

# THRIVING TOGETHER

BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR TEACHER  
WELL-BEING AND STUDENT SUCCESS

## 5A: We Have a District MTSS/SW-PBS Team — Exploring Our Next Moves

St. Louis MTSS Leaders Networking Team

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## Session Outcomes

- Discuss district wide logic, simplified phases of implementation, and elements that drive the work.
- Learn from leaders in the field about tools, data, and resources that teams can use when building a districtwide plan.
- Identify the next steps to build internal capacity to implement MTSS and SW-PBS districtwide through systems, practices, and data.

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## Welcome

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Introductions, Norms, Purpose

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Resources

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District Exemplars

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Networking, Question & Answers

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Next Steps

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We have a District Leadership Team



I am on the District Leadership Team



I lead my District Leadership Team



We have used the District Systems Fidelity Inventory



We have used another District tool to develop our plan



We have a professional development plan supporting behavior/social emotional learning



I am here to learn from others

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## Norms

Promote a Spirit of Inquiry

Pause...and Think

Paraphrase

Probe for Specifics

Put Ideas Out There

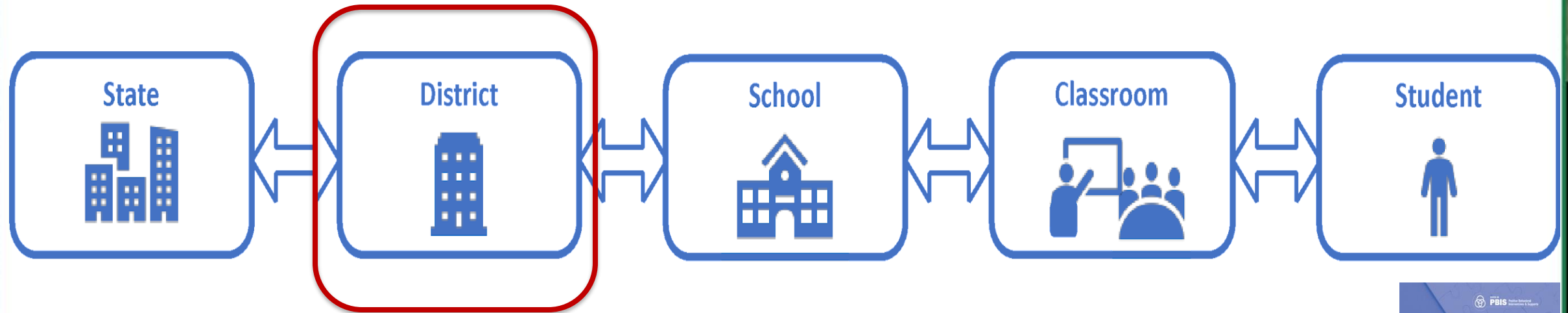
Pay Attention to Self and Others

Presume Positive Intentions

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## Implementation Cascade



<https://www.pbis.org/about/pbis-state-coordinators>



**Reminder: Get (and Stay) Connected**





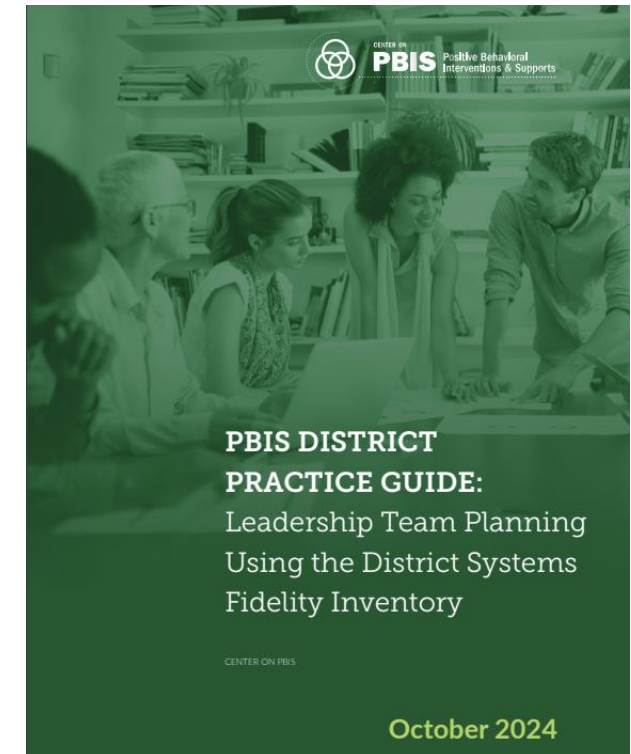
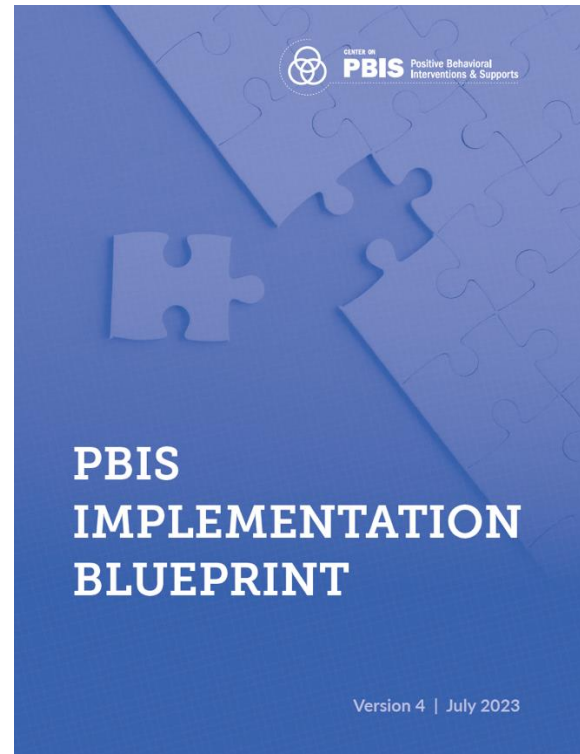


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## Explore Center on PBIS Resources

