Wisconsin's Framework for
Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Wisconsin's Framework for
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Developed by
Wisconsin RtI Center
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

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Dear Educator:

Wisconsin continues to be among the states leading the nation in graduation rates, college entrance exam scores, and number of students taking rigorous college-level courses. As our tradition of excellence continues overall, we must work to ensure the realization of our vision that every student in Wisconsin graduates from high school academically prepared and socially and emotionally competent.

Data reveals that significant opportunity and achievement gaps persist between our students of color and white students, native and non-native English-speaking students, and students with and without disabilities. In 2010, we identified Response to Intervention (RtI) as a way to begin to address these disparities. RtI helps schools and districts systematically provide students with supports at increasing levels of intensity based on the students' responsiveness to instruction and intervention.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the CESA Statewide Network, established the Wisconsin RtI Center/Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Network to assist schools and districts as they work to implement this practice. Since its inception in 2010, the Center has had great success and more than half of the schools in Wisconsin access this valuable resource.

This revision to Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document draws on what we've learned since then - from expanding research in this field and a deepened understanding of the science surrounding successful implementation, to the feedback and success stories from Wisconsin schools as they develop an equitable multi-level system of supports based on the needs and assets within their school communities.

I believe the need to provide opportunities for each and every child to excel, especially for our students who have been historically marginalized, is one of the great moral issues of our time. To succeed, we need honest talk about the shared benefit of a system that promotes excellence for all. Our continued commitment to using RtI as an equitable multi-level system of supports is one of the ways to ensure that every child graduates prepared for further education and meaningful work. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to all learners in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Tony Evers, PhD,
State Superintendent

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Background

In November 2010, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction partnered with education stakeholders from around the state to publish *Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document*. This guidance was developed to support education leaders' understanding of Wisconsin's vision for Response to Intervention (RtI) as a multi-level system of behavioral and academic supports designed to increase success for every learner. The original guiding document described Wisconsin's vision for RtI, defined its essential elements, provided a visual model to represent the vision and definition, and highlighted state resources to help schools get started in this work. The visual model (*shown at right*) outlined the parameters of a high quality multi-level system of supports that maintained flexibility for Wisconsin districts to build systems that meet local needs.
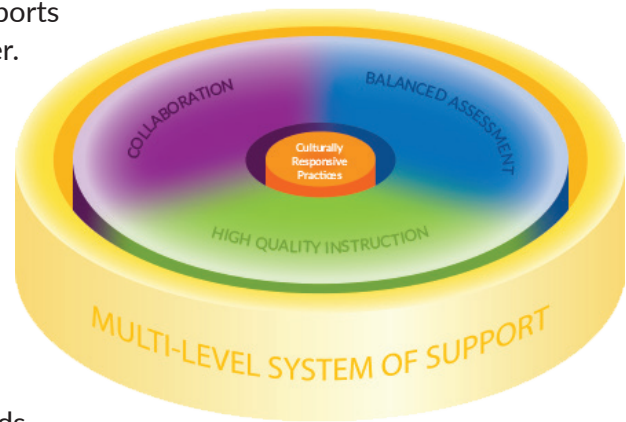
Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document and the Office of Special Educational Program's *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports* (PBIS) *Implementation Blueprint* provided the foundation for statewide trainings, resources, self-assessments, and technical assistance supports developed and provided to schools by the Wisconsin RtI Center and PBIS Network.

Since 2010, the Wisconsin RtI Center/PBIS Network has significantly expanded its scope and reach of training, technical assistance, and resources. The majority of Wisconsin schools have participated in trainings and are in the process of implementing systems of supports for behavior (PBIS), academics, or both. The Department of Public Instruction has expanded its commitment to **equity** and focused efforts on **culturally responsive practices**. More schools are regularly assessing their RtI and PBIS frameworks and are realizing improved learner outcomes as a result of implementation.

What Happened to "RtI" and "PBIS?"

The term RtI is often associated with a narrow focus: a mandated, technical process for specific learning disability eligibility determinations, used by general educators, for academic learning, and only for learners who are struggling.

PBIS continues to mean a proactive approach to establishing the positive behavioral systems of support and social culture needed for all learners to reach **college and career readiness**.

Wisconsin's Equitable Multi-level Systems of Supports conveys the vision of an integrated system of behavioral, social, emotional, and academic support, includes all educators and all learners, considers the whole child and system, and attends to equitable access, opportunity, and outcomes.

Purpose of This Document

Wisconsin's Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports builds on these years of collective expertise and research about what works. This framework sets forth a more developed vision of an integrated and coherent framework of academic, behavioral, social, and emotional supports to ensure equitable success for every learner.

Wisconsin's Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports is intended for all those providing, leading and supporting education in Wisconsin. This document provides a big picture view of equitable **multi-level systems of supports**. When localized and implemented with fidelity, this framework increases the likelihood Wisconsin schools and districts realize and sustain the best positive outcomes for every learner they serve. While this is not a how-to document, resources are provided in the Entry Points section to help get started with, or deepen implementation of, an equitable multi-level system of supports.

This document builds on the premises established in the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) *PBIS Implementation Blueprint*, the original *Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document*, and the state-developed *Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practice*. In addition, this document draws on what has been learned over the past seven years, from relevant research to Wisconsin district and school success stories.

