

Spring 2026



Inclusion in Catholic Schools: A Report from the Field

Responses from 224 Catholic School Leaders and 51 Diocesan-Level School Leaders

This document contains a summary of survey results gathered from Catholic school leaders with regard to the way students with disabilities are included and the ways schools and (arch)diocesan schools offices prepare their teachers to include students with disabilities.

**Developed and Reviewed by the Catholic Schools Committee of the
National Catholic Partnership on Disability**

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Background

In 1978, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) published its first pastoral letter on persons with disabilities. It called for a national resource (NCPD, 1982) to provide training and resources to advance the call to include all Catholics in the full life of the Church, including Catholic education. In 2016, the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) published the white paper "One Spirit, One Body," describing why educating students with disabilities in Catholic schools is part of the mission of Catholic education. In the fall of 2024 and winter of 2025, NCPD's Catholic Schools Committee surveyed Catholic school leaders to gauge progress on inclusion to date. This document provides the survey results, analysis, and considerations.

Data Collection Process

The Catholic Schools Committee of NCPD partnered with NCEA on the effort of data collection. NCEA distributed the superintendent survey to attendees at the October 2024 Catholic Leadership Summit and via email after the conference to member superintendents. Responses to the 2024 survey came from superintendents and assistant superintendents.

NCEA emailed school leader surveys to their member principals in February 2025. As such, the majority of respondents are NCEA members. Committee members and NCPD employees also contacted other Catholic organizations to invite their schools to participate in the surveys, but few responded. Twelve independent Catholic schools participated in the survey.



Purpose

Data From the Field The purpose of collecting data from Catholic school leaders in school and diocesan roles was to provide an up-to-date snapshot of how inclusion of students with disabilities is being prioritized and practiced in Catholic schools nationwide.

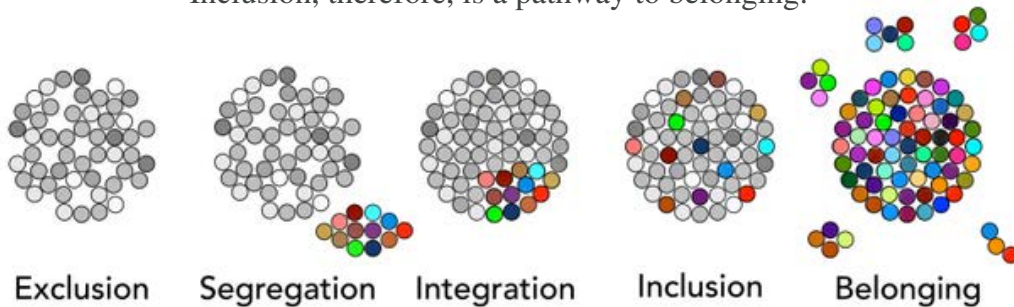
Inclusion as Mission As was stated in the 1978 USCCB Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities and the 2016 "One Spirit, One Body" NCEA white paper, persons with disabilities are agents of catechesis who are intended to be represented as members of the full Body of Christ in all ministries, including in Catholic education.

Inclusion Defined

The images below provide visual examples of the ways people experience exclusion, segregation, integration, inclusion, and belonging. In Catholic schools, a common goal is development of the whole child, which includes spiritual, academic, social, physical, psychological, and emotional development. Catholic schools aim to help students see the gifts they have been given by God and to develop and use those gifts in service to others to enhance the world around them.

The ultimate goals of inclusion are multi-faceted. One goal is creating places where people can be honored for how God created them by successfully developing and contributing their gifts to serve others. Another goal is to create places where difference is honored so that all of God’s children, all who make up the Body of Christ, find a place where they belong.

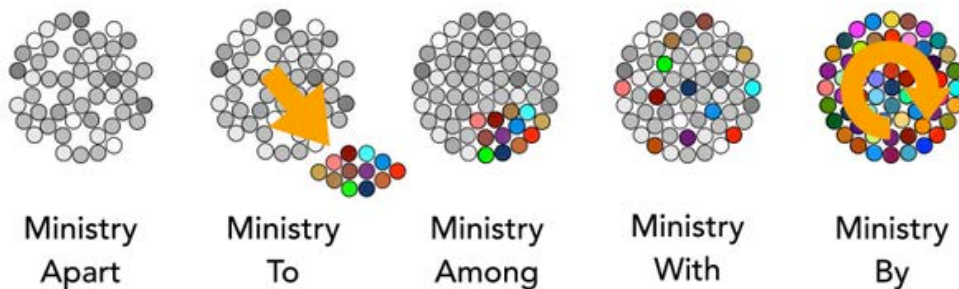
Inclusion, therefore, is a pathway to belonging.



Inclusion in Ministry

Education is a ministry of the Church that serves 1.6 million children K-12 (NCEA 2024-2025 enrollment data). This ministry forms children’s values, beliefs, and attitudes for life. Who they learn with, who their friends are, and how they see God in others develops their perspectives of the world during these formative years.

The graphics below provide a visual example of the way inclusive ministry impacts communities. This example reflects the statement, “They [persons with disabilities] are not just recipients of catechesis, they are its agents” (USCCB, 2005).



Reflecting on Current Practices

How much progress has been made in Catholic schools?

Nearly 50 years have elapsed since the USCCB first called attention to the need for proper preparation so that persons with disabilities can have full participation in the Christian community. NCEA echoed the call to include students with disabilities in Catholic schools and defined the mission of inclusion in 2016 through “One Spirit, One Body.” Progress made toward fulfilling these calls varies widely throughout the country. Survey results provide insight into the variances in expectations for inclusion, resources utilized and needed to successfully include students, use of systems of support for effective instruction and inclusion, and how professional development is offered and utilized to make inclusion possible.

Revisiting A Rationale for Inclusion

Catholics everywhere would be hard-pressed to deny the truth about human life--that we are all created uniquely and unrepeatably, granted distinctive gifts from God to use on earth to contribute to the communities to which each belongs and serve others through the use of those gifts. This is true of all human persons.

Catholic schools are places where service, virtue, faith, and love are part of daily practice, formation, and nearly every mission statement. Catholic schools exist to cultivate development of the whole person, not only faith and academics.

In 1986, St. John Paul II stated, “No one born into this world is free from human frailty — whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual [...] in the providence of God a different life does not mean a less important life. It does not mean a life with less potential for holiness or for contributing to the well-being of the world.” (Address of John Paul II to the Sick and the Handicapped) The call for Catholic schools to execute the mission through ministry is clear and undeniable in Catholic documents from the USCCB, in Scripture, and in papal addresses.