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

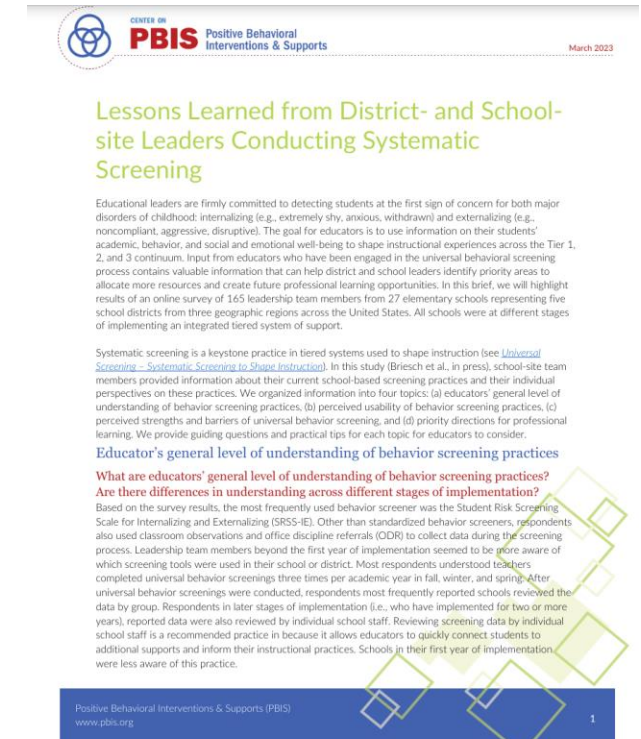
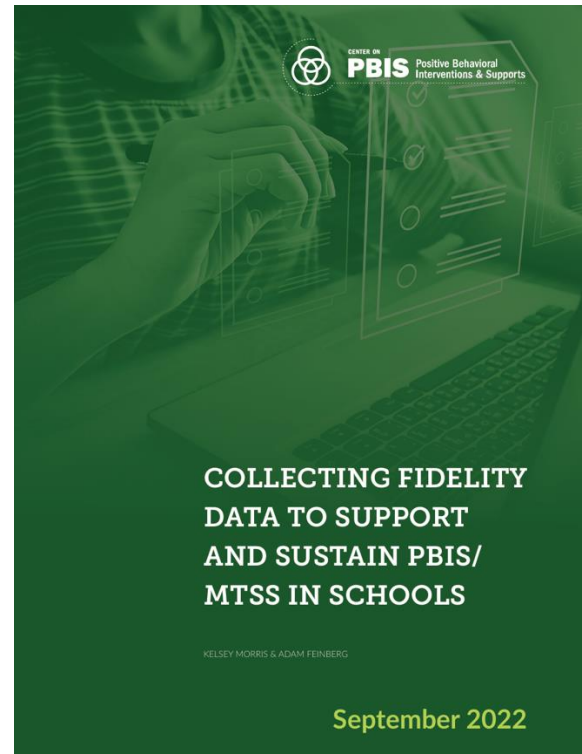
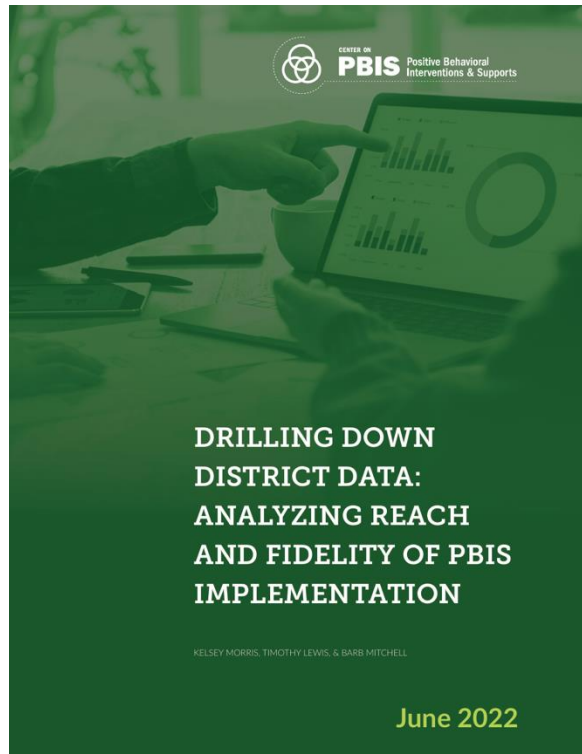




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## More resources





Today you will  
hear from four  
district  
leaders...

- Dr. Lauren Weissler – Maplewood Richmond Heights School District
- Dr. Casetta Browm – St. Louis Public Schools
- Mrs. Ashley Jones – St. Charles School District
- Dr. Colette Higgins – Ferguson Florissant School District

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## MRH By The Numbers

Current Enrollment-1585 (PK-12)

