



Student Assistance Team Policy

- I. **Purpose.** This Policy outlines the process for student interventions and requests/referrals for initial evaluation for students with a suspected disability. The Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) and Student Assistance Teams (SAT) are part of the intervention process.
- II. **Function and Design.** The MLSS is a coordinated, comprehensive framework for providing all students with increasingly intensive evidence-based interventions to support their academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs. The layer of support provided to students is data-informed and needs-based; layers are fluid and not necessarily sequential. MLSS occurs at every level of intervention, prior to and during the SAT process and is available to all students, including students in special education. The MLSS and SAT processes are intended to be conversations and opportunities to collaborate with students, parents, families, and school site educators to support each student learner.

The SAT is a school-based group that works collaboratively with parents, students and families that reviews existing MLSS data regarding academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports provided to students experiencing difficulties that prevent them from benefiting from general education, as well as modifies such interventions and/or determines whether to refer a student for a special education evaluation.

Referral to the SAT is not required for assigning a student to layered interventions as part of MLSS. Appropriate interventions should be provided to all students regardless of referral to the SAT, and regardless of Section 504, special education or gifted determination, or potential determination. Parents may also collaborate on appropriate interventions in the MLSS process in addition to the formal processes of SAT or initial evaluation.

The School shall provide time embedded within the regular school schedule for all students to access targeted and intensive learner interventions or advanced instruction described as follows:

- in small group settings;
- aligned with New Mexico standard; and
- not to exceed twenty-five percent of instructional hours.

Student placement in embedded intervention or advanced instruction shall be reviewed each quarter and students shall be moved in or out of embedded intervention or advanced instruction based on quantitative and qualitative MLSS data.

Embedded intervention or advanced instruction time shall be provided to students without forgoing instruction in art, music, theater, dance, computer science, physical education, library, or other enrichment or experiential learning activities or courses.

Equitable access. Students in any layer shall have access to grade-appropriate, standards-aligned instruction seventy-five percent or more of their instructional hours unless instructional time is allocated differently in an IEP of a student receiving special education or gifted education services.

Student needs are met through three layers of MLSS support:

- Layer 1: all students receive screening in the areas of health and well-being, language proficiency status, and academic levels of proficiency, support and high-quality core instruction, aligned to New Mexico content standards. Layer 1 includes differentiated instruction, which could incorporate enrichment opportunities for students who are mastering content.
- Layer 2: students will receive targeted interventions if they are not making expected progress (academically or behaviorally) or are insufficiently challenged academically. Students receiving Layer 2 targeted interventions receive core curriculum and instruction plus targeted evidence-based interventions.
- Layer 3: students will receive intensive evidence-based interventions if they are not making expected progress with Layer 1 or 2 interventions, or are experiencing an educational crisis. Students receiving Layer 3 interventions receive the core curriculum and instruction, plus targeted interventions, plus intensive evidence-based interventions.

Parents may request an Initial Special Education Evaluation in any layer or at any time to determine whether a student is a child with a disability requiring special education and/or related service, in accordance with 6.31.2.10 NMAC. The School may determine a referral to special education is necessary at any time during the implementation of MLSS if the student is suspected of having a disability.

The School shall complete the MLSS Self-assessment annually and shall include a report on intervention systems in NM School DASH.

III. Definitions. For the purposes of this procedural directive,

- “Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS)” means a coordinated and comprehensive framework that uses increasingly intensive evidence-based academic and behavioral supports that address student needs as evidenced by student data. It is a model for holistic school improvement that provides progress measures for additional supports such as school-based team structures, professional development, health and wellness, and family and community engagement. MLSS satisfies the definition of “multi-tiered system of supports” contained within the ESSA.
- “Student Assistance Team (SAT)” means a school-based group of people whose purpose is to recommend additional educational support to students experiencing difficulties preventing them from benefiting from general education.
- “Educational Crisis” means an emotional or environmental situation that may be transitory or permanent in nature and that impacts the resiliency of a student and his or

her potential for academic success. An educational crisis may be the result of social determinants of health. A crisis may be precipitated by school, community, and/or family factors including negative or unsafe school or community environment, a sustained lack of educational opportunity or rigor, food scarcity, lack of cross-cultural sensitivity, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts, death of family or friend, student or family drug/alcohol addiction, domestic violence, child abuse, and/or homelessness/unstable housing, among others.

IV. Multi-Layered System of Supports

A. General Screening and Data for all students

General data collection and universal screening provides essential and baseline information around students' strengths and needs. This information includes students' present/historical levels of performance, standardized test results, health records and other available data within the Student Information System (SIS). Teacher-based teams will analyze and utilize these multiple data points to evaluate student learning, monitor student progress and to inform instruction.

The following are examples of general screening and data collection applicable to all students:

- Summative, Interim, and Formative Assessments/Screeners
- Placement tests
- Progress reports
- Documented teacher observations (including study skills, social behaviors, learning styles, student work samples, academic skills, etc.)
- Vision and hearing screening (in accordance with APS Nurse Procedure Manual)
- Review of health records
- Attendance records
- Cumulative file data
- Primary languages/alternative language services
- Screening tools (gifted)
- Behavior data
- Health and wellness team records
- Class work
- Homework

B. Interventions and Layered Supports for all students

All students shall have access to Layer 1, 2, and 3 instruction and interventions without a need to convene a SAT meeting.

