efforts that promote equity, access, participation and outcomes for all students.

National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

<http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/content/functional-behavior-assessment>

The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders is a multi-university center to promote the use of evidence-based practice for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders.

National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC)

<http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/>

NCCC provides national leadership and contributes to the body of knowledge on cultural and linguistic competency within systems and organizations.

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCRESt)

<http://www.nccrest.org/index.html>

This program provides technical assistance and professional development to close the achievement gap between students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their peers, to reduce inappropriate referrals to special education.

Tier 3 Academics

Center on Teaching and Learning:

<http://ctl.uoregon.edu/>

CTL provides rigorous research on the design, delivery and efficacy of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as individual elements used in schools, especially in the primary, elementary, and middle school grades.

Florida Center for Reading Research

<http://www.fcrr.org>

FCRR is a multidisciplinary research center at Florida State University that explores all aspects of reading research.

The IRIS Center

<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

The IRIS Center offers a wide variety of resources about evidence-based instructional and intervention practices, in an effort to infuse resources into preservice preparation and professional development programs.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/>

(NCELA) supports the U.S. Department of Education's [Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students \(OELA\)](#) in its mission to respond to Title III educational needs, and implement NCLB as it applies to English language learners (ELLs).

Tier 3 Mental Health

School Mental Health Project (SMHP)

<http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

SMHP was created to pursue theory, research, practice and training related to addressing mental health and psychosocial concerns through school-based interventions.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

SAMHSA's National Center for Trauma-Informed Care (NCTIC) is a technical assistance center dedicated to building awareness of trauma-informed care and promoting the implementation of trauma-informed practices in programs and services.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

Family and Community Engagement

Institute of Community Integration

<http://ici.umn.edu/>

The ICI seeks to improve policies and practices, through collaborative research, training, and information sharing, to ensure that all children, youth, and adults with disabilities are valued by, and contribute to, their communities of choice.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

www.ncpie.org

This website provides resources and information to help foster collaboration between families and schools.

Promising Practices Network

<http://www.promisingpractices.net/>

This networks provides research-based information on what works to improve the lives of children and families

University of Nebraska Lincoln, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families, and Schools

<http://cyfs.unl.edu/>

The mission of CYFS is to advance the conduct of high-quality interdisciplinary research to promote the intellectual, behavioral and social-emotional development and functioning of individuals across educational, familial and community contexts.

Alternatives to Restraint/Seclusion

Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/seclusion/restraints-and-seclusion-resources.pdf>

A guide from the US Department of Education on reducing the use of restraint and seclusion.

SAMHSA Promoting Alternatives to Restraint and Seclusion

http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/promoting_alternatives_to_seclusion_and_restraint.pdf

This document from SAMHSA outlines strategies to reduce incidents of seclusion and restraint.

Other Important and Relevant Resources

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

<http://cecp.air.org/>

The CECP is dedicated to a policy of collaboration at Federal, state, and local levels that contributes to and facilitates the production, exchange, and use of knowledge about effective practices.

Council for Exceptional Children

<http://www.cec.sped.org/>

CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

National Association of School Psychologists

<http://www.nasponline.org/>

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) empowers school psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve students' learning, behavior, and mental health.

Project ACHIEVE

<http://www.projectachieve.info/>

The program uses strategic planning, professional development, and on-site consultation and technical assistance to address student achievement, positive school and classroom climates, effective teaching and instruction, and parent and community outreach and involvement.

U.S. Department of Education

www.ed.gov

ED's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Appendix B:
Recommended Books Related to Tier 3 Behavior Interventions

- Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (1999). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers (5th Edition)*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill/Prentice-Hall.
- Crone, D. A., & Horner, R. H. (2012). *Building positive behavior support systems in schools: Functional behavioral assessment*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Dunlap, G., Iovannone, R., Kincaid, D., Wilson, K., Christiansen, K., Strain, P., & English, C. (2010). *Prevent-Teach-Reinforce: The School-Based Model of Individualized Positive Behavior Support*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Emmer, E. T., Evertson, C. M., & Worsham, M. E. (2009). *Classroom management for middle and high school teachers*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Friend, M., & Bursuck, W. D. (2002). *Including students with special needs: A practical guide for classroom teachers*. Allyn & Bacon, A Pearson Education Company, 75 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116.
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- Repp, A. C., & Horner, R. H. (1999). *Functional analysis of problem behavior: From effective assessment to effective support*. Wadsworth Pub Co.
- Umbreit, J., Ferro, J., & Liaupsin, C. J. (2007). *Functional behavioral assessment and function-based intervention: An effective, practical approach*. Prentice Hall.
- Walker, H. M., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in school: Strategies and best practices*. Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
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