



# Responses to Questions: Training Provider for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Reading in Early Grades

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31, 2019

MAKING RESEARCH RELEVANT

Provider Questions	Answer
<p>1. Our Tier 2 model includes one-to-one individual instruction for the lowest performing first grade students and ELL in second grade as well as small group instruction for slightly higher performing students in both grades. Will AIR consider one-to-one instruction an acceptable component of Tier 2 instruction?</p>	<p>The RFP requests a Tier II intervention that can feasibly be implemented within the proposed budget. The provider should propose a Tier II intervention that serves all or most students identified for Tier II (approximately 20-30 percent of the student population) and can be feasibly implemented by staff within the school (e.g. the school can reorganize staff activities, but no staff will be added to deliver Tier II). One-to-one instruction is not ruled out as a part of the Tier II intervention as long as the proposed Tier II intervention meets the criteria stated in the RFP (see pp. 7, 23 and 25).</p>
<p>2. Page 6 of the RFP states – “Data-based differentiated instruction can address students’ deficits both in foundational/decoding skills and in language/comprehension skills.” We would like to know how ‘reading’ is defined for this study; reading as decoding or reading for meaning or some combination of both?</p>	<p>The RFP requests that providers address all reading skills relevant to students in Grades 1 and 2, especially students at-risk for reading difficulties. The provider should address both foundational (decoding) and higher-level reading skills (reading for meaning) as appropriate for the grade levels included in the study.</p>
<p>3. On page 11, the RFP says that AIR will collect data on student achievement through individual testing. What individual testing instruments are being considered to examine early literacy skills? How will AIR assure that the individual testing instruments align with or combine both decoding/foundational AND language/comprehension skills?</p>	<p>The study team is in the process of selecting a combination of reading tests that will measure both decoding/foundational and language/comprehension skills. The study team will receive feedback from the Technical Working Group members regarding the final selection of tests. The study team is considering adaptive tests of overall reading and timed tests of foundational skills and silent reading fluency.</p>
<p>4. Who is responsible for training at the school level? The bottom of page 8 of the RFP indicates that a district-based MTSS coach will support each school in implementing the MTSS-R program with fidelity.</p>	<p>The RFP specifies two forms of school-level support. First, the provider will offer direct training to teachers and interventionists at the study schools. Second, the study will provide compensation for a district coach, who the provider will train and support. The coach will,</p>

<p>a) To implement our model, the district will need to employ a nationally credentialed and registered Teacher Leader who functions as a District MTSS Coach for K-2. Will AIR require districts to make this staffing change to participate in our MTSS-R model?</p> <p>b) In the new study design (top of page 4), 15 schools will be randomly assigned to MTSS program 1, 2, or the business as usual model. Will the district-literacy coach need to support three different MTSS programs?</p>	<p>in turn, support schools in implementing MTSS-R.</p> <p>a) The training and support to coaches is a core component of the professional development being evaluated in this study. The provider should offer training and support for coaches that is feasible, within the constraints of the study, and can be replicated on a large scale. To fit this purpose, the provider would need to train coaches as part of the training offered through the study, not solely rely on hiring or identifying staff who have already been trained in the provider’s MTSS-R approach. The district-based MTSS-R coach can be a new hire or an existing district staff member can serve as the coach. The provider is expected to set criteria for the position and describe the criteria in the proposal. The criteria must be feasible for typical districts to meet.</p> <p>b) The study will support separate coaches for each of the two MTSS-R approaches in each district. Each coach will support only one MTSS-R approach. The actual number of coaches for each approach will depend on the number of participating schools in the district, with one full time coach expected to serve five schools. School randomly assigned to the business-as-usual control condition will not receive coaching.</p>
<p>5. How will rural schools be included if they don’t have 9 elementary schools in their districts? Would a consortium of smaller schools be allowed to participate as a “district”?</p>	<p>A group of districts served by an intermediate unit would be eligible to participate if the districts together include at least 9 schools. Although we are seeking districts that are geographically diverse, the population included in the study is not intended to represent the population of schools in the U.S. The study</p>