# Wisconsin's Vision of Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Supports

For Wisconsin schools and districts, implementing an equitable multi-level system of supports means providing equitable services, practices, and resources to every learner based upon responsiveness to effective instruction and intervention. In this system, high quality instruction, strategic use of data, and collaboration interact within a continuum of supports to facilitate learner success. Schools provide varying types of supports at differing levels of intensity to proactively and responsively adjust to the needs of the whole child. These include the knowledge, skills, and habits learners need for success beyond high school, including developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional skills.

Collaborative teams use a range of data to match learner needs with evidence-based supports, monitor learner progress, and adjust the intensity and nature of support accordingly. Implementing equitable multi-level systems of supports can help PK-12 schools and districts across the state realize their mission to ready every learner for college and career success.

This vision of an equitable multi-level system of supports is depicted at right:

As depicted in this graphic, equitable multi-level systems of supports include the following key system features:

- **Equity** is at the center of the framework and embedded into all other key system features to challenge and change inequitable access, opportunity, and outcomes experienced by learners currently underserved in Wisconsin schools;

- Academic, behavioral, social, and emotional teaching and supports delivered through **high quality instruction;**

- The **strategic use of data** for continuous improvement**;**

- **Collaboration** among staff, learners, **families, and communities** to make the complex work of system change possible.

- A **continuum of supports** for learners, starting with a strong **universal level of support** as the base;

- **Systemic implementation** throughout the district, schools, teams, and classrooms to promote consistency and effectiveness across the system of supports;

- **Strong shared leadership** and **positive culture** to provide the context necessary for schools and districts to grow and sustain implementation; and

- Use of **evidence-based practices** to ensure that school and district efforts positively impact learner outcomes
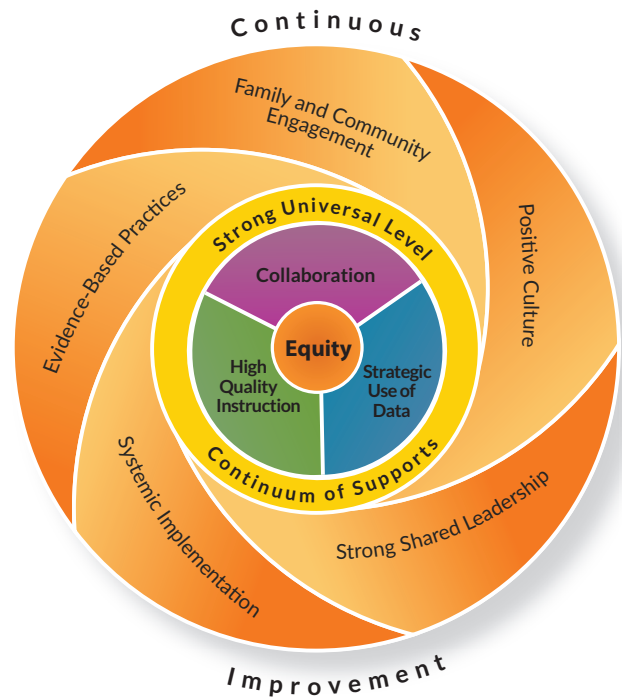
These key system features inform and impact each other. Therefore, the success of the framework depends on a school's or district's capacity to simultaneously develop key system features. Success and durability of an equitable multi-level system of supports depends on coherent implementation across the system: from the state, to the district, to the school, to grade and content teams, to the classroom.

The remainder of the document describes each key system feature in detail. The interdependent nature of these features means concepts and words often overlap within the descriptions and throughout the document. With the exception of equity, the order in which key system features are presented should not be interpreted as order of importance or implementation.

Key System Features

The original DPI guiding document included essential elements. The PBIS Implementation Blueprint references core features and practices. Through research, the Wisconsin RtI Center has identified components necessary for implementation of integrated systems that lead to positive learner outcomes.

Rather than parse out this intersecting vocabulary, this document refers to each critical part of an equitable multi-level system of supports as a key system feature. Each key system feature is indicated by a key icon throughout the document.

⚿ Equity

Equity means every learner has access to the resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education, despite race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background, or family income (CCSSO, 2017). In nearly every measurable area (i.e. academic achievement, discipline practices, gifted and talented placement, and graduation rates) across all ages and grades, Wisconsin's education system has yielded persistent inequitable outcomes for learners along demographic lines. In particular, learners of color, learners with disabilities, English learners, and learners eligible for free or reduced lunch have experienced significantly lower rates of success than their white, nondisabled, native English-speaking, middle income peers across the state.

Achieving equity in Wisconsin schools demands a bold commitment to deliberately address these unacceptable outcomes and is the reason equity is situated at the center of this framework.

An intentional focus on equity accounts for and adapts to the diversity of learners and families served by Wisconsin schools. To become equitable, schools and educators engage in a journey of deep and honest examination of who they are, their beliefs and assumptions about the learners and families they serve, as well as what they value and affirm.

To guide this process, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin RtI Center and the Disproportionality Technical Assistance Network have collaboratively developed a *Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practice* (illustrated to the right). This model describes the beliefs, knowledge, and skills Wisconsin educators and schools cultivate to reach and teach diverse learners and achieve equity within their multi-level systems of supports.