Staff-290

3 Square Miles

4 Gardens

Multiple Chickens

Bees

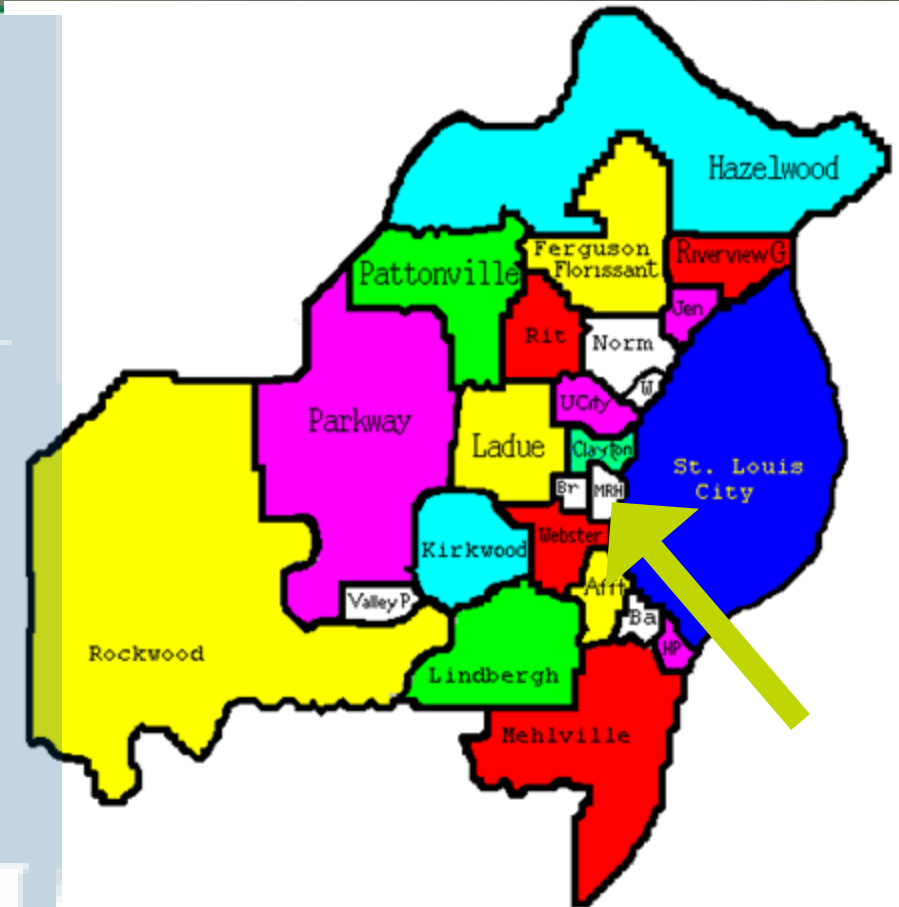
4 Schools, 3 Buildings

Joe's Place

Metaphors

Academic Freedom Policy

Equity and LGBTQIA+ Resolutions





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## Timeline to Today

Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring/Summer 2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Social Emotional Curriculum action team takes the DSFI</li> <li>• District Hires MTSS Coordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Leadership Team is formed</li> <li>• District joins a MTSS Cohort</li> <li>• Resource investigation and goal setting</li> <li>• ELEM creates universals</li> <li>• District Strategic Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team completes DSFI</li> <li>• SRSS-IE Screening is done K-12</li> <li>• Summer Learning Retreat for all admin and team members</li> <li>• ECC creates universals</li> <li>• District Strategic Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handbook and communication created</li> <li>• ECC and ELEM implementation and teaming.</li> <li>• ELEM participates in MU CICO study</li> <li>• Team completes DSFI and goal setting</li> <li>• All buildings have Leadership Teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued work on handbook</li> <li>• Decided on a new K-12 student screener with student voice</li> <li>• Planned a transition day event that allowed school teams to meet and discuss MTSS practices and needs to support students as they transition grades and buildings</li> </ul>

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## Selecting Priorities and Goals–Use the Data

- ☐ Climate and Culture climate
- ☐ Academic data
- ☐ Behavior data – \*evolved
- ☐ District process for SEL  
Screening
- ☐ Fidelity TFI – SAS elementary
- ☐ DSFI-Yearly
- ☐ MTSS – how to we continue to  
align academic and behavior

### 1.3 Equitable Learning

**1.3.1.** Develop key success milestones at meaningful transitions in a students educational experience that allow them to demonstrate knowledge, assets, skills, and abilities.

**1.3.2.** Develop a multi-tiered system of support that provides differentiated levels of support and resources based upon academic, behavioral, social emotional, and physical needs.

### 2.3 Sense of Belonging

**2.3.1.** Provide employee training on culturally competent and responsive teaching strategies and equity for all identities.

**2.3.2.** Develop an Multi-Tiered System of Support framework, common language, and supports for teachers, staff, and students.

**2.3.3.** Provide engagement opportunities for families to learn about the intellectual and developmental needs of children.

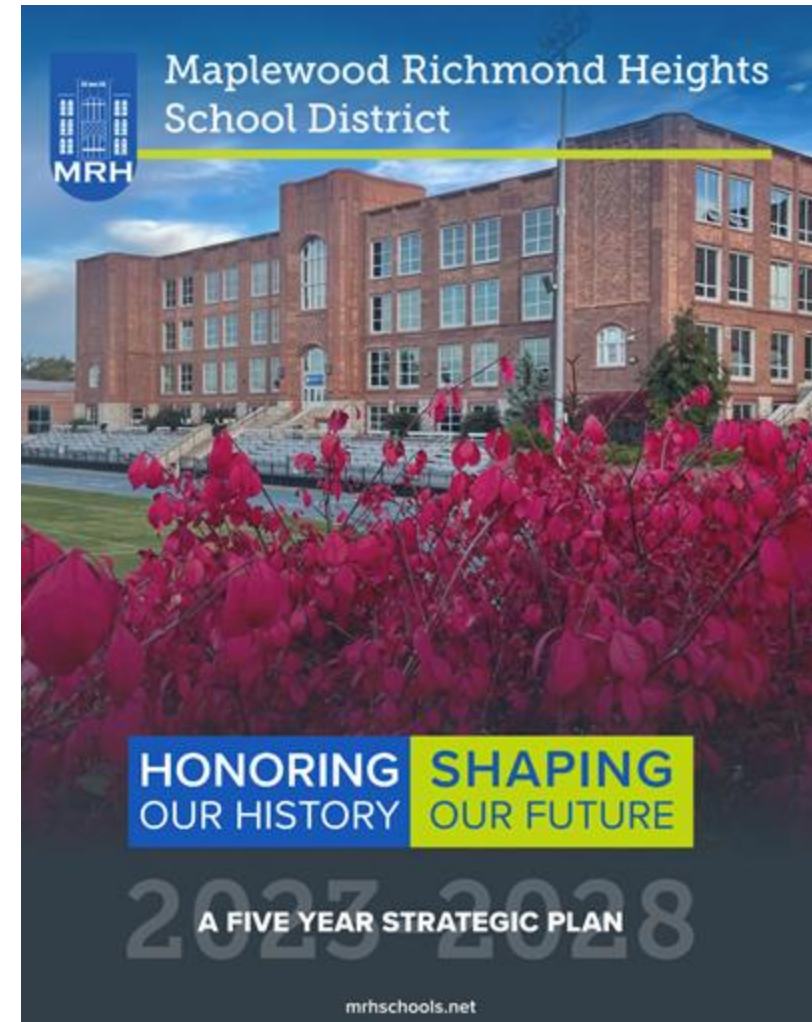


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## Strengths

- MTSS is written into strategic plan
  - It is priority of the district
  - Members of cabinet on DLT (supports to make things happen)
- Collective support for SEL – teacher invested and resources
- Teams who are interested and willing to learn to do the work – Culture of Continuous Improvement
- Using the data – high performing school district
  - Are we supporting all kids and are all kids growing ?
  - What does the data look like? Are we seeing trends?
  - Examine inequities



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## Current State - Big Need

- How does MTSS fit in PLC? and not feel like “one more thing”.
  - What data is most important?
  - What is the response to it?
- How to blend MTSS – Academic, behavior and social emotional
  - Break down silos
- How to continue to support school teams
  - How are they structured?
  - What is their purpose?
  - Do we have too many?





