# Tier 2 Identification Procedures

Identification for Tier 2 intervention and supports is an important decision teams will make as part of implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Tier 2 identification typically follows the administration of a schoolwide, brief, valid and reliable screener of the target outcome(s). The percentage of students identified for Tier 2 depends on the capacity of the school’s Tier 2 system. Teams will use validated procedures implemented with fidelity to identify students for Tier 2. To avoid overidentification of students for Tier 2, consider the following.

* If more than 20% of students are identified as at-risk by your universal screening process, conduct a root cause analysis of Tier 1 and identify and implement approaches to improve Tier 1 instruction and support.
* Prior to identifying students for Tier 2 supports, determine the number of students your Tier 2 system can effectively support.
* Use validated approaches to identify students for participation in Tier 2 intervention.

This resource is designed to support teams in addressing the last two considerations.

#### Step 1: Assess Tier 2 Intervention Capacity

Using a review of resources and infrastructure, determine the number of students your delivery of Tier 2 interventions with fidelity can effectively support. To provide a more accurate assessment, assume at least 5% of students will also need more intensive intervention (Tier 3). When determining capacity, consider the following:

1. *Intervention*: What evidence-based interventions do we have at the target grade levels?
2. *Intervention Implementation Requirements*: What is the recommended frequency, duration, and grouping size necessary for fidelity of implementation and desired effects?
3. *Schedule*: What does our schedule realistically allow for delivery of each intervention?
4. *Staffing*: What staff are trained to deliver the intervention with fidelity? Are these staff available to provide high-quality instruction at the recommended intensity and duration?

A sample tool and approach for evaluating the requirements and capacity of each grade level intervention is provided below. Teams should only focus on their capacity to implement the interventions with fidelity within the school’s current context. Remember, it is important to understand your system’s current capacity before making changes to scheduling or intervention selection.

| **Grade Level** | **Intervention and Content** | **Implementation Requirements (frequency, duration, grouping size)** | **Staff Available to Deliver with Fidelity** | **Available Intervention Blocks** | **# of students our system can support with fidelity** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Ex. 4th* | *Fraction Face Off*  *Math: fractions* | *Group Size: 2-3*  *30 min, 3x wk for 12 weeks* | *2 trained paraprofessionals*   * *Sari* * *Mike* | *1-1:30 and 1:30-2pm*  *M, T, Th* | *12* |
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#### Step 2: Assess Tier 2 System Capacity

Understanding the capacity of the Tier 2 system allows teams to make more appropriate identification decisions for Tier 2 participation. An overwhelmed Tier 2 system—one that attempts to serve more students than it has the capacity to serve—can result in limited or poor learning outcomes and ineffective use of staffing and resources. Using the data above, calculate the percentage or raw number of students your Tier 2 system can support when all interventions are delivered with fidelity.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total Number of Students our System Can Support**  *(last column from Step 1)* | **Total Number of Students in Target Grade(s)** | **Percentage of Students our Tier 2 Can Realistically Support** |
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The image above demonstrates the percentage of students each tier has the capacity to **support** in two different schools. Understanding the Tier 2 system capacity can assist teams in making decisions about how many students can be effectively supported.

#### Step 3: Identify and Verify Risk Status

Once teams understand their capacity, the next step is to identify which students are at-risk. For accurate decision making, teams should have a written, agreed upon definition of an at-risk student. Accurate risk identification depends on the use of valid and reliable screening tools and validated risk verification procedures.

Written decision rules about risk identification can ensure teams make consistent and equitable decisions efficiently. These rules should be succinctly written and easily accessible to team members. When developing procedures, consider the following:

* *Teaming:* What staff will participate in Tier 2 teaming and identification decision making? When and how often will the team meet? What are the team member roles (e.g., facilitator, timer, recorder)?
* *Definition of Risk*: What is the definition of a student at-risk for poor learning outcomes?
* *Primary Data Source*: What is the primary data source for risk identification? Is there evidence of the tool’s [classification accuracy](https://intensiveintervention.org/sites/default/files/Classification_Accuracy_508.pdf), or ability to accurately identify students at risk and not at risk?
* *Risk Verification*: What secondary and additional data sources will be used to verify risk status? What is the validity of these data sources?
* *Decision Making*: How will risk status be determined using the primary, secondary, and additional data sources? What happens when more than 20% of students are identified and confirmed as at-risk? How will these data be used to improve decision making processes overtime?

The following is a sample tool teams can use to support risk-identification and verification using primary, secondary, and additional data sources.

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| **Student** | **Primary Data:**  *Valid Screening Tool*  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **Secondary:**  *Ex. Common class assessment*  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **Additional Data:**  *Ex. State Assessment*  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **Risk-Status Determination** |
| *Ex. Conner* | *Yes* | *No* | *Yes* | *At-risk* |
| *Ex. Jenny* | *No* | *Yes* | *No* | *Not At-Risk* |
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#### Step 4: Select Students for Tier 2 Intervention

Once students’ risk-status has been confirmed, the team’s focus shifts to how to support identified students. It is important to remember that being identified as an at-risk student does not mean the student needs a Tier 2 intervention. Based on student data, teams may choose instead to provide additional Tier 1 supports with progress monitoring. The school’s capacity to effectively support students in Tier 2, determined in Step 2, should also be considered when selecting students for Tier 2 intervention. For example, if the school identifies 32 fourth grade students as at-risk but can only effectively support 23 fourth grade students in intervention, the team must decide how best to support the remaining nine students. Overwhelming the Tier 2 system can have poor outcomes for all students.

Teams need clear decision-making procedures about which students will receive Tier 2 interventions versus additional Tier 1 supports. Regardless of the level of support provided, all students identified as at-risk (Step 3) should participate in frequent progress monitoring. Teams may use the tool below to make Tier 2 identifications decisions. Remember, students with the greatest need should have access to Tier 2.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **At-Risk Student** | **Tier 2 Supports** | **Tier 1 Additional Supports** |
| *Identified Need: Fractions (12 intervention Slots)* | | |
| *Ex. Conner* | X |  |
| *Ex. Jane* |  | X |
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#### Step 5: Ongoing Improvement of Tier 2 Identification Processes

Once students have been identified for Tier 2 intervention or additional Tier 1 supports, the team’s focus shift to ensuring implementation of the selected interventions for the identified students. Throughout Tier 2 implementation, the team will need to consider the following.

* Does the current Tier 2 system continue to have the capacity to support the number of identified students? Are educators able to implement Tier 2 interventions and supports with fidelity?
* Does progress monitoring data suggest that some identified students in Tier 2 intervention can move to less intensive supports?
* Does progress monitoring data suggest that some students not initially identified for Tier 2 now need Tier 2 intervention?
* Does the data suggest that the Tier 2 identification process was effective and efficient?
* How can the efficiency and effectiveness of the risk verification and Tier 2 identification be improved?