The model is not a checklist or a toolkit. Rather, the model describes ways of being and knowing needed to develop systems that respectfully engage with learners and families who have been historically underserved in Wisconsin schools. Specifically, this continuous process calls on educators and schools to:

To access the full model narrative, visit: www.wisconsinrticenter.org/assets/ files/CRCP/Session%201/1.1%20 Model%20to%20Inform%20CRP.pdf

- · Become self-aware: Staying alert to the ways that identity and culture affect who we are and how we interact with learners and families;
- · Examine the impact of systems, structures, policies, and practices on learners and families: Analyzing who the system serves and underserves;
- · Believe all learners can and will achieve at high levels: Examining and intentionally pushing back on societal biases and stereotypes;
- · Understand all learners have a unique world view: Recognizing each adult and learner represents a complex blend of cultures, identities, and roles, with singular differences;
- · Know and respect the communities: Understanding and valuing the behaviors, beliefs, and historical experiences of families and community members served by the school;
- · Lead, model, and advocate for equity: Challenging prejudice and discrimination as barriers to equity and giving voice to those inequitably impacted by school and district decisions, policies, and practices;
- · Accept the responsibility for learner success: Recognizing that equitable outcomes depend on changing the school's and district's beliefs and practices, rather than fixing learners and families; and
- · Use practices, curriculum, and policies that respect the identities and cultures of learners and families served by schools.

🔑 High Quality Instruction

High quality instruction includes curricula, teaching practices, and learning environments across the system. Delivering high quality instruction starts with identifying the academic and early learning standards, behavioral expectations, and social and emotional competencies valued by the community and that lead to college and career readiness. Educators use rigorous and relevant academic and social and emotional curriculum aligned to these values and standards. To develop learners' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional knowledge, skills, and habits, educators employ high leverage evidence-based teaching practices, delivered through an agreed-upon **instructional framework**. Educators use **Universal Design for Learning** principles and culturally responsive practices to inform the development and delivery of instruction in well-managed classrooms to reach, challenge, and engage every learner.

High quality teaching practices are more likely to positively impact learners when delivered in settings where learners feel safe, supported, and proud to be themselves. Educators ensure learner identities are positively represented in curricular materials and throughout the physical environment. Through words and actions, educators convey messages of high expectations and care for each learner. Educators respect and take time to learn about beliefs, practices, and experiences of learners and families. Educators use this understanding to design and deliver instruction that helps learners achieve success in mainstream society while sustaining their identities, home culture, and language.

Educators are supported through training and coaching to deliver high quality instruction in inclusive, well-managed learning environments. To gauge the effectiveness of practices, teams of educators regularly review learner outcome and system implementation data at each level of support, and then adjust accordingly. This continuous improvement process is described further in the *Strategic Use of Data* section.

🔑 Strategic Use of Data

Equitable multi-level systems of supports are driven by the strategic use of data for continuous improvement. Continuous improvement is an ongoing effort to improve a framework, process, program and innovation and requires an organizational commitment to continual learning, self-reflection, adaptation, and growth. Teams, across the system, use both implementation data and outcome data in a continuous improvement problem-solving process to inform decisions and actions leading to college and career readiness for all.

Implementation data measures staff knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to the framework, and links adult behaviors to learner outcomes. Implementation research shows that schools only realize improved learner outcomes when evidence-based practices are fully implemented across the system. For this reason, teams routinely use implementation data to gauge the extent to which practices are in place and used as intended. System assessments such as the **District Capacity Assessment** (DCA), **Tiered Fidelity Inventory** (TFI), and the **Schoolwide Implementation Review** (SIR), help teams gauge progress toward implementing key system features of an equitable multi-level system of supports. Based on results of these system assessments, teams use strategies informed by implementation science to guide action planning, professional development, and resource allocation.

Outcome data helps teams gauge how well their system of supports works for learners and families, to identify who is benefitting and whose needs are underserved. Depending on the team's focus, outcome data may include multiple:

- Areas of focus (i.e. developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional);

- Types (i.e. development, achievement, attendance, early warning system indicators, formative and interim assessments, anecdotes and interviews, observation, office discipline referrals, climate surveys, performance);

- Levels of analysis (**aggregated** and **disaggregated**); and

- Sources (learners, families, staff, and the community).

Universal screening and progress monitoring are outcome data and processes uniquely important for decision-making within equitable multi-level systems of supports.

Teams regularly use problem-solving processes to inform data-based decisions and actions. Educators systematically review implementation and outcome data with a **growth mindset**, dig deeper to learn more about **root causes**, create action plans, evaluate results, and adjust accordingly to continuously improve. Consistent use of team norms, roles, and protocols help teams make decisions in an equitable way and move from identifying problems to taking informed action for change.

A team's ability to strategically use data depends on the presence of facilitative conditions within the system. Schools and districts need to ensure that team members have the knowledge and skills to select, interpret, and use implementation and outcome data in a problem-solving process. Teams also need to regularly disaggregate data to gauge the impact of current practices and policies on every learner and family. Consequently, an environment of trust and transparency can foster team members' willingness to focus on changing the system and adult practices, rather than fixing learners and families.

Using Data to Support Learners

Universal screening data and processes help schools proactively match supports to needs. Throughout the year, teams use a universal screening process to review academic, behavioral, social, and emotional data for every learner. They review aggregated data to gauge whether the universal level of support is meeting the majority of learners' needs, and disaggregated data to identify areas of inequity. Where gaps exist, teams use a problem-solving process to make universal-level adjustments.

This process also helps identify learners who may benefit from support beyond the universal level. For example, some learners may need interventions to improve specific academic, behavioral, social, or emotional areas. Learners who have exceeded academic benchmarks may need additional challenges to meet their learning needs. Once learner needs have been identified in this process, teams engage in a process to match supports to needs.