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## Future Direction

- Continue to build district systems and support
  - Leverage strengths
  - Opportunities for district consistency
  - Allows for a variety of voices
- Team development support
  - How are buildings using teams to support the MTSS work
- Fidelity/Implementation data
  - Walkthroughs
  - SAS/TFI
  - Surveys
  - Self Assessment
- Academic curriculum resources and writing adoption
  - How do the tiers align?

## Core Values



**Belonging:** We intentionally develop relationships to create a culture of safety, trust, and openness so that every student, family, and staff member feels valued and connected.



**Integrity:** We are honest and accountable. We follow through on what we say and act with transparency to sustain trust with the community.



**Inspiration:** We create an inclusive environment and engaging learning experience that excites and empowers our community to discover, problem-solve, innovate, and grow to become well-rounded lifelong learners and leaders.



**Courage:** We have a personal and collective responsibility to take bold and confident action in various forms in the face of adversity and uncertainty. We uncover, recognize, and dismantle systems of oppression in order to build an inclusive and supportive community.



**Success:** We challenge our community to set ambitious goals to maximize personal and collective potential in order to learn, grow and thrive now and in the future.

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## Value of the MTSS Networking Group/Journey

- This group has been a valuable source of information and support
- Provides connections around the region
- Access to resources and support
- Current research and trends

### Advice

- Think about the purpose
- Have topics or focus areas
- Time for sharing and learning



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OUR CITY • OUR SCHOOLS • OUR FUTURE  
**SAINT LOUIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
2024-25 data for K-12 students unless otherwise noted. Percentages may be rounded.



SUPERINTENDENT  
 Dr. Millicent Bortshade



## STUDENT SUCCESS GOALS



**3rd Grade Reading**  
 Growth and Proficiency



**3rd Grade Math**  
 Growth and Proficiency



**College and Career Readiness**  
 High School Students Prepared for Workforce and Post-Secondary Employment



**Culture and Climate**  
 Student Wellbeing

MISSION: We will provide a quality education for all students and enable them to realize their full intellectual potential.

## WHO WE SERVE

**18,122**

PK-12 Students  
(Based on Jan. 27, 2025)

**17,989**

PK-12 Students  
(Based on Sept. 25, 2024)

**62**

District Schools  
(42 Ele | 9 Mid | 11 High)

**15%**

English Learner

**1,876**

Pre-K Enrollment

**1,771**

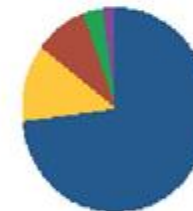
Pre-K Enrollment

**8**

Programs†

**15%**

Special Education



**95.6%**  
 KEA Completion  
(Kindergarten Entry Assessment for October 2024)

**87.53%**  
 Economically Disadvantaged\*  
(Free-Reduced Lunch)

**31.95%**  
 Student Mobility Rate\*

**470**  
 Adult Education Participants

**145**  
 Dual Enrollment Program Participants†

**10,597**  
 Registered for 25-26 Transportation

## SAFETY & SECURITY

- Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) ☒
- Risk Assessment ☒
- Window Safety Film (ongoing)

## BEFORE & AFTER CARE

Approximately \$2.5 Mil.  
 410 Before & 901 After Care students attended on the first day – first time ever!

## TRANSFORMATION PLAN 4.0

Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) Community Dates:  
 March 27th | April 24th

## EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

**1,248**

PK-12 Teachers

**573**

Total Hires  
(For Everyone in SLPs as of 1/28/25)

**141**

Certified Teachers Hired  
(New to the District)

**207**

Support Staff Hired  
(Subs, ICAs, TAs, ISS, Library Aides, etc.)

**206**

New to Profession Teachers  
(1 Full Year of Teaching Experience)

**1,035 (83%)**

Teacher Retention from 23-24 SY to 24-25 SY

\*2023-24 data †Green, NICHIA or Eosonville, Fresh Start or Sunrise, SLPs Therapeutic Support or Madison, Nohat Chappin New American Academy, Beaumont High School, AFSM or U-Chavante Academy, ICA or Blawie ‡ECA at STLCC, ECA at Harris Grove, Harrison Career, Bonham, Access Point



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## Journey with PBIS



- Implementation: the planning began in the Fall of 2018, and I facilitated the first Culture and Climate Committee meeting on March 20, 2019.
- My Start: I was working in isolation and fearing future burnout.
- Today: 50 ISS and PBIS Teammates w/Super Team PD Leads (strategic capacity-building PD), Bullying Designees, and Culture and Climate + Stakeholder (PBIS) Committees.
- Strategy: School SSTs – TFI Action Plan Implementation / DSFI Action Plan Implementation - District Culture and Climate (+ PBIS) Committees.
- The DSFI: serves as a roadmap for where we've been, where we currently are, and where we plan to go; it guides our decisions, priorities, and efforts in terms of needs, wants, and planning.

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## MTSS/PBIS Area of Focus

**PBIS Framework**

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

PBIS is a proactive, team-based, tiered framework for creating and sustaining safe and effective schools with emphasis being placed on prevention of problem behavior and development of pro-social skills. It supports students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. School-wide PBIS increases the capacity of schools to educate all scholars utilizing research-based, school-wide, classroom and individualized interventions.

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**Character Education**

Character Education is the teaching of values or morals that we use every day to make decisions. It is an districtwide initiative used to highlight character traits throughout the school year such as respect, kindness, integrity, and bravery.

Character Education helps to:

- Reduce disciplinary reports/referrals and actions such as detention, in school suspension or out of school suspension
- Reduce inappropriate/undesirable behavior
- Reduce student bullying
- Improve peer interaction
- Improve classroom and school culture
- Improve student's academic success
- Instill moral and ethical values

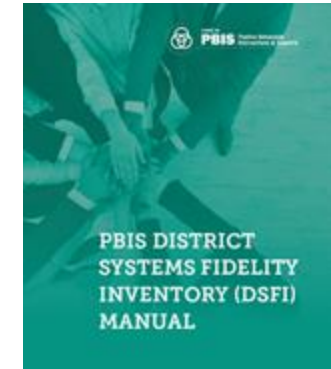
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**Restorative Practices**

**Restorative Practices:**

- Are a set of skills used for building community and for responding to challenging behaviors in schools.
- Reduces the number of Out of School Suspensions, improves school culture and climate, strengthens relationships and improves equity and inclusion for all students.
- Involves conversation/discussion that is structured and ranges from low intensity to higher intensity, more structured (based on the situation) this is facilitated with the purpose of restoration after damage has taken place.