In observing Catholic schools across the country, it seems that even when leaders and teachers understand the mission and rationale for serving all students, including persons with disabilities, implementing practices, increasing knowledge and skills for all Catholic educators, and developing robust systems of support are challenging for many schools and dioceses.

Policies on Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

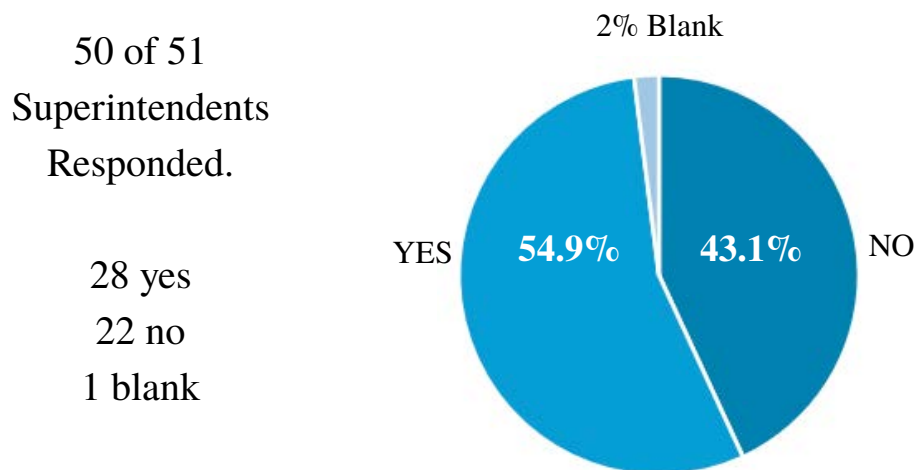
The Survey and its Participants

In the United States, there are 192 Catholic dioceses. Fifty-one (51) diocesan-level leaders (superintendents or assistant superintendents) responded to the survey.

There are approximately 5,800 Catholic schools that serve populations between preschool and grade 12 in the United States. Two hundred twenty-four (224) principals/school leaders responded to the survey.

Superintendents were asked three questions. The school leaders' survey was lengthier and asked 15 questions, with some of those questions having multiple response options. As such, the majority of the information in this report is derived from school leader responses.

Superintendents were asked, “Is there an expectation in your Diocese, reflected in policy or mission statement, that schools are inclusive of students with any disability?”



Fifteen of the 28 diocesan leaders that said yes (51.7%) provided language or an explanation.

Whether a policy exists or not, diocesan leaders influence school operations, including admissions of students with disabilities, through the ways they provide support or respond to questions from school leaders and parents. The responses provided by diocesan leadership reflect local expectations and dispositions regarding inclusion in Catholic schools.

Diocesan School Leaders' Responses Regarding Policies and Expectations

When asked to provide verbiage from policies, some respondents provided policies and others commented on policies. Here are some responses:

One response that supports inclusion in schools stated:

“All schools are to maintain an Individual Needs Committee for the purpose of supporting students and getting them the maximum services possible.”

One diocese that has affirmed dedication to inclusion in schools but is early on the journey shared:

“[An expectation to include] is expressed in the Diocesan strategic plan -- no current pastor or school leader (or even teacher or parent) is unaware of the emphasis. That said, we still have a long way to go.”

Another responder stated: *“[We are] committed to serving children of varying special needs... dedicated to encouraging schools to expand their educational programs to include a wide range of students.”*

Another diocese cited a specific process: *“Students who are struggling and/or have been identified with special needs will be served through the diocesan CARE Process within the MTSS Framework to the extent that each Catholic school is able to appropriately accommodate students' needs in a way that is safe and does not interfere with the learning environment.”*

One diocesan leader stated, *“Catholic schools are not required to meet the needs of every child... they should not enroll any students whose needs cannot be met by the school's current program, resources, and available staff.”*



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

What are multi-tiered systems of support, or MTSS?

Several questions within the survey to school leaders were about MTSS. Responses indicated a lack of clarity on what MTSS is, how it is applied in schools, and what school personnel need to know in order to implement MTSS effectively.

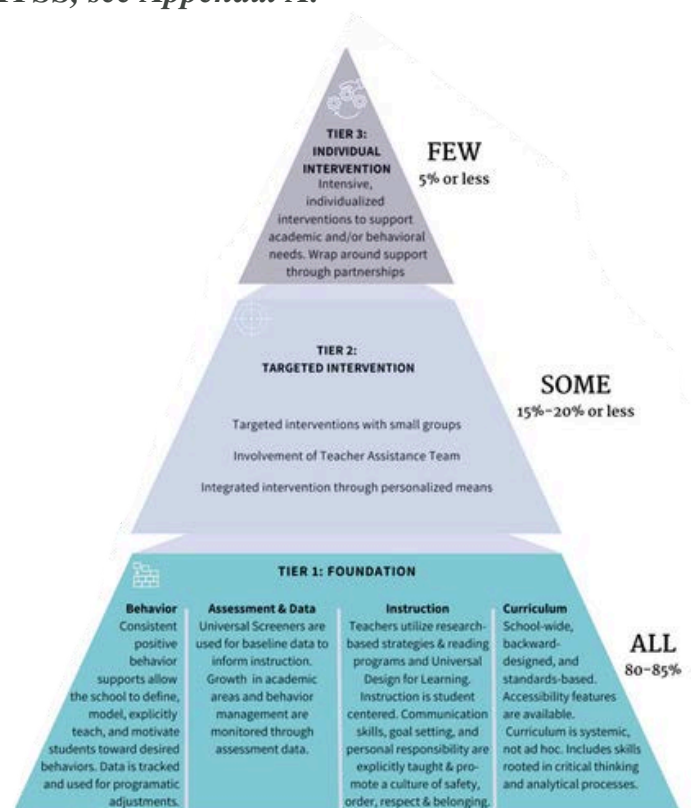
Below is a graphic that describes the tiered system, including the percent of students likely to fall into each tier of needed support.

To clarify, MTSS is not a special education program. Tier 1 is the education all children receive. When Tier 1 instruction is effective, evidence-based, and naturally differentiated, 80-85% of students will be successful in a general education classroom, whether they have a disability or not.

Students receiving support through targeted intervention may receive support in one subject area or to build a specific skill or fill a skill gap. Tier 2 intervention may occur for any student and often occurs as a precursor to a referral for psychoeducational testing.

Tier 3 intervention is intensive and may be provided in or outside of school and is necessary only for the few students identified with high levels of need in an academic, behavioral, or other health area.

For more information on MTSS, see Appendix A.