Progress monitoring data and processes are used to gauge individual learner responsiveness to interventions or additional challenges. Teams reviewing progress-monitoring data consider whether learners are making adequate progress with supports provided, or whether changes are needed. Learners and their families are important partners in this decision-making process.

Leadership teams review aggregated progress monitoring data to gauge the overall effectiveness of their levels of supports. Teams also review disaggregated progress monitoring data to identify and address areas of inequity within the system of supports.

🔑 Collaboration

Establishing a sustainable system of supports relies on stakeholders working together and holding each other accountable toward a shared goal of success for every learner. This means meaningful collaboration occurs:

- Across the district (i.e. central office, schools, departments, grades, classrooms) for aligned implementation;

- Across settings (i.e. classrooms, lunch room, playground, bus) to develop consistency in expectations, language, and practices;

- At and across levels of support (i.e. universal/tier 1, selected/tier 2, intensive/tier 3) to deliver coherent learner supports;

- Among diverse stakeholders (i.e. learners, families, board members, educators, administrators, staff, **cultural brokers**, community members) to include and legitimize multiple perspectives in decision-making and foster engagement;

- Across programs (i.e. general education, special education, Title I, gifted and talented, EL, and specialists) to maximize use of resources and minimize silos of decision making; and

- Beyond the school system (i.e. Department of Public Instruction, child care and preschool providers, CESAs, community service providers, post-secondary institutions, professional organizations, and businesses) to expand the reach of systems of support for learners and families.

Collaboration in an equitable multi-level system of supports occurs through intentionally designed linked implementation teams and shared goals within and across teams. Each team oversees implementation and gauges effectiveness of particular aspects of the system. For example, building leadership teams are concerned with system-level excellence and equity, whereas learner problem-solving teams focus on planning and monitoring support for individual learners. A process for fluid structure and regular flow of information among and across teams helps the separate parts of the system work in unison.

The complex work of improving outcomes for all and eliminating inequities depends on authentic dialogue, learning, and planning among learners, staff, families, and the community. Each partner plays an important role in collaborating for learner success, as described below.

Learners

Since learners are the primary stakeholders in their own educational experience, engaging them as collaborative partners in decision-making benefits both the learner and the system. First, actively seeking learner voice (e.g. setting classroom expectations, goal-setting, monitoring progress) and providing choice (e.g. instructional materials, types of supports provided) acknowledges and honors each learner's experience and worldview. Learners meaningfully engaged in this type of decision-making are more motivated to own their development as learners.

At the system level, learners provide a unique perspective on the actual versus intended impact of school practices. Learners serving on decision-making teams can provide insight into root causes of concerns and help teams take action that makes a meaningful difference in their lives.

Staff

As the primary implementers of an equitable multi-level system of supports, staff benefit from the encouragement, expertise, and accountability provided through peer collaboration. In this context, educators exchange information and share diverse perspectives and expertise, coming together to examine root causes, problem-solve, and identify ways to more effectively meet the needs of every learner. Educators hold each other accountable through shared goals and progress data.

Teams need training and coaching to work effectively. They also need assistance and leadership to develop culturally competent ways of collaborating. Team members need time to examine the role of equity in teaching and learning, starting with understanding their own identities. Through this work, staff come to believe in the capability of every learner to achieve college and career readiness. When facing inequitable outcome data, teams with an equity focus actively consider whether mismatches in system structures, policies, and practices unintentionally inhibit learner success. The teams then work together with families (see Family and Community Engagement) to improve the system.

What is Coaching?

Coaching is regular, embedded professional development designed to help school staff implement a framework, process, program, or innovation as intended. Effective coaching ensures all staff work toward the district's and school's vision for an equitable multi-level system of supports.

🔑 Family and Community Engagement

Families are key collaborators in equitable multi-level systems of supports. Schools and districts use the "three Es" to form the foundation of relationships with families throughout their child's educational experience:

- Embrace: Through words and actions, staff convey a welcoming environment, respectful of families' home cultures, values, and languages. Schools recognize families as the first teachers of and foremost experts on their child.

- Engage: Families participate meaningfully in school and district level decision making. Family perspectives are intentionally sought through two-way communication, paying particular attention to family input from populations underserved by the school and district. Families partner authentically with schools and districts in finding solutions and making decisions that impact their child's learning.

- Empower: As children proceed through the system, schools and districts involve families as active partners in their child's learning. Schools and districts empower families: through respectful relationships, with information and resources, and by connecting families with community assets that fully support their child's educational journey.

Community partnerships extend the reach of a school's and district's system of supports. Partnering with community agencies as assets creates more comprehensive, fluid, and accessible supports for learners and families, beyond the limits of the school day and school year. Community leaders and organizations also serve to build cultural and linguistic bridges between families and the system.

🔑 Continuum of Supports

Schools provide a continuum or multi-level system of proactive and responsive supports built to match the range of learners' developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs. Supports are equitable and appropriate for the learners being served, validating their knowledge and experiences and acknowledging their diverse identities. Staff, learners, families, and the community are engaged in the selection and implementation of these supports.

Though not required, many schools develop a three-level system of supports to ensure the success of every learner:

- The universal level of support, or tier 1, includes the high quality instruction, collaboration, and strategic use of data provided for all learners. In sustainable systems, at least 80% of learners have developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs met through the universal level of support.