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If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings, and grow.

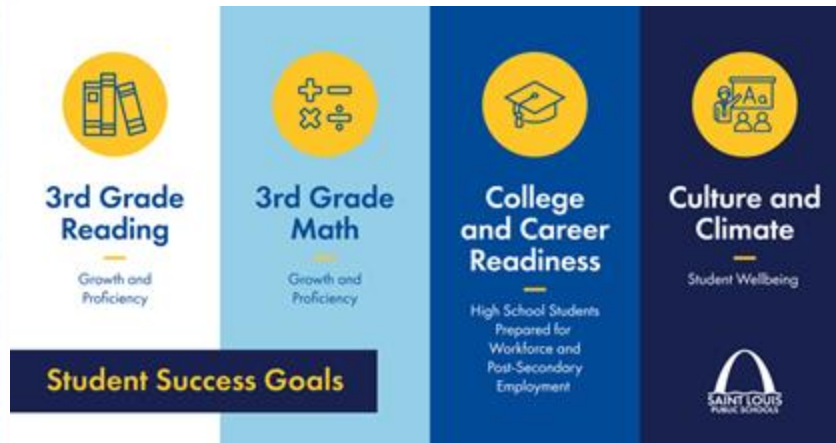
— Alfie Kohn —



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## Strengths

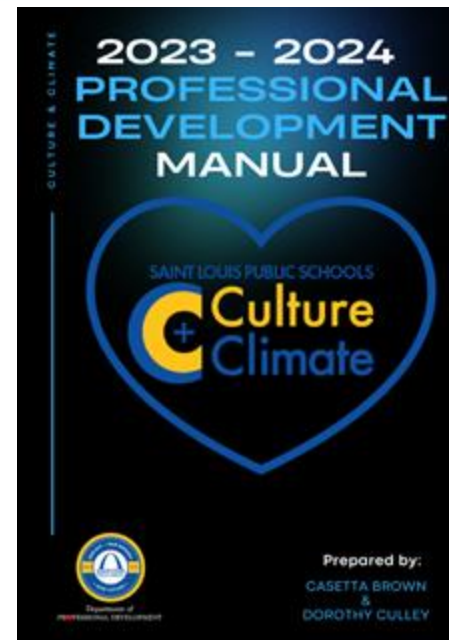


CULTURE & CLIMATE

Kasserian  
Ingera:

And How  
Are The  
Children?

Are They Well?



**Mission**

To be the program that informs, supports and shapes change within schools across the district to promote a more positive school culture and climate for scholars and ultimately, wellness within school-based staff and all stakeholders.

**Vision**

The Culture and Climate Program of the Academic and Professional Development Offices, in partnership with the St. Louis Public School's mission, will effectively inform and create a more positive school culture and climate by developing a common language with best practices and interventions that impacts and develops a system of excellent schools within Saint Louis Public Schools.

## SLPS Strategic Values



SLPS DISTRICTWIDE BUS EXPECTATIONS

**On SLPS buses,  
we EXPECT to be:**

- EX**perts in Safe Bus Behavior  
(Zero Tolerance)
- P**olite to Fellow Students and Staff
- E**ager to Arrive and Learn Daily
- C**alm in Conversations and Actions
- T**imely in Entry and Exit of All Buses

SLPS DISTRICTWIDE PBS BUILDING EXPECTATIONS

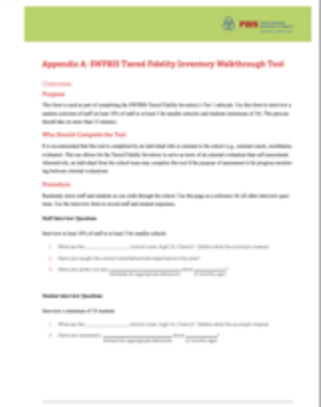
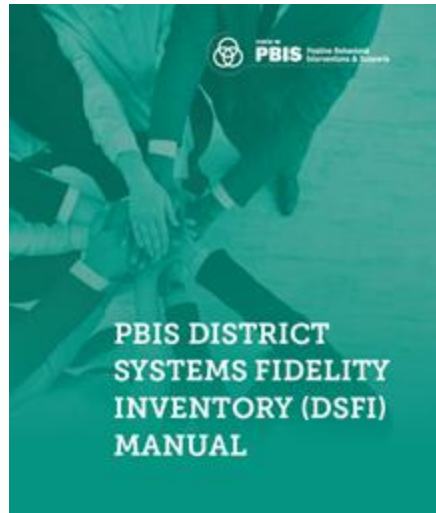
**In SLPS  
we EXPECT:**

- EX**ceptional Attitudes
- P**ositive Mindsets
- E**ngaged Learners  
(Partner of a Graduate)
- C**onsideration of People and Property
- T**houghtful, Future-Ready Citizens

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## Current State - Big Need



- Next: Stakeholder Engagement, Funding & Alignment, Policy, and Workforce Capacity
- Data: Panaroma, SIS, Staffing, and Funding
- Training/Presentations: Cabinet, BOE, Committee and Data Share Outs, etc.



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## Future Direction



### Culture & Climate Program

#### Vision:

The Culture and Climate Program is dedicated to informing, supporting, and shaping a system of excellent schools within SLPS that offers scholars a positive school culture and climate focused on their academic, social, and emotional needs and wellness.

#### Mission:

To help scholars be successful in all aspects of their lives, starting in each classroom by developing a common language for systems, procedures, and routines; while using best, proactive, restorative, and equitable practices and interventions that allows them to develop into their best selves.

#### Goal:

To create a Sense of Belonging using PBIS, Character Education, Restorative Practices, and MTSS to ensure that students are well and that our schools are well-resourced, so that they can imagine and realize any future they desire.

#### **The Culture & Climate Stakeholder (PBIS) Committee will:**

Directly and positive impact the culture and climate of our district by using stakeholder autonomy and collective efficacy to foster a sense of belonging and ownership to support SLPS student and stakeholder wellbeing.



