

# Culturally Responsive Tenets within Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)<sup>1</sup>

## Overview

This proposed action plan is used as a guide for monitoring school-wide fidelity of MTSS related to cultural competence. While this plan outlines a focus on organizational structures, policies, and practices, several additional components will be outlined at a later date. Those components will include a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally responsive school leadership, and finally a motivational framework for culturally responsive education.

The proposed action plan is categorized according to five domains, each embedded with culturally responsive tenets and aligned to MTSS.

**Domain #1 - Assessments: Screening and Progress Monitoring**

**Domain #2 - Data-Based Decision Making**

**Domain #3 - Multi-leveled Interventions: Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III**

**Domain #4 - Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms**

**Domain #5 - Fidelity and Evaluation**

## Definitions

**Cultural Competence:** the current working definition of cultural competence requires students to gain self awareness of their personal worldview, as well as the worldview of others. It is the ability to understand human diversity and interact effectively with others in a variety of settings, applying skills that build positive interactions with all people. Components of cultural competence include:

- Self-Awareness (e.g., assumptions, beliefs, values, biases, & customs)
- Worldview (cultural perception / lens)
- Empathy (understand & respect viewpoints)
- Action Research (e.g., address bias, injustice, & inequity)
- Ongoing Reflection

**Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:** using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance preferences of ethnically and culturally diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Multitiered Systems of Support for English Learners. (2019). *Culturally and linguistically responsive response to intervention within multi-tiered system of supports: Fidelity of implementation rubric*. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.

**Ethnocentric views:** Individuals view one’s own culture as central to reality in some particular way.

**Ethnorelative views:** Individuals view one’s culture in the context of other cultures

**Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS):** a framework for understanding intercultural sensitivity and development along a continuum from ethnocentric stages (Denial, Defense, Minimization) to ethnorelative stages (Acceptance, Adaptation, Integration).

**Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI):** an assessment instrument that measures the levels of intercultural competence across the developmental continuum from cultural denial to cultural adaptation. It is a 50-item questionnaire, available online that can be completed in 15–20 minutes.

**Cultural Denial:** a developmental orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but may not notice deeper cultural differences (e.g., conflict resolution styles) and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences.

**Cultural Defense:** a developmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them”. This can take the form of an uncritical view toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices.

**Cultural Minimization:** a developmental orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.

**Cultural Acceptance:** a developmental orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one’s own and other cultures.

**Cultural Adaptation:** a developmental orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.

**Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)**

Ethnocentric Stages			Ethnorelative Stages		
<b>1. Denial</b>	<b>2. Defense</b>	<b>3. Minimization</b>	<b>4. Acceptance</b>	<b>5. Adaptation</b>	<b>6. Integration</b>
“I don’t think there’s any other way.”	“My way is the best.”	“What we have in common is much more important.”	“People’s values and behaviors are different.”	“I’m adding new behaviors to be more effective.”	“I can move in between cultures.”

**Domain #1 - Assessments: Screening and Progress Monitoring**

The primary purpose of assessment is to increase employees’ cultural competence. This assessment affects all constituencies within the school community, especially students taught by instructional employees.

<b>Screening:</b> accurately identify the development of cultural competence in employees	
D1.Goal 1: we will <b>adopt a screening tool</b> to measure the cultural competence of employees	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adopt the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) reliable screening tool to provide evidence of employees’ cultural competence</li> <li>● Establish and articulate clear link between the IDI and desired outcomes of cultural competence</li> <li>● Articulate how the IDI will provide reliable and accurate evidence of employee’s cultural competence</li> <li>● Adopt versions of the IDI that assesses cultural competence in an employees’ native language (to the extent feasible)</li> </ul>
D1.Goal 2: we will <b>universally administer screening</b> of employees’ cultural competence	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Administer IDI to measure all employees’ cultural competence (i.e., is universal)</li> <li>● Put procedures in place to ensure implementation accuracy of IDI (i.e., all employees’ cultural competence assessed)</li> <li>● Screen all employees’ cultural competence using the IDI more than once per year (e.g., fall, winter, spring)</li> <li>● Administer IDI to measure all employees’ cultural competence in their native language (if feasible)</li> </ul>
D1.Goal 3: we will collect <b>additional data</b> that would provide a fuller picture of employees’ cultural competence	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collect additional data about employees’ cultural competence from other sources (e.g., classroom observations, short-term progress monitoring, etc.)</li> <li>● Analyze alignment or misalignment between IDI screening data and additional data</li> </ul>
<b>Progress Monitoring:</b> ongoing and frequent monitoring of intercultural development and use it to inform responsive professional learning programs	