- The selected level, or tier 2, includes supports intended for learners whose developmental, academic, behavioral, social, or emotional needs extend just beyond the reach of the universal, or tier 1, level. This level is intended for short-term intervention targeting the specific skill needs of learners so the universal level of support can meet their educational needs. In sustainable systems, 5-15% of learners access this level of support in addition to the universal level.

- The intensive level, or tier 3, is intended for learners whose needs extend well beyond the reach of the universal, or tier 1, level. In effective systems, only 1-5% of learners need access to this level of support. For developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional achievement that is well below benchmark, learners access intensive supports in addition to the universal level. For learners who well-exceed these benchmarks, collaborative teams may determine that additional challenge (e.g. compacting or acceleration) may most appropriately take the place of universal level instruction.

Instruction, collaboration, and the strategic use of data are connected, coherent, and aligned across levels of support to create a system ensuring a high rate of learner success.

To identify the nature and intensity of support best matched to learner needs, teams review multiple forms of data. Teams modify instructional practices, time, frequency, group size, and/or expertise of the provider to best respond to learner needs. As the intensity of supports increases, so does the frequency of monitoring progress and collaborative review of data. Identifying, using, and reviewing supports are adjusted fluidly, based on review of learner progress and instructional fidelity data.

🔑 A Strong Universal Level of Support

Within their continuum of support schools consider the universal, or tier 1 level to be most important to the success of the system. Here, all learners experience good first teaching based on high academic standards, and behavioral, social and emotional expectations in an environment conducive to learning. Educators use agreed-upon evidence-based and culturally responsive classroom management, curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices with fidelity. These practices are supported and refined through coaching and by reviewing data in collaboration with learners, families, and peers.

A strong universal level of support proactively promotes developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional wellness for every learner and prevents challenges from developing.

🔑 Systemic Implementation

Schools and districts can better meet the needs of every learner when policies, programs, practices, roles, and expertise are aligned and coordinated into an interdependent whole. The systems approach of an equitable multi-level system of supports enables schools and districts to proactively provide the most effective instruction and supports to learners. In this way, systemic implementation helps ensure all learners benefit equitably from access, opportunity, and support across the school and district.

Leaders and leadership teams oversee and sustain systemic implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports in districts and schools. In this role, school and district leaders:

- Focus on a clear, shared vision of success for every learner;
- Connect implementation with state and regional goals, mandates, and resources;
- Evaluate potential new initiatives in terms of alignment with, duplication of, and value added to existing initiatives;
- Establish linked implementation teams to leverage implementation science principles and systems change best practice;
- Develop **implementation drivers** to establish the infrastructure needed to improve and sustain new and existing instructional and behavioral supports;
- Convey the importance and relationship of each staff member's role and responsibilities toward the success of the system; and
- Equip staff to skillfully fulfill their roles and responsibilities through strategic professional development, collaborative structures, and job-embedded coaching.

School and district leaders understand that building and coordinating pieces of a system takes time, continual monitoring, and a commitment to adjusting course and evolving to meet the needs of learners.

Implementation Science

The study of factors influencing the full and effective use of innovations in practice.

🔑 Strong Shared Leadership

Leaders play a key role in the successful implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports. Getting from implementation to positive learner outcomes takes time. With a deep understanding of the framework and **leadership drivers**, leaders promote a vision of success for all, establish a collaborative culture for the improvement of learning, and foster a shared commitment toward that vision across the school, district and community. Leaders model **cultural competence**, leading courageous conversations and advocating for equity.

Leadership teams work together with school and district leaders to make sure the system is implemented with fidelity and is sustainable. Comprised of administrators, educators, pupil service providers, families, learners, school board members, and members of the community, leadership team members represent the student population and include multiple perspectives with deliberate inclusion of people from groups that have historically been **marginalized** by schools and districts.

Leadership teams meet regularly to determine needs, establish goals, institute evidence-based practices, and create action plans with input from diverse stakeholders. Teams foster open communication channels, so all agreed-upon practices are understood, and practitioners can ask questions and provide feedback. Teams also coordinate staff support through resources, professional development, and coaching.

With a commitment to equity, the leadership team uses implementation and outcome data to action plan and monitor progress for continuous improvement that is inclusive of all learners. Internal and external coaches provide valuable insight and feedback to leaders and teams working to establish and sustain equitable multi-level systems of supports.

🔑 Positive Culture

The school's and district's prevailing beliefs, values, and practices are instrumental to the successful implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports. Leaders know meaningful change depends on the degree to which staff share a collective sense of purpose: an unwavering commitment to the success of every learner. Cultivating positive school culture is essential for the other key system features to thrive.

In schools with a positive culture, the environment is predictable and safe: physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and culturally. Positive relationships and shared expectations among learners and adults foster a strong sense of community, identity, and belonging with the school. Individuals within the school, learners and adults, are seen through a strengths-based lens and treated as assets. Teams use an equity lens to ensure school structures benefit all learners, school policies promote every learner's success, and school practices are centered on the needs of every learner.

🔑 Evidence-Based Practices

Schools and districts use evidence-based practices across the system to successfully improve learner outcomes. Evidence-based practices are those known and shown to be effective, and align with the school's or district's population and values. By implementing evidence-based practices with fidelity, or as designed and intended, schools and districts are more likely to achieve the positive outcomes found in research. In this context, evidence-based practices are not limited to instruction; evidence-based also refers to the practices used in the strategic use of data, collaborative teams, and all other key system features.