# Value of the MTSS Networking Group/Journey



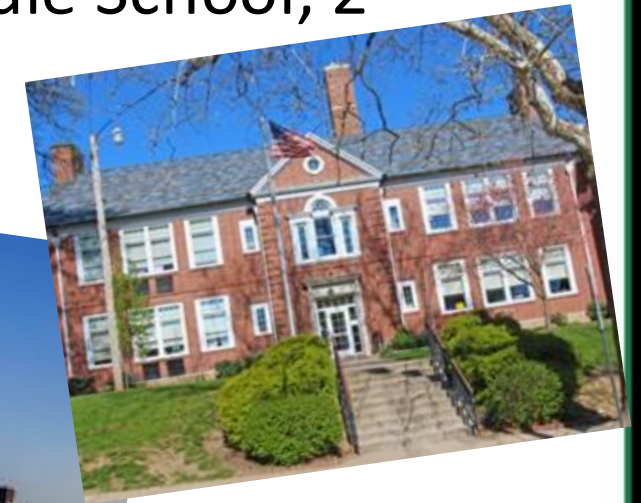
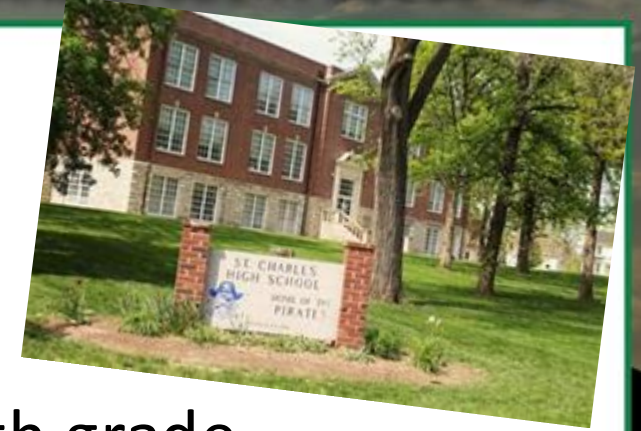


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## City of St. Charles School District

- Founded in 1846
- Benton School (Central Office): 1896
- ECC: 2018
- Approx. 5,000 students Early Childhood through 12th grade
- 1 ECC, 6 Elementary Schools, 1 Intermediate, 1 Middle School, 2 High Schools, 1 Career Center, 1 Alternative School



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## Journey with PBIS

- SCSD began using PBIS in 22-23
- New to the journey with SCSD
- Currently: Making strides towards full implementation district-wide
- PBIS has become part of our CSIP plan for next 5 years
- SCSD uses the DSFI to create goals and drive work for following year

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## MTSS/PBIS Area of Focus

- Focus past year: ETLP's, How to use the data
- DLT members created rubrics for observation, staff completed observations and provided feedback, using results to plan PD
- Our work in DLT directly impacts buildings. This is an area we need to continue to grow.



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## Strengths

- Many schools have strong Tier 2/3 teams and use data to drive decisions.
- This work has built stronger connections with families.
- I am confident that we will continue to grow in our Tier 2 and Tier 3 support in ALL buildings.
- We are seeing positive outcomes
- PBIS has become a way of life



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## Current State - Big Need

- Successful implementation at the secondary level
- Lacking teacher buy-in and understanding
- Continuous networking with other districts/buildings.
- No “out”
- We have the support and resources, but need to help others see the connection of successful PBIS implementation= higher graduation rate, less discipline infractions, closing the learning gap, etc.

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## Future Direction

- FORWARD
  - Walking alongside school teams
- I'm excited to see how each building individualizes their PBIS experience.
- Many indicators of success:
  - Meet CSIP goal
  - Making data informed decisions
  - Student growth
  - Strong academic AND behavioral interventions

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## Value of the MTSS Networking Group/Journey

- I value the comradery of the MTSS Networking Group and the ability to problem-solve with other districts who are currently experiencing the same challenges or are on the other side of those challenges.
- Being a part of the MTSS Networking Group has provided me with thoughts, ideas, and solutions I didn't otherwise have.
- What I love about this group is that it is a positive, solution-focused group. Growth, student success, and teacher success are at the forefront of all of the work done.



# MTSS @ Ferguson-Florissant School District

MO-PBIS Conference



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## Who we serve . . .

- 10,000 students (PK-12)
- 23 sites: 7 primary, 6 intermediate, 2 6th grade centers, 2 MS (7-8), 2 HS (9-12), STEAM MS and HS, Big Picture Learning HS, Restoration & Wellness alternative school
- Little Creek Nature Preserve, Challenger Learning Center, PROBE gifted program, early childhood program
- Each year, 5-8 HS students earn their pilot's license through the Red Tail Cadet Program



# Journey with PBIS . . .

**Began in 1997(!) with the first PBIS cohort in Missouri**

- Halls Ferry Elementary

**Changed to a MTSS District-wide approach in 2021**

- All students; All 23 schools

**School Awards:** 10 school recognized! (7 T1, 3 T1/T2/T3)

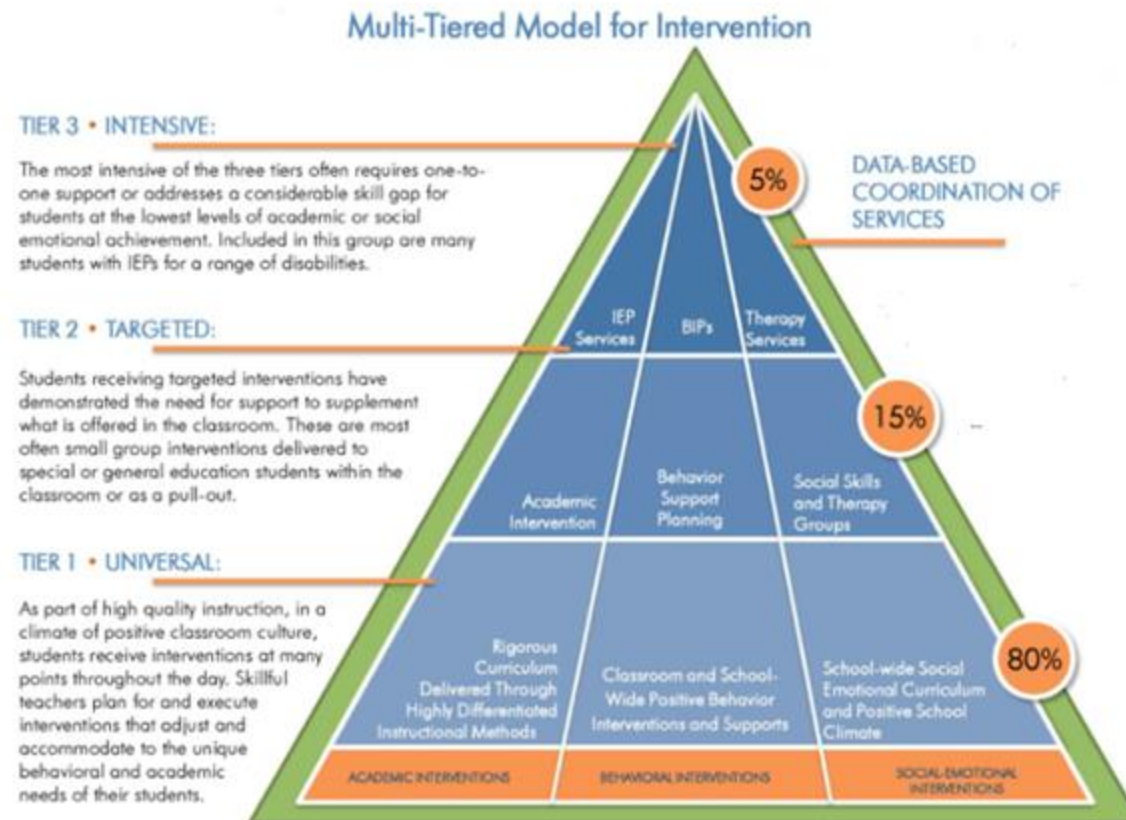
**District MO-PBS Award:** We were recommended by partners from the University of Missouri to apply for the this prestigious award