<p>D1.Goal 4: we <b>adopt progress-monitoring tools</b> to measure employees' intercultural development</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide sufficient differentiation of professional learning offerings appropriate to orientations on the intercultural development continuum, allowing for progress monitoring based on intervention level</li> <li>● Specify minimum acceptable growth along the cultural competence continuum, not mastery</li> <li>● Provide individualized learning plans with end-of-year goals related to intercultural development</li> <li>● Engage in one-on-one debriefs with employees, sharing information for the performance-level scores from the intercultural development report</li> <li>● Provide each of the above steps in the native language of employees (to the extent feasible)</li> </ul>
<p>D1.Goal 5: we <b>outline a progress-monitoring process</b> to support employees' intercultural development</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Progress monitoring occurs at least monthly for employees needing secondary-level intervention (i.e. cultural minimization) and at least weekly for employees needing intensive intervention (cultural denial and cultural defense)</li> <li>● Put procedures in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., all employees' cultural competence assessed)</li> </ul>

## Domain #2 - Data-Based Decision Making

The primary purpose of data-based decision-making processes is to inform professional learning, identify areas of growth, and employ multilevel systems of interventions related to cultural competence.

<p>D2.Goal 1: we establish <b>decision-making processes</b> to determine professional learning offerings and interventions related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decision making is driven by data and based on validated methods assessing cultural competence</li> <li>● Decision making involves a broad base of stakeholders, including those with expertise in culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy</li> <li>● Decision making is operationalized with clear, established benchmarks (e.g., criteria for determining developmentally appropriate professional learning offerings or interventions based on cultural competence assessment)</li> <li>● Collect and regularly analyze data about cultural competence according different groups (by language, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, disability, or other relevant groups)</li> </ul>
<p>D2.Goal 2: we put a <b>data system</b> in place to organize information and processes related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure system allows employees to document and access individual data (including screening and progress-monitoring data) and professional learning decisions related to their cultural competence</li> <li>● Enter cultural competence data into system in a timely manner</li> <li>● Graphically represent culturally competence data</li> <li>● Establish a process for setting/evaluating group and individual goals related to cultural competence.</li> </ul>
<p>D2.Goal 3: we make decisions <b>responsive to secondary and intensive levels of intervention</b> employees need</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make decisions about responsiveness to intervention based on reliable and valid progress-monitoring data that reflects intercultural development.</li> <li>● Align decision-making regarding responsiveness to intervention based on predetermined criteria</li> </ul>

### Domain #3 - Multi-leveled Interventions: Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III

The primary purpose of multi-leveled interventions is to provide a schoolwide, multilevel system of professional learning and interventions for supporting employees' intercultural development. This might also be known as a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for developing employees' cultural competence.

Tier I: primary-level professional learning and intervention	
D3.Goal 1: we provide <b>evidence-based professional learning</b> related to cultural competence	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure professional learning is evidence-based for the developmental orientations on the cultural competence continuum</li> <li>• Design and/or adapt professional learning and facilitation according to employees' cultural and linguistic needs</li> </ul>
D3.Goal 2: we <b>articulate facilitation and professional learning</b> related to cultural competence	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate professional learning objectives regarding cultural competence one developmental orientation to the next</li> <li>• Ensure professional learning objectives pertaining to a particular developmental orientation meet highly similar desired outcomes, regardless of the facilitator</li> </ul>
D3.Goal 3: we <b>differentiate professional learning</b> related to cultural competence	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiate professional learning related to cultural competence (changing process, content, or product) for employees across different development orientations</li> <li>• Explain and implement SAS's process for using data related to cultural competence to identify and address the needs of employees</li> </ul>
D3.Goal 4: we ensure our professional learning related to cultural competence is <b>competency-based</b>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align professional learning to cultural competence benchmarks</li> <li>• Adopt enduring understandings and essential questions related to cultural competence</li> <li>• Draft professional learning overviews and plans related to cultural competence</li> </ul>

<p>D3.Goal 5: we provide <b>enrichment opportunities</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide enrichment opportunities for employees who measure in the culturally competent orientation</li> <li>● Implement these enrichment opportunities consistently at all levels of the school</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier II:</b> secondary-level intervention for employees not meeting cultural competence benchmarks</p>	
<p>D3.Goal 6: we provide <b>evidence-based intervention</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure secondary-level interventions related to cultural competence are evidence-based</li> <li>● Align interventions with employees’ intercultural development orientations, as well as their linguistic and cultural needs</li> </ul>
<p>D3.Goal 7: we <b>supplement and complement school-wide professional learning</b> with secondary-level interventions related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Align secondary-level interventions with professional learning related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Incorporate foundational skills in secondary-level interventions that support cultural competence benchmarks</li> </ul>
<p>D3.Goal 8: we <b>facilitate secondary-level interventions</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deliver interventions systematically, while ensuring they are culturally and linguistically responsive.</li> <li>● Ensure employees trained in culturally responsive leadership and pedagogy lead secondary-level interventions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier III:</b> intensive Intervention and individualized support related to cultural competence</p>	
<p>D3.Goal 9: we <b>adapt data-based interventions</b> based on employees’ intercultural developmental needs</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide intensive interventions, adapted to address individual employees needs related to cultural competence in a number of ways (e.g., increased duration or frequency, scope of skills, or frequency of progress monitoring) based on intercultural development data</li> <li>● Align intervention with employees’ linguistic, cultural, and professional learning needs</li> </ul>