Schools and districts use local data and engage families and the community to select evidence-based programs, practices, and procedures that ensure equitable access, opportunities and outcomes for every learner. Schools and districts also support the use of evidence-based practices by allocating resources, developing policies, and providing ample training and coaching to staff. Lastly, schools and districts use accountability measures, structures, and tools to: ensure evidence-based practices are routinely used with fidelity, adjust support as needed, and evaluate the extent to which they are improving outcomes for learners.

Conclusion

In Wisconsin, educators are dedicated to ensuring every learner graduates, college and career ready. While all learners are capable of fulfilling this expectation, some need additional support to get there, while others have already surpassed grade-level benchmarks and need additional challenge. An equitable multi-level system of supports provides a framework for schools and districts to create a flexible system that coordinates instruction, data, and collaboration to meet learner needs. Situated at the center of this framework, equity is critical across all facets of this work. By implementing and sustaining this framework, Wisconsin schools and districts can eliminate demographics as performance predictors and ensure college and career readiness for each of the learners they serve.

Entry Points

The key system features of an integrated equitable multi-level system of supports serve as entry points for schools and districts to begin, continue, and sustain implementation efforts. Below are definitions, defining elements, and resources for each feature.

Definition	Defining Elements	Resources
Equity Every learner has access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education despite race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background, or family income. (CCSSO, 2017)	· Become self-aware · Examine the impact of systems, structures, policies, and practices on learners and families · Believe that all learners can and will achieve at high levels · Understand that all learners have a unique world view · Know and respect the communities · Lead, model, and advocate for equity · Accept the responsibility for learner success · Use practices, curriculum, and policies that respect the identities and cultures of learners and families served by schools	Promoting Excellence for All: Strategies that Close Achievement Gaps Promoting Excellence for All ecourse Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practice: Wisconsin RtI Center Building Equitable Systems: Wisconsin RtI Center Disproportionality Technical Assistance Network (DTAN) Characteristics of Successful Schools
High Quality Instruction Curricula, teaching practices, and learning environments are standards-based, evidence-based, engaging, differentiated, culturally responsive, and data-driven.	· Instruction is based on academic standards, behavioral expectations, and social and emotional competencies valued by the community and that lead to college and career readiness · Academic, behavioral, social, and emotional curriculum are rigorous, relevant and aligned to values and standards · Teaching practices use high leverage evidence based and agreed upon instructional frameworks that develop learners' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional knowledge, skills, and habits · Teaching strategies are differentiated, universally designed, and culturally responsive · Instruction is delivered in well-managed settings where learners feel safe, supported and proud to be themselves · Learner identities are positively represented in curricular materials and throughout the physical environment · Messages of high expectations and care for each learner are conveyed · Instruction is designed and delivered with understanding of and respect for the beliefs, practices, and experiences of learners and families · Learners' success in mainstream society is achieved while sustaining learner identities, culture, and language · Delivery of instruction is supported through professional learning and coaching · Effectiveness of instruction is regularly reviewed through learner outcome and system implementation data at each level of support and adjusted as needed	Wisconsin DPI: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards Wisconsin DPI: Literacy and Mathematics Standards and Instruction Wisconsin DPI: Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Wisconsin DPI: Literacy Classroom Instructional Practices Bank Wisconsin DPI: Toolkit for Gifted Education Wisconsin RtI Center: Reviewing Universal Mathematics Instruction Wisconsin RtI Center: Reviewing Universal Reading Instruction

Entry Points

Definition	Defining Elements	Resources
Strategic Use of Data Ongoing, reflective, and collaborative analysis of implementation and outcomes data in a problem-solving process to inform improvement and achieve equity.	Teams at all levels of support: Use implementation data (staff knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices) to: · Gauge the extent to which practices are in place and used as intended · Gauge the extent to which features of an equitable multi-level system of supports are in place and implemented with fidelity · Guide action planning, professional development, and resource allocation Use multiple forms of aggregated and disaggregated student outcome data to: · Gauge the effectiveness of system of supports for learners and families · Identify who is benefitting from and whose needs are underserved by the system Skillfully use problem-solving processes to inform data-based decisions and actions Establish an environment of trust and transparency for data use Use consistent, culturally competent processes focused on changing the system and adult practices, rather than fixing students and families	National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) Active Implementation Hub: Module 5 - Improvement Cycles and District Capacity Assessment PBIS Apps: Tiered Fidelity Inventory Wisconsin DPI: Characteristics of successful schools. See *Evidence of Success; High Academic Standards* Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership. See *1.2.2 Student Achievement Focus; 1.2.4 Schoolwide Use of Data; 2.1.3 Use of Feedback for Improvement* Wisconsin RtI Center: Risk Ratio E-learning Module and Calculating Risk Ratio Wisconsin RtI Center: Schoolwide Implementation Review and RtI All-Staff Perception Survey Wisconsin DPI: Strategic Assessment Systems (SAS) Wisconsin DPI: WISExplore Data Navigation and Inquiry
Collaboration A systematic process of learners, families, educators, and the community working together to ensure the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional success of every learner.	· Occurs through intentionally designed linked implementation team structures and shared goals: within and across teams; across the district; across settings; at and across levels of support; among diverse stakeholders; across programs; and beyond the school system · Depends on fluid team structure and regular flow of information among and across teams · Emphasizes family and community engagement Staff collaboration includes: · Structures to exchange information, share expertise, and problem-solve · Peer accountability · Culturally competent team members committed to equity Learner collaboration includes: · Actively seeking learner voice at individual and system levels · Providing choice	Wisconsin DPI: Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework Wisconsin RtI Center: Establish Collaborative Structures learning module National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) Active Implementation Hub: Framework 4: Implementation Teams The IDEA Partnership: Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement Wisconsin FACETS: Guidebook for Serving on Groups