Why MTSS Matters

This survey included several questions about MTSS to gauge the understanding and utilization by schools to effectively support all learners in Catholic schools in the United States. Responses to the MTSS questions show a wide variance in understanding its implementation and its connection to inclusion.

The respondent that stated, *“Catholic schools are not required to meet the needs of every child... they should not enroll any students whose needs cannot be met by the school’s current program, resources, and available staff”* later stated that enrollment decisions for children with disabilities should be made based on whether the child’s needs can be met utilizing services provided by the LEA along with *“...the school’s education program that is available to all children.”*

This statement encapsulates the rationale for Catholic school leaders and personnel to understand MTSS. If the foundation for inclusion is dependent upon a school’s current program of instruction, then if a school hopes to be successfully inclusive, it must provide excellent and highly effective Tier 1 instruction. If Tier 1 instruction, or **the program of instruction all students receive**, is not highly effective, the possibility of success is not guaranteed for any student, neurotypical or neurodivergent.

Inclusion Begins with Commitment

Many respondents expressed an expectation and desire for schools in their diocese to be inclusive. Dedication to the mission is articulated in many different ways.

“Our mission is to create a Catholic school system where all means all.”

“...each child is uniquely created in God’s image and that all children can learn.”

“...strives to be inclusive...and provide a Catholic faith-based education for all who want one.”

Others described a commitment in more general terms by stating they are

“dedicated to encouraging schools to expand their educational programs to include a wide range of students.”

“...foster inclusionary practices and a culture of inclusion.”

“...educate students...through...programs that strive to be accessible to all.”

Understanding Multi-Tiered Systems of Support as a Means of Creating Inclusive Schools:

School-Level Leader Responses to Use of MTSS

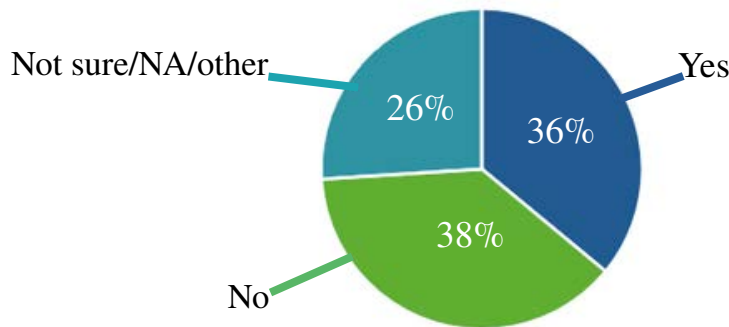
Two hundred twenty-four (224) school leaders were asked whether they use MTSS in their schools and if so, which programs are used for reading, math, and behavior support. For reading, 180 leaders responded, for math, 158 leaders responded, and for behavior 147 leaders responded.

Those responses are disaggregated in the following sections.

Reading

School leaders were asked, *“Does your school use MTSS? If so, what programs or supports do you use for reading?”* Thirty-six percent (36% or 81 leaders) responded yes and named reading support strategies or programs. Thirty-eight percent (38% or 85 leaders) said no. Twenty-six percent (26% or 58 leaders) left no response, responded N/A, not sure, or named an assessment.

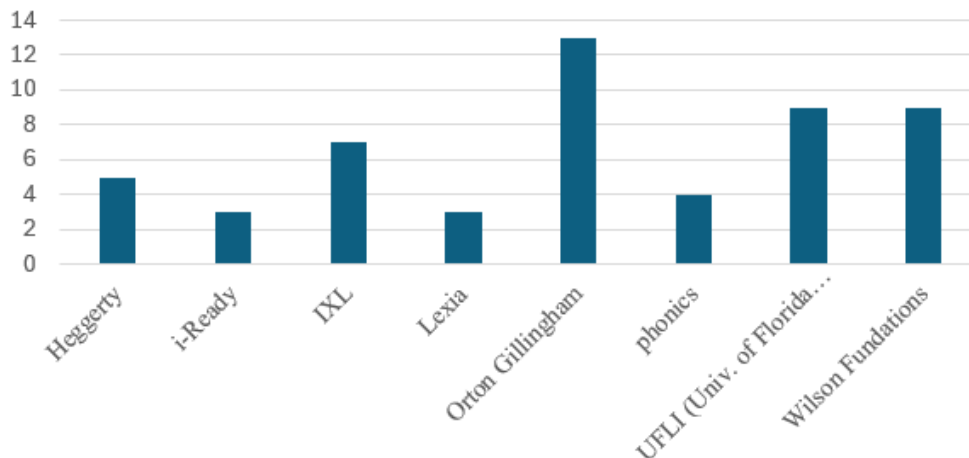
**Note: The responses for “programs used for reading support” were a mix of strategies (i.e. small grouping or leveling groups), some were intervention programs (i.e. Wilson or Orton Gillingham), some were curriculum programs that have reading support resources included.*



Of the 81 leaders that stated use of MTSS for reading, responses included methodologies, strategies, Tier 1 curriculum, and other non-specific responses to students who are not succeeding with Tier 1 instruction.

Reading intervention programs mentioned three or more times are indicated in the table.

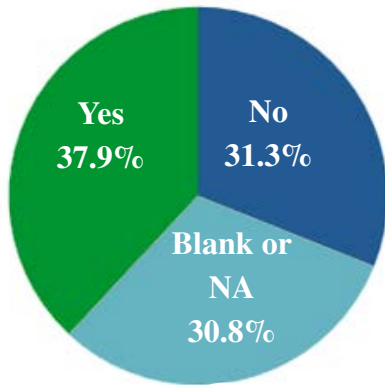
Programs/Systems/Strategies Mentioned 3 or more times



Math

School leaders were asked: **“Does your school use MTSS? If yes, what programs or supports do you use for math?”** Of the 224 participants, 70 said no, 66 left it blank, 3 wrote N/A, and 85 inserted a comment or a yes with comment. Unlike with reading, responses were not repetitive or consistent. Only IXL was mentioned six times.

Do You Use MTSS for Math?



Comments shared by leaders include the following:

“We use Savaas Math for core and tier 1. For tier 2 and 3, we have tier time daily for K-5 where students are broken into smaller groups. No set curriculum.”

“We use supports we have developed over time.”

“We have a Tiered Math program, where students who need to close gaps in their grade level material can get support to do so.”

“Used by learning specialists, unknown to me.”

“Yes- leveling of classes and supplemental math classes.”

“We use Eureka Math Squared, supplemented with Edmentum, ALEKS, and IXL.”

“We have a curriculum assistance class staffed by both a Math and ELA educator who are supported by a trained special education educator who is our Director of Learning Support. These educators provide ongoing support for students based on their needs.”