<p>D3.Goal 10: we <b>facilitate intensive interventions</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the intervention related to cultural competence is individualized and is culturally and (to the extent feasible) linguistically responsive</li> <li>● Ensure employees well-trained in culturally responsive coaching and leadership are providing the intensive interventions based intercultural development data</li> </ul>
<p>D3.Goal 11: we <b>supplement and complement school-wide professional learning</b> with intensive interventions related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make decisions regarding employee participation in intensive interventions on a case-by-case basis according to their intercultural developmental needs</li> <li>● Align intensive interventions related to cultural competence to the specific skill needs of employees to help them make progress toward cultural competence benchmarks</li> </ul>



#### Domain #4 - Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms

The primary purpose of infrastructure and supporting mechanisms is to provide knowledge, resources, and organizational structures necessary to operationalize all components of MTSS related to cultural competence benchmarks

<p>D4.Goal 1: we <b>develop understanding of MTSS</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop employees’ understanding of MTSS as a problem-solving model that can help increase our cultural competence</li> <li>● Develop employees’ understanding that MTSS related to cultural competence can support the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 2: we <b>develop leadership personnel’s knowledge and motivation towards MTSS</b> implementation related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the decisions and actions of school leaders support the essential components of the MTSS model as it relates to intercultural development and help make the model more effective</li> <li>● Encourage leadership to prioritize support for MTSS implementation related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Develop leadership’s knowledge of the language and cultural background of employees, encouraging them to take this knowledge into account when making decisions</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 3: we <b>facilitate professional learning</b> related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide professional learning related to cultural competence that is culturally and linguistically responsive, well-defined, consistent, and institutionalized</li> <li>● Ensure employees are continually examining, reflecting upon, and improving practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions related to cultural competence</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 4: we <b>allocate resources</b> to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allocate resources (e.g., time, funds, programs) to adequately support MTSS implementation related to cultural competence</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Align schoolwide schedules during in-service, regular meeting, and planning time to support multiple levels of intervention related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Allocate adequate time in schedule (whether in-service, meeting, or planning time) to deliver interventions related to cultural competence</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 5: we <b>provide professional learning</b> related to culturally responsive pedagogy</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide instructional employees personal learning in adopting culturally responsive pedagogy</li> <li>● Guide instructional employees in articulating information and factors they need to consider when adopting culturally responsive pedagogy (e.g. curriculum, assessments, instruction, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 6: we <b>involve and provide communication with parents</b> regarding MTSS related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share with parents a description of the school’s essential components of MTSS related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Update parents on the progress of the school regarding growth from secondary and intensive interventions related to cultural competence using a coherent mechanism for reporting out the data</li> <li>● Involve parents in decision making regarding growth from secondary and intensive intervention related to cultural competence</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 7: we <b>involve and provide communication with all staff</b> regarding MTSS related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share with all staff a description of the school’s essential components of MTSS and decision-making processes related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Put a system in place to keep all staff informed of our growth related to cultural competence</li> <li>● Engage instructional and non-instructional teams in collaborative inquiry regarding MTSS related to cultural competence</li> </ul>
<p>D4.Goal 8: we <b>embed MTSS</b> related to cultural competence in all collaborative team structures</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure all key stakeholders are embedded MTSS related to cultural competence in their collaborative team structures</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Put in place structures and clear processes that guide decision making about cultural competence in collaborative teams</li><li>● Ensure time is set aside for all collaborative teams to meet regularly to engage in data-drive dialogues about cultural competence</li></ul>
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## Domain #5 - Fidelity and Evaluation

The primary purpose of fidelity and evaluation is to put a system in place for collecting and analyzing data that measure fidelity and effectiveness of MTSS related to cultural competence

<p>D5.Goal 1: we establish <b>procedures to monitor MTSS</b> implementation related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Establish procedures to monitor the fidelity of MTSS implementation of secondary and intensive interventions related to cultural competence</li><li>● Establish procedures to monitor the processes of administering and analyzing assessments related to cultural competence</li></ul>
<p>D5.Goal 2: we <b>review data and evaluate effectiveness of MTSS</b> implementation related to cultural competence</p>	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Review data to evaluate effectiveness of MTSS framework related to cultural competence (i.e., professional learning is effective, interventions are effective, screening process is effective)</li><li>● Review implementation data (e.g., walk-through) to monitor fidelity across all components of MTSS framework related to cultural competence</li></ul>