Entry Points

Definition	Defining Element	Resources
Family and Community Engagement Families and communities are active partners and key collaborators in achieving the goal of success for every learner.	• Create a welcoming environment, • Be respectful of families' home cultures, values, and languages. • Recognize families as first teachers of and foremost experts on their child. • Include families as meaningful participants in school-level decision making • Seek out family perspectives through two-way communication, especially from underserved populations • Partner authentically in finding solutions and making decisions that impact their child's learning. • Empower families through respectful relationships, information and resources, and by connecting families with community assets • Partner with community agencies to create more comprehensive and accessible supports for learners and families, beyond the limits of the school day and school year. • Build cultural and linguistic bridges between families and the system	Wisconsin DPI: Characteristics of successful schools. See *Family, School, and Community Partnership* Promoting Excellence For All: Strategies That Close Achievement Gaps. See *Family and Community Engagement strategies* Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership. See *2.1.4 Initiative and Persistence; 2.2.2 Communication* Wisconsin RtI Center: Why Family Engagement is Important The IDEA Partnership: Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement Wisconsin FACETS: Guidebook for Serving on Groups
Continuum of Supports High quality instruction, collaboration, and strategic use of data of varying intensity to equitably address the needs of every learner.	A range of supports (*instruction, collaboration, and strategic use of data*) that are: • Proactive • Provided in a timely way • Responsive to learners' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs • Culturally responsive • Coherently aligned across levels of supports • Selected and implemented through staff, learner, family, and community engagement • Modified and adjusted fluidly based on data	Wisconsin PBIS Network: PBIS Training Sequence Wisconsin RtI Center: Continuum of Supports Implementation Tools Wisconsin RtI Center: Framework Training Wisconsin RtI Center: Reviewing Your Selected and Intensive Levels of Support Wisconsin RtI Center: RtI Applications in Early Childhood Settings: Guidance for Implementation Wisconsin DPI: Response to Intervention and Gifted Education Wisconsin DPI: Wisconsin Pyramid Model Initiative: An Overview

Entry Points

Definition	Defining Elements	Resources
Strong Universal Level of Support Instruction, assessment, and collaborative systems and practices are accessible, effective, and reflective of every learner.	• Every learner experiences good first teaching based on high academic and behavioral expectations in an environment conducive to learning • Educators use agreed-upon evidence-based and culturally responsive classroom management, curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices with fidelity • Practices are supported and refined through coaching and by reviewing data in collaboration with learners, families, and peers • Academic, behavioral, social, and emotional wellness are proactively promoted for all • Meets the needs of at least 80% of learners (both overall and for disaggregated populations)	Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: SWPBIS implementation blueprint. See *Preventative perspective; Continuum of evidence-based interventions* Wisconsin DPI: Universal Design for Learning Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework Wisconsin DPI Academic and Career Planning: Career Cruising for Wisconsin Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership. See *1.2.2 Student Achievement Focus* Wisconsin DPI: Social and Emotional Learning Competencies
Systemic Implementation Programs, practices, roles, and expertise aligned and coordinated into an interdependent whole to ensure every learner benefits equitably from access, opportunity, and support across the school and district.	• Exploration – establish a clear, shared vision of success for every learner, assess need, build readiness, plan and connect implementation with state and regional goals, requirements, and resources, develop communication and data collection processes • Installation – adjust structures and functions, identify and allocate resources, develop coaching and professional development plans, convey importance and relationship of each staff member's role and responsibilities toward success of the system, communicate efforts through linked implementation teams • Initial Implementation – provide professional development and coaching during implementation, use a continuous improvement process to resolve system issues, provide a decision support data system to empower individuals and teams to understand, and deepen ownership for implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports • Full Implementation – commit to long-range implementation with continuous monitoring and improvement, maintain and improve skills, evaluate for expected outcomes	National Implementation Research Network (NIRN): Systems intervention NIRN Active Implementation Hub: Module 2: Implementation Drivers Module 3: Implementation Teams Module 4: Implementation Stages Decision Support Data System Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: SWPBIS implementation blueprint. See *What is a Systems approach?; Implementation Foundations; Policy and Practice Inform Each Other; Systemic; Capacity Building Goal* Wisconsin PBIS Network: Readiness Documents Wisconsin DPI: Advancing student learning through distributed instructional leadership: A toolkit for high school leadership teams. See *Define a Shared Vision; Align Leadership Structures and Roles*

