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Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports

"The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) is a data-informed decision making framework for establishing the **academic, behavioral and social-emotional supports** needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students" (Virginia Department of Education, 2019).

Currently there are 53 school divisions in Virginia utilizing the VTSS framework. Through effective alignment, teaming, data-based decision-making, and evidence-based practices matched to student instructional needs, VTSS is quickly becoming the way Virginia school divisions assure that every student receives supports necessary to be successful.

READY

Many resources are available to help school divisions **get ready** for VTSS.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education Directors, the Swift Center, the National PBIS Technical Assistance Center, and the RTI Action Network all provide comprehensive overviews that can help school personnel grow their knowledge of multi-tiered interventions and supports.

SET

The [VTSS implementation matrix](#) is a Virginia specific guidance document that **sets** a course for divisions and schools to follow from early exploration all the way to full implementation. The VTSS matrix contains six core features:

Aligned Organizational Culture and Structure: The essential elements of an integrated, multi-tiered system of interventions and supports exist at the division, school, and classroom level and are compatible.

Data Informed Decision-Making: Problem-solving teams analyze and evaluate information to inform decision-making.

Evidence-Based Practices: Academic, behavioral and social-emotional teaching and learning approaches proven to be effective through scientific research-based studies are matched to students' instructional needs.

Monitoring Student Progress: Student performance is examined frequently over time to evaluate response to instruction and intervention.

Family, School, and Community Partnership: Intentional partnerships with families, schools, and communities are established and sustained.

Evaluation: Fidelity of implementation and impact on student outcomes are examined frequently and the results inform action steps.

Getting set with VTSS begins with alignment. Rather than independent implementation of initiatives, the VTSS framework helps divisions integrate initiatives and resources. Beyond academics and behavior, some school divisions seek to expand initiative integration to include [mental wellness](#), or [early childhood](#). Adopting the VTSS framework enables divisions and schools to **set** up systems that mutually support all initiatives, maximize effectiveness and efficiency, and ensure all students can succeed.

GO

There are many resources available to increase understanding of VTSS and multi-tiered systems of supports.

Websites

- [Comprehensive Integrated Three-Tiered Model of Prevention \(ci3t\)](#)
- [Integrated Mental Health](#)
- [National Association of State Directors of Special Education](#)
- [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)
- [National Center on Response to Intervention](#)
- [Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports](#)
- [RTI Action Network](#)
- [SWIFT schools](#)
- [Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports Research and Implementation Center](#)

Visit the [Virginia Tiered Systems of Support Research and Implementation Center](#) or contact your Regional TTAC VTSS Coordinator for requests for further VTSS information.

References

McIntosh, K; Goodman, S. (2016) *Integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: Blending RTI and PBIS*. New York: Guilford Press.

Baker, B; Ryan, C. (2014) *The PBIS Team Handbook: Setting Expectations and Building Positive Behavior*. Golden Valley, MN: Free Spirit.

This news brief is a collaborative effort of the Virginia Department of Education Training and Technical Assistance Centers at George Mason University and James Madison University. For questions about the content in this article, contact Region 4 TTAC at George Mason University VTSS coordinators Karen Berlin (kberlin@gmu.edu) or Kay Klein (mklei1@gmu.edu).

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