Interventions are actions designed to meet the individual student's needs in an educational setting. Interventions may include but are not limited to:

- Changing instructional strategies for the student
- Obtaining parental involvement (when appropriate) including notification and/or conference
- Initiating a behavior management system for the student
- Conducting a documented observation of the learning environment and the individual student's behavior
- Providing special services/programs (i.e., Title I, Alternative Language, 504)
- Providing school-based tutoring

- Providing school counseling/health and wellness services
- Providing substance abuse intervention and support
- Providing enrichment and/or acceleration support for students mastering grade-level standards
- Reassigning student to another class(es)/level
- Utilizing existing core curriculum and assessment resources
- Utilizing available research and evidence-informed intervention

C. Layer 1

In Layer 1, all students receive screening in the areas of general health and well-being, language proficiency status, and academic levels of proficiency. If data from universal screening and progress monitoring suggests that a particular student is in need of additional behavioral and academic supports, then teacher teams will make a determination on whether or not the student would benefit from targeted or intensive interventions. When a student moves up or down a layer, teacher teams may consult with non-teacher staff such as counselors, paraprofessionals, administrators, and ancillary personnel to inform the teacher team on how to plan and implement relevant learner interventions in the general education environment.

D. Layer 2

In Layer 2, a teacher team conducts the student study process and considers, implements, and documents the effectiveness of appropriate evidence-based interventions utilizing curriculum-based measures. As part of this process, the teacher team addresses culture and acculturation, socioeconomic status, possible lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, teaching and learning styles and instructional delivery mechanisms in order to rule out other possible causes of the student's educational difficulties.

E. Layer 3

In Layer 3, students are provided with intensive academic and behavioral supports that are progress monitored on a bi-weekly basis. At the end of each progress monitoring cycle, the teacher team evaluates the efficacy of the supports provided using all available data. At that time, the teacher team may decide whether to continue with the current support, change the intensity, or nature of support. If progress monitoring data suggests that the learner has benefited from Layer 3 supports and all current concerns have been addressed, then the teacher team may decide to move the student out of receiving Layer 3 supports.

V. Student Assistance Team

The purpose of the SAT is to review referrals and the effectiveness of layered interventions provided through MLSS, provide additional educational support, make retention recommendations, and refer students for a special education or gifted education evaluation. If the team suspects a student has a disability and requires special education and related services, the SAT will proceed with a referral for an Initial Special Education Evaluation.

All members of the SAT must be trained in School policies related to the SAT process. The team's membership may include:

- School administrator
 - Teacher
 - School counselor
 - Parent
 - Diagnostician (when a student is referred due to a suspected disability)
- Additionally, the following persons may participate in the SAT as necessary and as available:

- Student (as appropriate)
- Multi-grade teacher representation
- School nurses
- Reading or math interventionists
- McKinney-Vento homeless liaisons
- Second-language acquisition specialists (bilingual or TESOL endorsed teachers, etc.)
- Representatives from the Children Youth and Families Department
- Representatives from community agencies (school-based health centers, community-based truancy centers, etc.)

SAT Student Referral

At any layer, parent(s) may refer a student to SAT. Classroom teacher(s) and other person(s) should refer a student to SAT at any layer if a student requires a formal written intervention plan or behavior intervention plan or if it is suspected that the student has a disability that requires special education and related services.

Referrals to SAT may also occur to address the following statutory situations: obvious disability, gifted referral, student has been identified as a student with dyslexia, a student has been or is in danger of being retained, student exited from special education, or student without a Section 504 plan or IEP has been restrained two or more times in a thirty (30)-day period. (For students with a 504 plan or IEP, the 504 team or IEP team will review restraints.)

Parental Notification/Consent

Prior to initiating a SAT meeting, parents will be provided written notification of the scheduled meeting. Parental consent will be obtained prior to any Speech, Language, and Gifted screeners.

The SAT will review the layer plan interventions that address individual student needs specific to the skill deficit along with progress monitoring data in order to make an appropriate determination of next steps.

The SAT plan will be maintained in the School's records and will include:

- Referral Information
- Area of concern
- Present levels of performance (academic, behavioral, and social-emotional) including areas in need of improvement and strengths
- Health assessment (in accordance with the APS Nurse Procedural Manual)
- Teacher developed classroom intervention plan and MLSS data
- Goals and instructional strategies/interventions

- Timelines - implementation and effects of interventions are documented and monitored.
- Progress monitoring data
- Outcomes of the instructional strategies/intervention
- Any additional relevant data such as medical documentation or existing evaluation

SAT Meeting Determination

At the SAT meeting, after reviewing all collected data, the SAT makes one of the following determinations:

- Continue or modify interventions through SAT, determines successful/unsuccessful interventions, and suggests additional intervention strategies recommended by SAT
- Exit the student from SAT (MLSS continues)
- Referral for Initial Special Education Evaluation. The student's performance indicates a suspected disability and that the student may need special education and/or related services and/or giftedness
- Recommendation for retention/promotion
- Referral for further evaluation under Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act when the student has, or is suspected of having a disability or disability condition which substantially limits a major life activity if the SAT does not suspect that the student also needs special education and related services.

When it is determined that a student has an obvious disability, the SAT shall address the student's needs promptly on an individualized basis, which may include a referral for an initial evaluation to determine possible eligibility for special education and related services consistent with the requirements of the IDEA and State law (6.29.1.9 NMAC).

Approved by the Coral Community Charter School Governing Council on 8 8 2023.