“Yes. We offer Title I Math Intervention.”

“Yes. Special Ed Teacher and paraprofessional support in math classes.”

“Yes- 1) classroom differentiation 2) MATH small group instruction daily 3) one on one instruction from classroom teacher 4) one on one assessments given by resource team 5) after school tutoring by classroom teacher.”

“We use MTSS for interventions and supports, primarily around EF but nothing subject specific.”

“Yes - we have small group instruction in every class, we also have resource staff that support students who need intervention.”

“Yes, whole group instruction, small groups, math strategy interventions, response to intervention (RTI), teachers assisting teachers (TAT), tutoring, GATE, IXL math.”

Behavior

School leaders were asked,

Does your school use MTSS? If yes, what programs or supports do you use for behavior?

Of the 147 responses, 73 responded No/None/Not at this time, and 12 wrote NA. The remaining 62 responded with a comment, strategy, or program name. Three programs/strategies were mentioned more than 3 times and are listed in the chart below. Respondent comments are listed beside the chart.

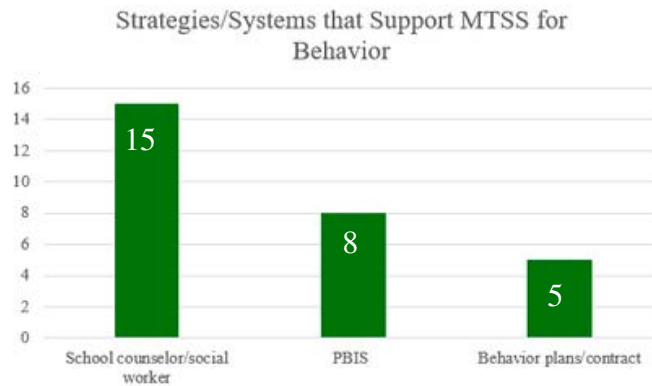
“We service ISP students with social-emotional needs.”

“Parent involvement.”

“Parent communication.”

“Character strong.”

“Depends on the student support plan.”



“Merit/demerit system.”

“Restorative justice.”

“Virtues program.”

“SEL.”

“Behavior plans.”

“Unsure.”

PBIS refers to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. PBIS is a proactive framework that reinforces desired behaviors and social and emotional health.

Making Connections

Behavior is mentioned in response to other survey questions as well. Those connections are noted below with page numbers to find more information.

When asked what they need from the diocesan offices to help them lead effective schools, 3.9% (5) of responses stated behavior support (see page 14 for full report of responses).

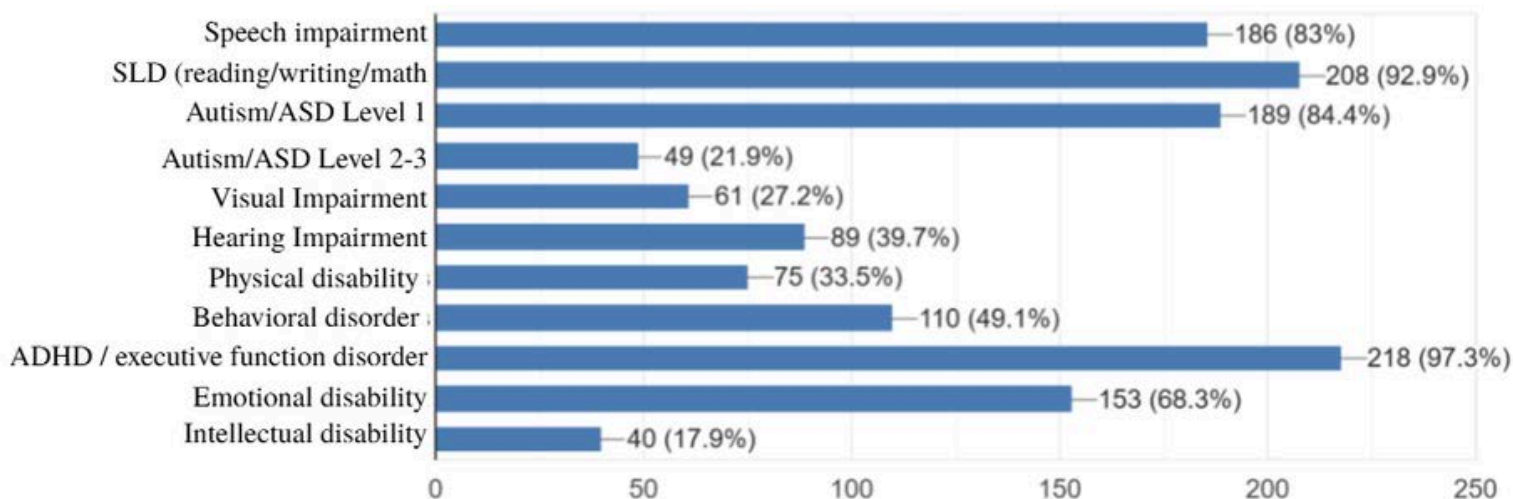
When asked if teacher training on behavioral strategies has been offered, 29.9% (67) of leaders said they do or have offered this, and 64.2% (144) said they would like to offer this type of training for teachers (see page 18 for full report).

15.2% of leaders responded that behaviors are a reason students cannot be served in their schools (see page 19).

School-Level Leader Responses Regarding Student Population

Who Attends Catholic Schools?

Two hundred twenty-four (224) school leaders responded to the prompt: “In the last two years, we have had students with the following disabilities”:



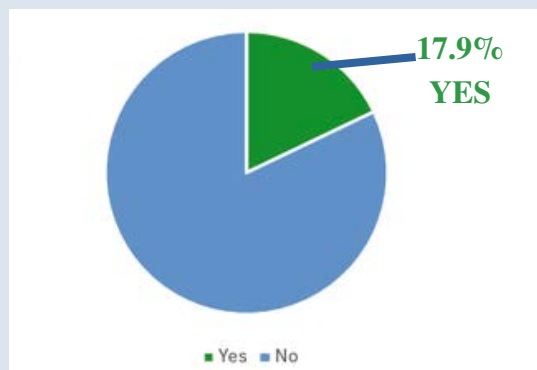
Statistics Debrief

Most respondents (208 of 224) reported having students with SLD (which is a specific learning disability that can be related to reading, writing, or math). According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the prevalence for students with SLD in reading and writing is around 20%. If 20% of the population (or 1 in 5 people) has SLD, it is understandable that most schools have students with these disabilities.