- Tells story of progress, not perfection!





## MTSS Focus Areas



1. Implement the FFSD MTSS Framework in all schools
2. Build capacity of the district team, school-based teams, and building leadership teams
3. Use fidelity and outcome data to drive decisions
4. Train and coach in new initiatives



# Strengths and Big Need

## ❖ Strengths

- District-wide approach ensures all students benefit from MTSS
- Improved outcomes in referrals, suspensions, special education indicators, social-emotional screeners, academic screeners
- High level of buy-in across the district because it works

## ❖ Big Need

- Sustainability: MTSS Dept eliminated, school consolidation, decimated budget, will schools be on their own to implement?



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## Future: Equitable Access for All

- ❖ Foundation in Tier 1 universals: ALL STUDENTS; ALL SCHOOLS
- ❖ School-based teams use action plans to drive progress
- ❖ Leaders utilize the data and communication feedback loop with Culture & Climate data to develop goals for next year
- ❖ Expanding access to Character Strong SEL Curriculum
- ❖ Growing capacity in Restorative Practices
- ❖ Strengthening parent and family engagement
- ❖ Prioritizing Advanced Tiers (T2/T3) systems and impact



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## St. Louis Regional Networking Group

- ❖ Learning and Growing Together
- ❖ Making Connections to Other MTSS Leaders
- ❖ Sharing Success
- ❖ Asking for Feedback



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The Heart of MTSS @ EFSD

BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR TEACHER  
WELL-BEING AND STUDENT SUCCESS



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## Let's Review



Utilize **District Systems Fidelity Inventory** to guide planning



Explore **PBIS District Practice Guide** to build foundational knowledge for all team members, provides resources across all tiers, policy, Guiding Questions and Coaching Tips



Form or join a **Community of Practice** – Connect, Collaborate and Grow



Q&A

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## Possible Next Steps

Form your own MTSS/PBIS Community of  
Practices

Join Center on PBIS Community of Practice



[PBIS](#) [Topics](#) [Tools](#) [Publications](#) [Presentations  
& Videos](#) [Conference](#) [About](#) [Q](#)

### Community of Practice: District Leadership Series 2024-2025



#### October 25, 2024

The Center on PBIS is happy to announce a new Community of Practice series of virtual events focusing on district leadership. These Community of Practice events are a continuation from our October 2024 PBIS District Leadership Institute in Chicago, IL. During the virtual events we will share and learn from expert district and regional leaders who are implementing the PBIS/MTSS framework. The format is 20-25 minutes of content, 40-45 minutes of small group breakout discussions, and the remainder of our time in large group discussion.

Date: November 8, 2024  
Time: 12:00-1:30pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Focus: Enhancing Leadership Teaming

- [View Recorded Session](#)
- [Handout](#)

Date: February 21, 2025  
Time: 12:00-1:30pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Focus: Integrated MTSS

- [View Recorded Session](#)
- [Handout](#)

Date: May 2, 2025  
Time: 12:00-1:30pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Focus: TBD  
[Register Here](#)