Entry Points

Definition	Defining Elements	Resources
Strong Shared Leadership Representative teams with responsibility to lead and oversee implementation of an equitable multi-level system of supports at the school and district levels.	• All members model cultural competency and advocate for equity • All members promote a vision of success for every learner and foster a shared commitment to the vision across the school and district • Team members represent multiple perspectives, with particular attention to providing voice to underserved learner populations • Ensure the system is implemented with fidelity and is sustainable • Coordinate staff support through resources, professional development, and coaching • Use implementation and outcome data to action plan and monitor progress for continuous improvement inclusive of all learners. • Rely on internal and external coaches to provide valuable insight and feedback to leaders and teams • Ensure effective, efficient, reciprocal communication throughout the system	Promoting Excellence for All: School and Instructional Leadership NIRN Active Implementation Hub Topic 3: Leadership Drivers Leadership and Coaching for RtI Implementation: Wisconsin RtI Center The Wisconsin RtI Framework: A School-Wide Approach to Implementation Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership. See *1.1.5 Distributed Leadership; 2.1.4 Initiative and Persistence* Technical Assisstance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: SWPBIS implementation blueprint. See *Implementation phases; Leadership Team*
Positive Culture A collective sense of purpose and commitment to ensure the well-being, sense of belonging, safety, and success of every learner.	• All stakeholders demonstrate an unwavering belief in every learner to achieve success and a shared commitment to the vision of success for all • The school and district provides environments where learners, staff, and families feel physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and culturally validated, safe and supported • School and district policies, decisions, and practices are reviewed, revised, developed, and delivered through a lens of equity and a strengths-based perspective • Staff, learners, and families have positive relationships creating a strong sense of identity and belonging with the school and district	Promoting Excellence for All: Learner-Teacher Relationships Wisconsin PBIS Network: PBIS Training Sequence Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework Wisconsin DPI: Characteristics of successful schools. See *Standards of the Heart* Wisconsin Framework for Principal Leadership. See *2.2.1 School Climate; 2.2.2 Communication; 2.2.3 Conflict Management and Resolution*
Evidence-Based Practices Use of programs, practices, and procedures with the best available evidence balanced with the fit to the school's and district's population and values.	Evidence based practices are: • applied across all key system features • implemented as designed and intended • selected collaboratively through use of local data • culturally responsive • supported through policy, resource allocation, training and coaching, and accountability measures and structures	National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) Active Implementation Hub: Module 6 - Usable Innovations Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: SWPBIS implementation blueprint. See *Evidence-based Practice*

Glossary

Below are terms used in this document with definitions of each to support a deeper understanding of the content.

Aggregate

The performance/achievement of the total population of learners participating in an assessment.

Bias

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another.

College and Career Readiness

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction mission to ensure every child graduates from high school academically prepared and socially, and emotionally competent for further education and the workplace. This includes proficiency in 1) academic content (knowledge), 2) application of knowledge through skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity (skills) and 3) behaviors such as perseverance, responsibility, adaptability and leadership (habits).

Cultural Brokers

Individuals who bridge, link, and mediate between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change.

Cultural Competence

Awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of learners and their families.

Culturally Responsive Practices

An approach to teaching that recognizes the value of learners' cultural beliefs and practices and draws upon them to inform instruction, enhance learner self-advocacy, and bridge learners' home and school experiences.

Disaggregate

Data calculated and reported separately for specific sub-groups or -populations (e.g., learners' economic conditions, race, gender, culture, native language, developmental differences, and identified disabilities).

Discrimination

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.

Disproportionality

The over- or under-representation of a given population group, often defined by racial and ethnic backgrounds, but also defined by socioeconomic status, national origin, English proficiency, gender, and sexual orientation, in a specific population category. For example, a child's race and ethnicity significantly influence the child's probability of being misidentified, misclassified, and inappropriately placed in special education programs.

District Capacity Assessment

An action assessment designed to help educational district leaders and staff better align resources with intended outcomes and develop action plans to support the use of effective innovations available throught the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN).

Glossary

Equitable Multi-Level System of Supports
Systematically providing differing levels of intensity of supports (interventions/additional challenges, collaborative structures, monitoring of learner progress) based upon learner responsiveness to instruction and intervention.

Equity
Educational equity means every learner has access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education despite race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background, or family income (CCSSO, 2017).

Growth Mindset
The belief that intelligence is fluid and develops over time. In contrast, a fixed mindset is the belief that intelligence is an inborn trait that does not change.

Identity
All aspects that make a person who they are including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, ability status, language, religion, and marital status. Aspects of culture combine to provide a sense of identity, a history of how a person or group experience interactions with society.

Implementation Drivers
Key components of capacity and infrastructure influencing a program's success. The core components needed to initiate and support classroom, building, and district level change.

Instructional Framework
A common language and vision for quality teaching shared by everyone in a school district. An instructional framework provides a district-wide picture with levels of specificity to what is taught in all grades and in all subject areas, including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments. The framework provides curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools.

Leadership Drivers
One component of implementation drivers in which leaders understand the difference between technical and adaptive challenges and implement effective strategies associated with each.

Marginalization
The social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of a school or district, to put or keep some learners and families in a powerless or unimportant position within a classroom, school, or district.

Prejudice
An opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge is attained.

Root Cause
The deepest underlying cause, or causes, of the outcomes being achieved within any process.

Glossary

Schoolwide Implementation Review (SIR)

An academic self-assessment focusing on either mathematics or reading used by schools to evaluate system implementation and fidelity at the universal, selected, and intensive levels available through the Wisconsin RtI Center/PBIS Network.

Stereotype

A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person.

Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)

A Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports assessment to measure fidelity within each tier of PBIS and all tiers collectively available through PBISApps.org.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

A research-based set of principles (engagement, access, assessment) to guide the design of learning environments accessible and effective for every learner.

Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs. (n.d.). Retrieved May 10, 2017, from http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2017/CCSSOAspenLeadingforEquity02022017.pdf