However, while nearly all schools (218 of 224) report having students with ADHD, the CDC reports the national statistic for ADHD at 11.4% (1 in 9 school-aged children ages 3-17). ADHD prevalence is reported with wide variance by state, according to the CDC website.

Notable among these statistics is **17.9% (40 of 224)** of respondents reported serving students with **intellectual disabilities.**

Less than 3% of the population of the United States is identified as having an **intellectual disability.**



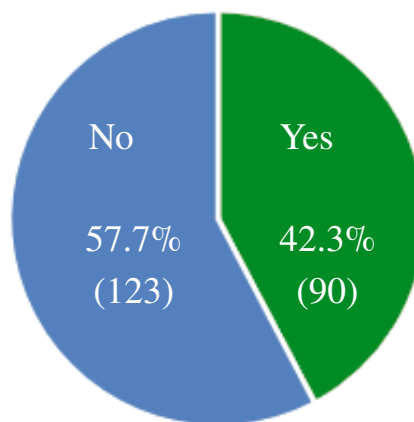
Resources and Support

Most Catholic schools operate under the rules of subsidiarity, meaning schools operate independently with local control and supervised by a pastor rather than the diocesan superintendent. This structure allows for little to no interference in (or control over) local decision making and operations.

To that end, a diocesan Catholic schools office or department operates not in a supervisory capacity but in a service and support capacity to the schools. One way the diocesan Catholic schools office or department can serve the schools is by providing professional development opportunities that help schools to meet the needs of all students, utilize research-based instructional methods and strategies, and ensure schools operate within the call of Catholic mission by defining and prioritizing the call to achieve fullness of mission as a ministry of the Church.

Two hundred twenty-four (224) school leaders were asked whether they receive needed support from the diocesan schools office to lead inclusive schools. Eleven (11) participants left this question blank, and 213 responded.

Do you receive the support you need from the (arch)diocesan offices to effectively lead an inclusive school?



Although nearly 58% of persons surveyed responded that they do not receive needed support, diocesan offices report that they provide professional learning opportunities on a variety of topics to advance inclusive practices. Twenty-two of the 51 responding superintendents (42%) stated that professional development is optional.

Needs Defined

When asked what they need from the diocesan schools office to help them lead inclusive schools, 96 school leaders left the question blank. Of the **128 responses** to this question, several leaders **responded with multiple answers**. These responses are itemized below.

Note: Percentages reflect the percent of persons that responded with this answer out of the 128 that responded. Also note that this question is asked in the context of “in the initiative of inclusion.”

What do you need from the CSO or other diocesan offices to effectively lead Catholic schools?

Funding/Resources	52	40.6%
Professional development or specific training	42	32.8%
Onsite, ongoing, effective professional development	6	4.6%
Personnel (diocesan dedicated person OR more people at the school level)	40	3.1%
Leadership on inclusion/Guidelines, Guidebook, or Policies/Vision/Systems of Support	18	14%
Convenings for support teachers or ways for schools to collaborate	8	6%
Behavior support	5	3.9%
Help with dispositional shift	3	2.3%
Something. Anything	3	2.3%

The most common answer “Funding/Resources,” is open to interpretation as funding might be used for training, personnel, or equipment, while the next most popular answers are more specifically identifying professional development/training and personnel.

Comments from school leaders regarding what is needed from the Office of Catholic Schools or other (arch)diocesan offices to help lead inclusive schools include:

“We need systems of support: someone leading the charge in the Catholic Schools Office; a committee of interested parties; relationships with allied supporters.”

“In order to have more inclusion, I think we would have to consider a child study team for just the diocese and then possibly look at schools sharing programs or staff.”

“A different teacher salary scale to accommodate highly trained special educators and behavior therapists.”

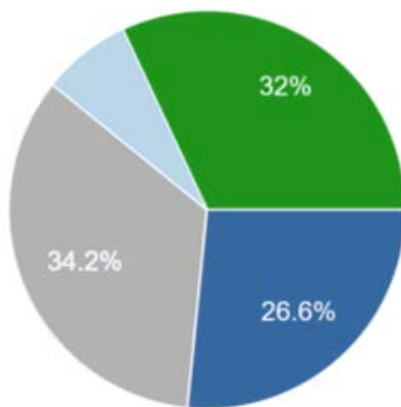
“Professional development, but we will not change our policy of not accepting IEP students.”

A Focus on Training and Personnel

Based on responses, Catholic schools have resource and support personnel with a variety of training and backgrounds.

The chart below shows the breakdown of 222 responses from school leaders to the following question:

Which statement reflects your staff and their specialized training?



34.2% We have resource/special education teachers with specialized training on staff.

32% We have resource/special education teachers on staff, some of whom have had specialized training.

26.6% We do not have resource/special education teachers on staff.

7.2% We have untrained resource/special education staff.

School leaders shared statements on the ways training and personnel deficits impact effectiveness of inclusion efforts.

“There are so many factors--teachers in the building are doing their best, but not trained in special education.”

“They [teachers] are trying, but need more staff as well.”

“Need more direct training for how to support learners with disabilities.”

“Locally we are able to provide certain accommodations and support to students. It would be beneficial to have a diocesan coordinator for this area to provide supports as well.”

Professional Development: System-Level and School-Level Responses

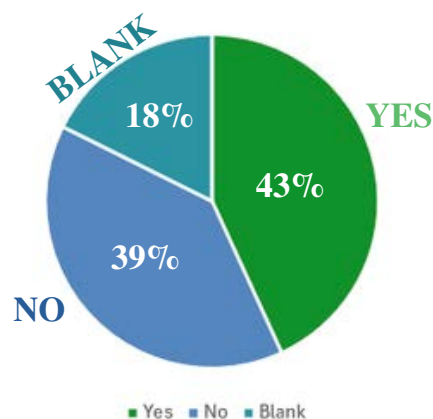
One of the ways schools can effectively serve all learners is by increasing teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching students with disabilities. Building teacher capacity can be done through ongoing, sustainable, effective professional development. The following 3 pages address professional learning through responses from system and school leaders.

System-level leaders and school-level leaders responded to questions regarding professional development.