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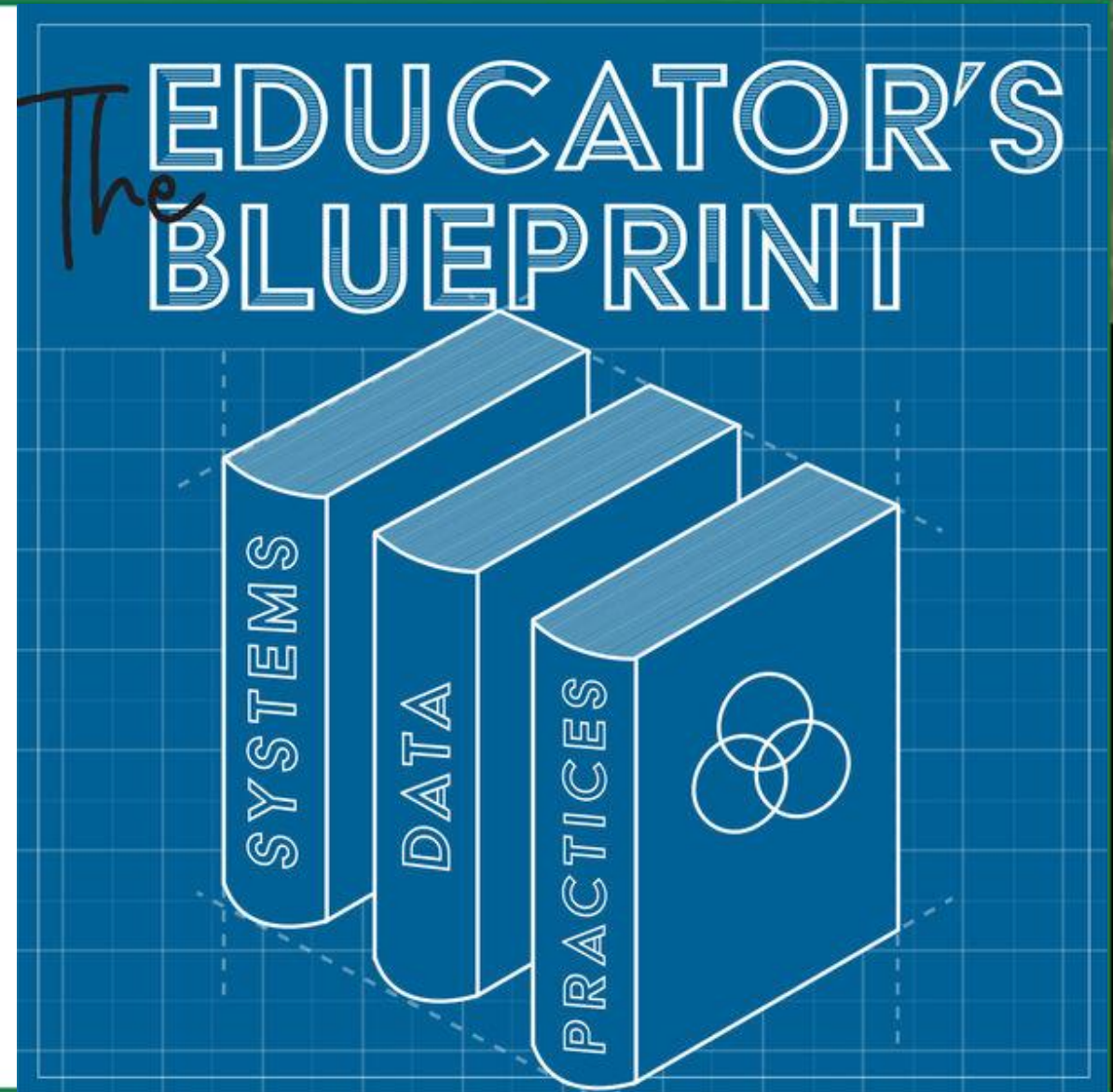
BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR TEACHER  
WELL-BEING AND STUDENT SUCCESS

## Join The Educator's Blueprint

Learn from friends in the field...

- Episode 74: One Leader's Approach to being a MTSS Coordinator
- Episode 65: MTSS in a Community School/District
- Episode 41: School Safety within the MTSS Framework with Mark Gengaro
- Episode 78: A Conversation with Dr Higgins on Leading MTSS in a District
- Episode 29: District Supports for Special Educator's with Dr. Terry Houlton
- ...

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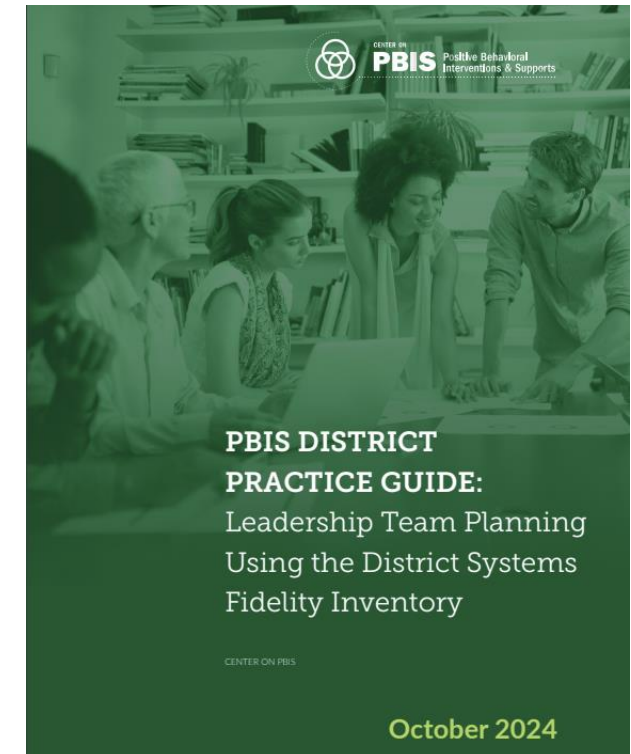
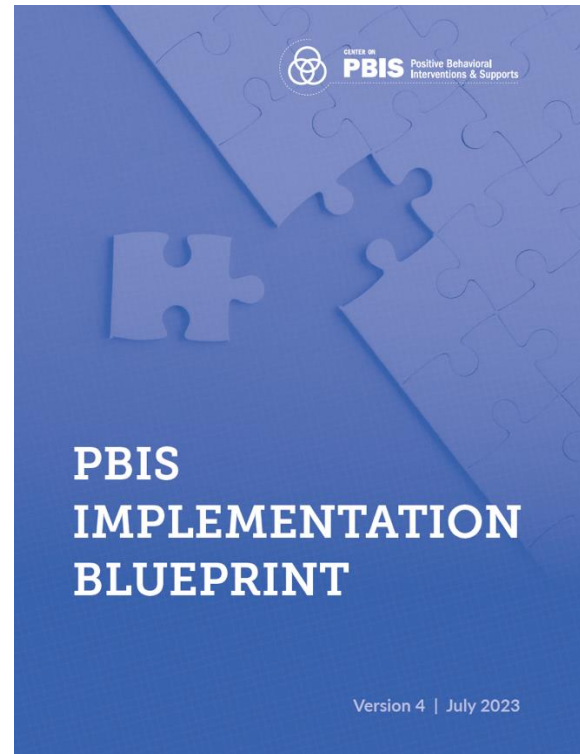


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## Explore Center on PBIS Resources

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



# 2025 National PBIS Leadership Forum

[www.pbisforum.org](http://www.pbisforum.org)

**save the date**

*Pre-Forum Leadership Institute*

**Tuesday October 21st**

*National PBIS Leadership Forum*

**Wednesday Thursday October 22nd-23rd**

**Hilton Chicago, Chicago, IL**

## Mark your calendar now!

This two-day forum is designed to support school, state, regional, and local educational leaders, together with community and family partners, to increase the effectiveness of school environments through PBIS. Sessions and topic-specific strands will provide guidance and tools for strengthening prevention-based systems that support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students to ensure engagement in learning.



*The National PBIS Leadership Forum is a technical assistance activity of the Center on PBIS*



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MISSOURI SW-PBS SUMMER INSTITUTE

Reminder ...  
Please  
complete the  
session  
evaluation in  
the Guidebook  
App

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