Purpose and Description

## What is the Purpose of This Guide?

This guide summarizes evidence-based, positive, and proactive practices that support and respond to students' social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) needs in classrooms and similar teaching and learning environments (e.g., small-group activity). Within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework, educators can (a) implement these practices for all students to provide universal support (Tier 1), (b) target practices to support small groups of students with similar needs (Tier 2), and (c) intensify and individualize practices further to meet specific needs of individual students (Tier 3). These practices help educators prioritize instruction; promote meaningful and equitable outcomes; and support students' SEB and academic growth.

What Needs to be in Place Before I Can Expect These Practices to Work?

The effectiveness of these practices are maximized when: (a) the practices are implemented within a schoolwide MTSS framework, such as positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS; see www. pbis.org); (b) classroom and schoolwide expectations and systems are directly linked; (c) classroom practices are merged with effective instructional design, curriculum, and delivery; and (d) classroom data are used to guide decision making. The following school and classroom supports (Table A) should be in place to optimize the fidelity and benefits of implementation.

Table A. Supports to Optimize Fidelity and Implementation

School supports	Classroom supports
• A **MTSS framework** that includes practices for identifying and teaching positive expectations and SEB skills, acknowledging SEB skills and contextually appropriate behavior, and responding to contextually inappropriate behavior. • Within the MTSS framework, educators **align and integrate** SEB practices to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. • **Schoolwide data** guide decisions related to screening, progress monitoring, promoting fidelity, and maximizing student outcomes. • Appropriate **systems of support for staff** are provided, including leadership teaming, supporting policy, training, coaching, implementation monitoring, and positive and supportive feedback.	• Classroom practices are **linked** to schoolwide framework. • Educators **integrate** instructional and SEB practices to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. • Classroom support decisions are guided by **classroom data**. • Effective **instructional practices** (e.g., high-leverage practices) are implemented equitably; and **curriculum** is culturally relevant, evidence-based, preventative, and matched to student need. • Positive and proactive **systems** (e.g., access to training, coaching, implementation monitoring, and positive and supportive feedback) support educators in each classroom.
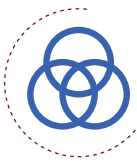
What are the Principles that Guide the Use of These Practices in the Classroom?

The five guiding principles (Figure 1) are foundational values that drive the success of these classroom practices. When using this document, use these principles to guide practice selection, implementation, and enhancement to maximize contextual and cultural relevance and ultimately student benefit.

- Prioritize **equity**. MTSS is for *all* students, families, and educators. All means *all*; in other words, MTSS supports individuals from all ability, race/ethnicity, gender, and LGBTQIA+, backgrounds. Use the MTSS framework to differentiate supports for students, and monitor to promote equitable access and outcomes among all student groups.

- Make student growth and benefit central to all decisions. Student **outcomes** that reflect equitable learning opportunities must be the ultimate criteria for all decisions, including those related to practice selection, implementation, and enhancement.

- Prioritize the most efficient and effective **practices**. Emphasize practices that address identified needs, have supporting evidence, and match the local culture and context. Promote high-quality implementation across time. Integrate, align, and connect practices within domains: (a) effective environments, instruction, and intervention to support SEB and academic growth and (b) high leverage academic instruction to support student learning. Most importantly, do a few important and relevant practices well, that is, with the high degree of accuracy, fluency, durability, and adaptability.
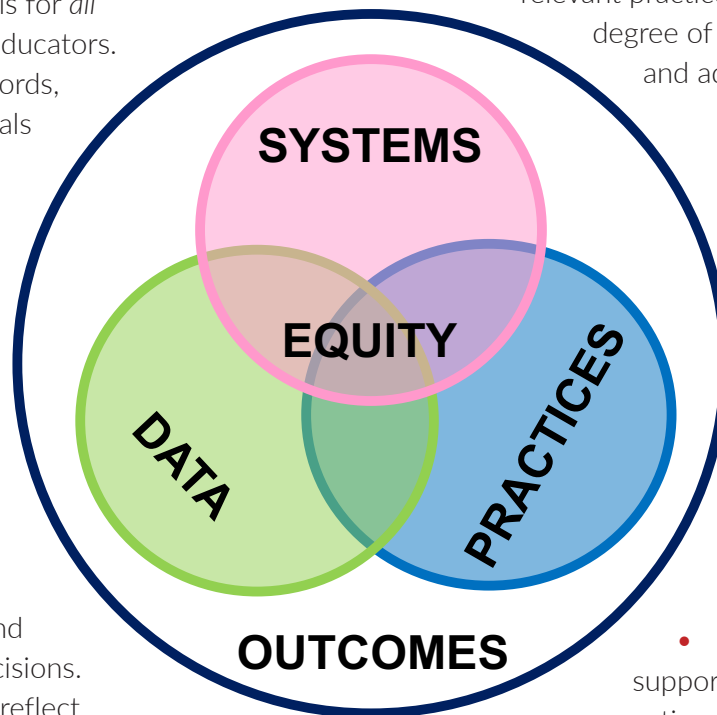
- Use **data** to inform decisions to (a) determine which students need which supports (screening); (b) promote effective implementation (fidelity); (c) continue, adjust, or fade supports (progress monitoring); and (d) ensure all students experience benefit (equitable outcomes).

- Invest in **systems** to support high-fidelity implementation across time. Leverage existing leadership teams to guide planning and implementation, and consider efficient and effective means to support educators' professional learning and wellness within current resources, experience, and expertise.

Figure 1. Guiding Principles