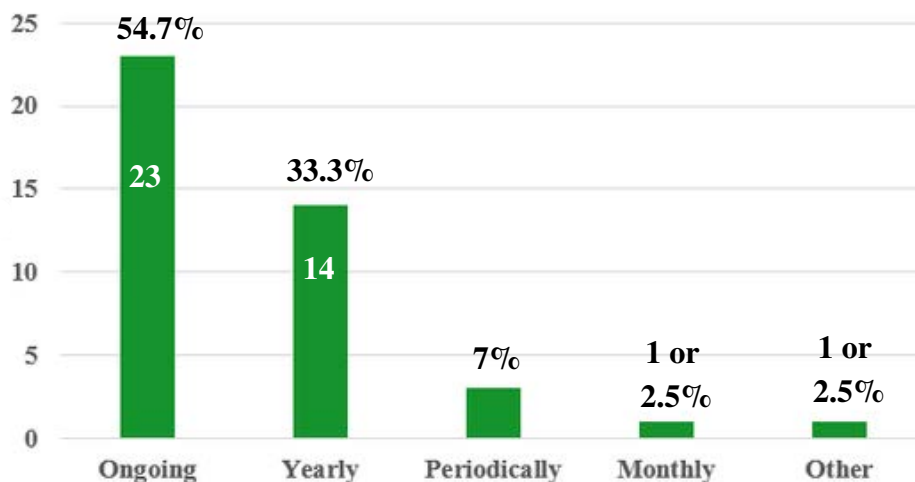
Superintendent Responses Regarding Professional Development

Diocesan-level leaders were asked **whether the professional development related to teaching students with disabilities is optional**. Forty-two (42) leaders responded; 9 left this question blank.

Note: The blank responses are from dioceses where there is no expectation or policy regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities.



Diocesan-level leaders were asked how often they offer trainings on topics related to teaching students with disabilities. Forty-two (42) leaders responded.



School leaders were asked about specific training opportunities for teachers.

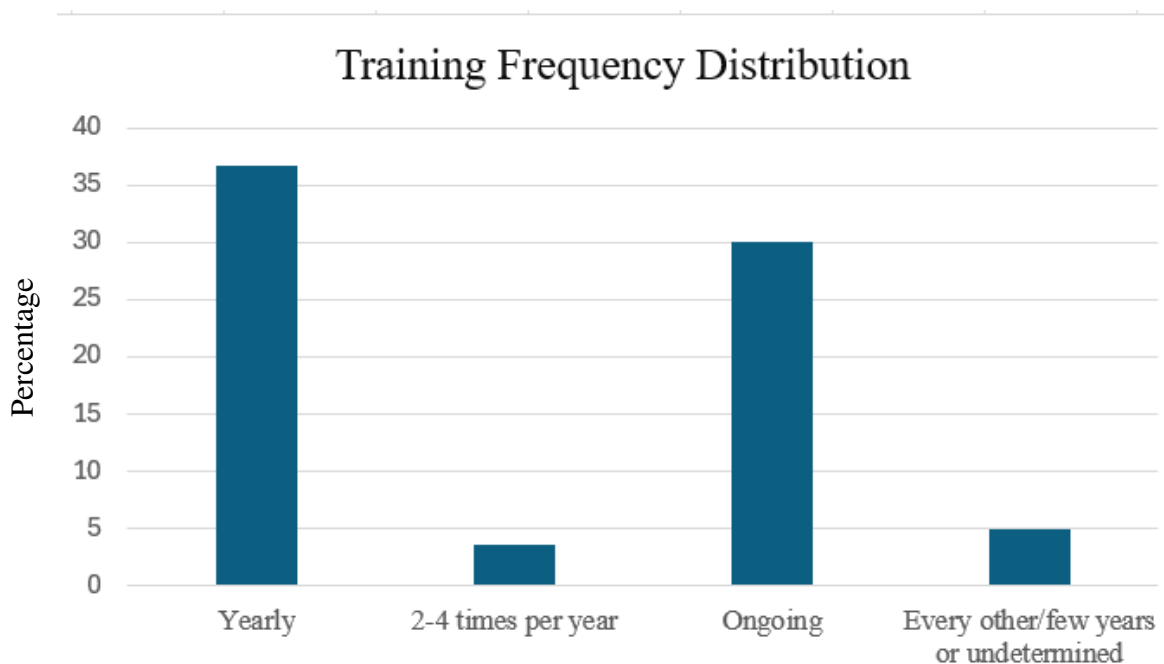
When asked **how often professional development related to learning disabilities or learning differences is offered to teachers**, 223 leaders responded.

36.7% (82) offer training yearly

3.6% (8) offer training 2 to 4 times per year

30% (67) offer ongoing training

4.9% (11) offer training every other or every few years or at undetermined times



“I would like to be able to better support students with learning differences by **helping their teachers have the training and tools** necessary.”