	team is recruiting the districts and schools, and each district's and school's participation will be approved by the U.S. Department of Education.
6. Definition of MTSS varies from state to state. What definition will be used for this study?	The RFP specifies the MTSS-R model to be tested in the study. In particular, the model includes four components: high-quality Tier I instruction with an emphasis on explicit and data-driven differentiated instruction; evidence-based Tier II intervention for students identified as being at-risk for reading difficulties; screening and progress monitoring (accurate identification of students for Tier II intervention and frequent progress monitoring of students receiving Tier II intervention); and MTSS-R infrastructure. The provider should propose a specific operationalization of the MTSS-R model (i.e., its MTSS-R approach) and describe the training and support needed for schools to implement the operationalized MTSS-R approach with fidelity.
7. Does having dual language classrooms in schools eliminate all classrooms in that building from participating in the study? (RFP pg. 11, item 4).	Having dual language classrooms in the building does not disqualify schools if they have enough classrooms in Grades 1 and 2 taught in English to qualify for the study.
8. What, specifically, is required for submission of PD materials?	For the proposal, please submit enough training materials to permit reviewers to assess the quality of the proposed MTSS-R model and professional development program. These can be included in an appendix or submitted through a medium such as Dropbox, GoogleDocs etc. If selected, the provider must provide all training materials in electronic format as a deliverable.
9. What measure will be used to determine that schools have 50 - 75% reading proficiency at grade 3?	We assume that the question is related to how the study team is identifying schools as eligible for the study. The study team used NAEP scores to identify an initial set of districts and schools to recruit. Schools will be screened for

	eligibility using district data on reading proficiency.
10. What is the role of the provider in district recruitment?	The study team is responsible for recruitment. The provider will be asked to assist in recruitment by preparing a district-friendly description of its proposed MTSS-R approach, including a recorded webinar/slide presentation, and by participating in the recruitment calls/visits as needed.
11. What is the theory of change for the project and how do you expect to see gains with proposed model?	We expect the provider to articulate the theory of change for its proposed MTSS-R approach and the training and support it will provide for schools to implement the approach. In general, the theory of action for the study assumes that with the help of intensive high-quality training and support, the four MTSS-R components specified in the RFP (and operationalized by the provider) will be implemented with fidelity, which in turn will improve teachers' classroom instruction and the delivery of Tier II instruction. This is assumed to improve student reading outcomes, specifically for at-risk students, but also for students overall.
12. Is there a project proportion of training in MTSS components (e.g., early intervention through systematic screening, promotion of positive development through Benchmark assessments, proactive design of tiered intervention(s)) and research-based increases in science of reading content knowledge and appropriately intensive Tiered intervention?	There is no preset proportion of the trainings that must focus on each of the four MTSS-R components defined in the RFP. The provider should propose a plan that adequately supports its proposed MTSS-R approach.
13. In the 10 districts and 50 schools, how many total teachers will need to be trained?	We assume about 6 teachers per school on average. So, the total number of teachers for the 50 schools working with one provider would be approximately 300 total, or 30 per district (assuming 10 districts with 5 schools each). Training for all teachers within the participating schools in a district should be provided in

	<p>common sessions. In addition, the 30 teachers within a district will also have the study-funded MTSS-R coach to aid with implementation, and the coach will travel to each school site.</p>
<p>14. Can the professional development dosage be increased within the constraints of the budget? With the large number of schools and small number of coaching sessions (up to 4 per year), we are concerned about not seeing any change due to the small dosage.</p>	<p>The provider should propose a training intensity it believes is adequate within the budget. Note that the RFP requires four site visits by the ‘external provider’. In addition to the training and site visits by the provider, the schools will receive one day of MTSS-R coach support each week.</p>
<p>15. What would the booster and new staff trainings would look like in years subsequent to the first summer training? How many of these are expected? How extensive will the training be?</p>	<p>The provider should propose what it considers the best training and support model within the budget. For example, the booster trainings could address issues that schools/teachers struggled with during the previous implementation year, or the booster training could be used to train teachers in grades 1 and 2 who new to the school.</p> <p>In general, we expect there to be up to 5 days of direct teacher training during the summer before year 1 and 2 of implementation. The provider should decide how to allocate these days in year 2 between booster trainings and trainings that may provide new content.</p>
<p>16. Will the provider have the discretion to employ their own measures of MTSS and EBP implementation fidelity?</p>	<p>We expect the provider to propose its own MTSS and EBP implementation fidelity measures and to share the data collected with the study team. The study team will collect implementation related data (e.g., coaching logs and MTSS-R team meeting minutes in treatment schools to describe coaching dosage and how often school teams meet; teacher and interventionist surveys to compare implementation of the four MTSS-R components in treatment and control schools). However, the study team will not collect additional data on</p>

	schools' fidelity to the provider's MTSS-R approach.
17. Although the provider has considerable experience in estimating and organizing national travel to schools, are we able to resubmit a budget once we have more detailed information about selected implementation sites?	We expect there to be slight changes in the scope of work and budget depending on the sites selected. We will negotiate any changes needed with the selected provider.



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