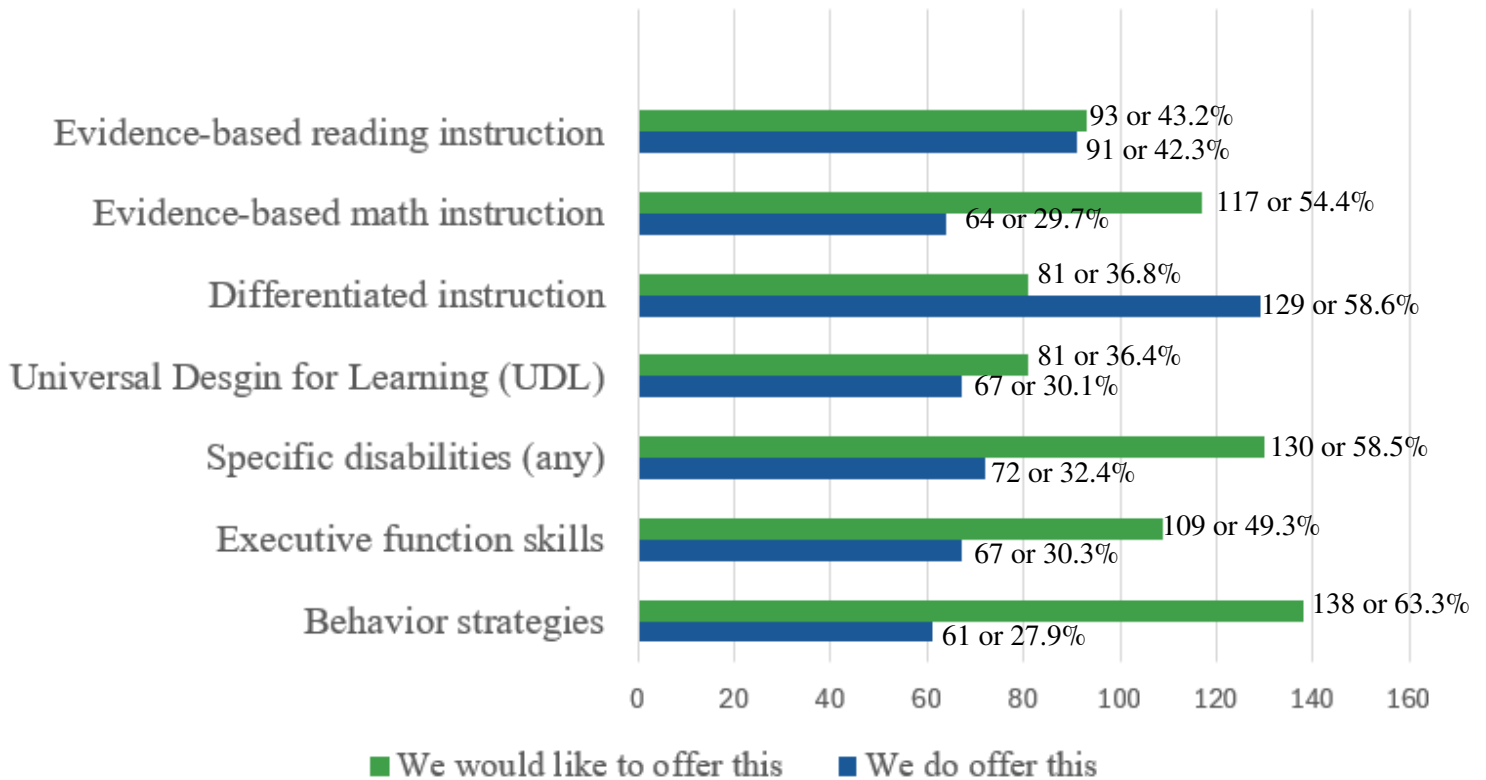
-School leader

This response is reflective of the understanding that Tier 1 **instruction delivered by teachers who are equipped** with knowledge and skills to teach children with disabilities is **foundationally necessary** to whether students with disabilities will succeed.

School leaders were asked about a variety of topics on which **teachers have received training in the past year** and topics that they **would like to be able to offer to their teachers**.

Numbers show both valid responses and percentage based on valid responses.

Professional Development Offerings



These responses indicate that school leaders want professional learning opportunities for teachers on the topics of behavior, executive functions, and specific learning disabilities. Additionally, while schools are focused on professional development in differentiated instruction, few are offering professional development on research-based Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which is rooted in delivery of Tier 1 instruction that naturally differentiates and takes all types of learning into consideration when lesson planning, designing classrooms, and assessing students.

Leaders also indicated that they **have NOT considered** offering PD to teachers in these specific areas.

10.6% for evidence-based reading instruction

13% for evidence-based math instruction

26.5% for UDL

7.6% for specific disability

14.4% for executive functions

Less than 1% for differentiated instruction

4% for behavior strategies

Exclusion

School leaders were asked,

At what point would you say you don't have the resources to support a student with disabilities?

Twenty-seven (27) leaders left this question blank. Of the 197 responses, some had multiple answers. The chart below shows how many of the 197 responders mentioned this item as a point at which they would determine that they do not have the resources to serve a student with disabilities.

Response	# of times this was named as a reason	% of responders that named this reason
Lack of staffing, lack of special ed programs, or help is needed beyond what the classroom teacher can provide	70	35.5%
We tried, but the student made no progress with intervention	26	13.2%
<u>Student is struggling</u> /Too far below grade level/Low test scores or GPA	13	6.5%
Behavior issues	30	15.2%
Intellectual disability/needs modifications beyond accommodations	23	11.6%
Student's disability is too severe/Student is deaf/Student is blind	13	6.5%
Physical disability/Cannot take care of physical self	13	6.5%
Autism Levels 2-3	11	5.6%
Emotional disability/Mental health issues	8	4%
Family is uncooperative or unsupportive	5	2.5%
Student affects the learning of others	4	2%
Teachers need training or PD	2	1%
<u>Student needs too much extra time</u>	2	1%
Too many students in 1 grade	2	1%

“There can be no separate Church for people with disabilities. We are one flock that serves a single shepherd.”

Summary, Key Points, and Considerations for Practice

The data in this report reveal that there is a wide range of ways schools are including and serving students with disabilities. Many schools invest much time and many resources to ensure inclusion can occur while others are precluded by policies that do not allow students to have modified curriculum and pursue alternative pathways to graduation. This report concludes with a summary and considerations for practice based on the broad, high-level view of the data collected from 51 diocesan-level and 224 school leaders.

Summary and Key Points in Context

- **Teacher preparation and professional development must assume all teachers teach students with disabilities. *AND...***

High-quality core instruction (Tier 1) is vital to effective inclusion. ***BUT...***

Understanding and implementation of MTSS for academic and behavioral support varies widely.

- **Inclusion of students with high-incidence/mild disabilities is common, though identification and models of inclusion and support vary widely. *THEREFORE...***

Mission and theological implications of being Catholic schools must accompany pedagogy, and opportunities for professional learning in both areas must exist if schools are to be successfully inclusive. ***BUT...***

System and school leaders agree that there is not enough ongoing, consistent training for school personnel to support inclusion. ***AND MAYBE...***

- **Mission and theological implications of being Catholic schools must accompany pedagogy, and opportunities for professional learning in both areas must exist if schools are to be successfully inclusive *BECAUSE...***

Inclusion of students with disabilities in Catholic schools has advanced with inconsistency throughout the United States.

Considerations for Practice

(Arch)Dioceses

Provide clear guidance and/or policies regarding inclusion of students with disabilities, especially with regard to modifications.

Form teachers in the theology and mission of inclusion as well as strong instructional practices that meet the needs of all learners.

Increase training opportunities and personnel. Learn how inclusion works in other dioceses and schools.

Provide ongoing, consistent, meaningful MTSS training for school leaders and monitor implementation.

Schools & Teachers

Local professional learning opportunities provided by the school for the teachers and staff rooted in mission and pedagogy to develop the necessary dispositions, knowledge, and skills to effectively include all students.

Choose, train, and use curriculum that provides strong resources for intervention and differentiation and is built on evidence-based pillars of language and numerical literacy and behavior.

Create sustainable support for students and teachers through systems rather than focusing on specially trained personnel/inclusion specialists. Specially trained personnel should fit into the system, not be the “program.”

Collaborate with other schools to share personnel and team up for training on topics that will increase teachers’ knowledge and skills (UDL, Science of Reading, Neuroscience of Math, PBIS, intervention, modifications, executive functioning, etc.).

School provides ongoing, required training in reading and math intervention and specific learning disabilities for teachers and staff.

Acknowledgements

“We must aim to build an educational relationship with each student, who must feel welcomed and loved for what he or she is, with all of their limitations and potential.”

-Pope Francis

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Catholic school teachers, leaders, and parents that advocate for the participation of all children in the ministries of the Catholic Church to ensure they know that they were created with unique gifts to share. Because of you, they are seen, known, loved, and know they belong.

"Although academic accomplishments matter, relationships and belonging matter most when it comes to human flourishing."

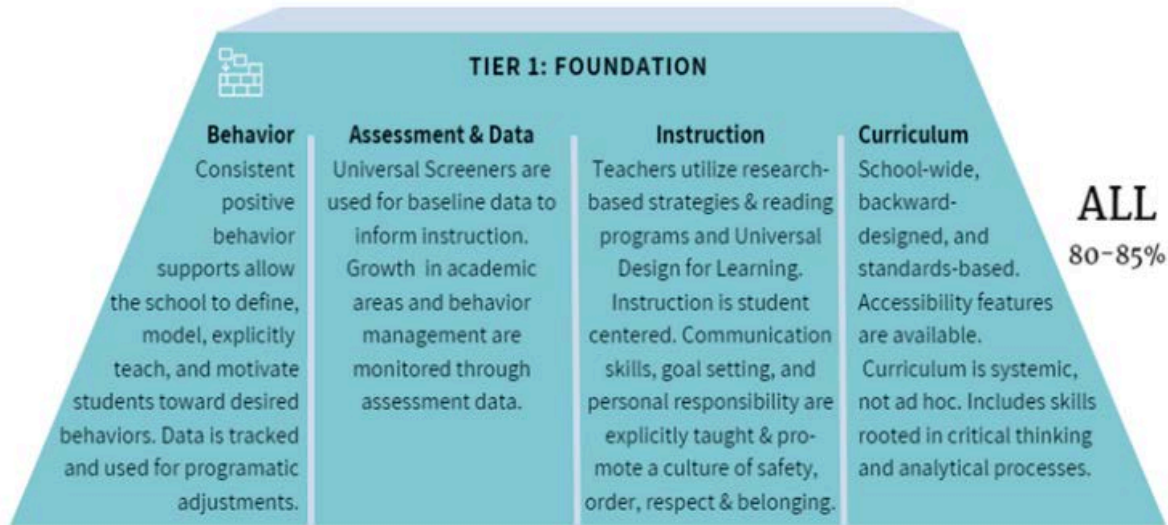
– Dr. Erik Carter, Baylor University

Appendix A:

Understanding Tier 1

MTSS indicates that effective Tier 1 instruction, the instruction received by all students in the general education classroom, should reach 80% to 85% of all learners.

Key elements of Tier 1 instruction that meets the needs of all students



This MTSS model has been adapted for Catholic schools by the Greeley Center for Catholic Education and Inclusion Solutions, LLC

Understanding Tier 1

The 4 pillars of **Tier 1 instruction in MTSS include Behavior, Assessment & Data, Instruction, and Curriculum.** Excellent, effective Tier 1 assumes systems and consistency in the following areas:

- Each school invests time and resources in effective **positive behavior intervention systems** that are rooted in their whole-child development goals and for which ALL faculty and staff are trained;
- Each school invests in **effective diagnostic tools, progress monitoring, and assessment systems** that show both growth and achievement and provides teachers training and time to actively review, analyze, and respond to data through their instruction each day;
- Each school invests in **instructional support and/or training** for teachers to implement effective, research-based instructional strategies that benefit all learners; and
- Each school ensures that teachers have access to and training on **effective, up-to-date, research-based curriculum programs** that are equipped with scaffolds and enrichment for learners of all academic levels.

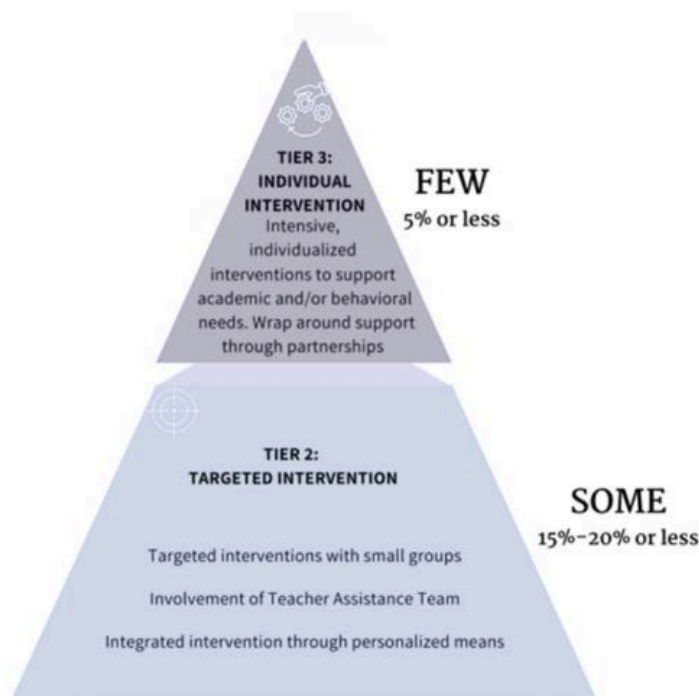
Understanding Tier 2

MTSS indicates that while effective Tier 1 will meet the needs of 80%-85% of students, roughly 15%-20% of students will require additional support. Support is meant to be given in addition to Tier 1 instruction, and may be delivered in a variety of ways.

Students can receive intervention on specific skills in small groups or individually in class (push in model) or outside of class (pull out model). Skills are explicitly taught and practiced during intervention. Student data is tracked consistently to indicate skill development, with anywhere from 6 to 10 weeks as a window to determine whether a student can exit intervention or needs to continue. Data teams or Teacher Assistance Teams can be helpful in determining the need and/or effectiveness of intervention. Tier 2 instruction typically helps 13%-15% of students achieve success.

If a student does not make progress through rounds of intervention, he or she may be referred for psychoeducational testing or Tier 3 intensive intervention.

Moving from Tier 2 to Tier 3



This MTSS model has been adapted for Catholic schools by the Greeley Center for Catholic Education and Inclusion Solutions, LLC

Tier 2 intervention is meant to be temporary and may or may not serve students with an identified disability. The school Child Study Team, Care Team, or Teacher Assistance Team might determine that a student should be referred for additional help if there is no or limited progress made during rounds of Tier 2 instruction.

Tier 3 intervention might serve students with or without an identified disability but who have a distinct skill gap that is preventing them from successfully learning and/or participating in the general education classroom.

Tier 3 interventions might include physical, speech, or occupational therapy or a research-based program that the student attends during school hours or over the course of a summer. Tier 3 intervention often requires specific training or qualifications for the professional that is administering the intervention.

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