

Mount St. Joseph University

Raising Reading Outcomes During a Pandemic:  
Successful Implementation of MTSS in  
Preschool – Third Grade

Dr. Amy Murdoch  
Mount St. Joseph University

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Objectives

- Understand ways to analyze and improve the current systems of support in place in PreK – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade.
- Have an example of how MTSS can be implemented in PreK – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade.

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Agenda

- The PARTNERS Grant Project
- The MTSS Model – Key Research & Understandings
- One School’s Journey with MTSS - Implementation Efforts & Data after year 1 of Implementation
- Lessons Learned & Next Steps

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Ohio Department of Education



University of CINCINNATI

Promoting  
Achievement in  
Reading  
Through  
Needs-driven  
Evidence-based  
Reading  
Structures

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### 2019 OSEP Grant – Model Demonstration

- Projects for Early Identification of Students with Dyslexia in Elementary School
- Ohio Department of Education: Dr. Melissa Weber-Mayrer (PI), Carolyn Turner, Kim Davis
- Mount St. Joseph University: Dr. Amy Murdoch & Dr. Wendy Strickler
- University of Cincinnati (Program Evaluation): Dr. Julie Morrison

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### Our Project

- Across 4 Years
- 3 Schools
- Preschool – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade
- Focus on schools serving low-income students

#### The School I Will Share Today

- 100% on Free or Reduced Lunch
- 70% English Language Learners

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### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the PARTNERS project is to substantially improve outcomes for students with, or at risk for, dyslexia.

The project seeks to build the capacity of elementary schools to provide a Multi-Tiered System of Supports to identify, intervene, support, and monitor the progress of students with reading concerns as they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to overcome their challenges.




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### Key Components

- Building on State-Wide Efforts to Improve Literacy Outcomes focused on the Science of Reading
- Partnering across institutes to narrow the research to practice gap.
- Create easy-to-use tools & professional learning opportunities for schools to strengthen:
  - Their tiered literacy instruction
  - Data-based decision making
  - Knowledge about dyslexia & reading disabilities and service to children with reading disabilities.

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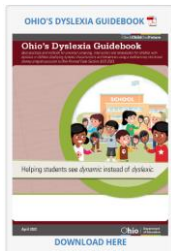
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### Ohio Dyslexia Guidebook

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Literacy/Dyslexia>




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## The Science of Reading & MTSS

- “RTI is a good approach, and it succeeds in schools that can mount a program faithful to its tenets.”

However,

“RTI is not effective as implemented in many schools, leading to disenchantment with the approach. The consequent need for parents to seek quality interventions outside the school contributes to disparities in educational opportunity, favoring those who can afford it.” (Seidenberg, 2017, p. 163).

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## Knowledgeable & Skilled Educators Are Powerful

“Successful implementation of RTI however **depends on educators** knowing enough about relevant research in reading psychology, educational measurement, linguistics, and instruction”

- Moats, 2017, p. 20

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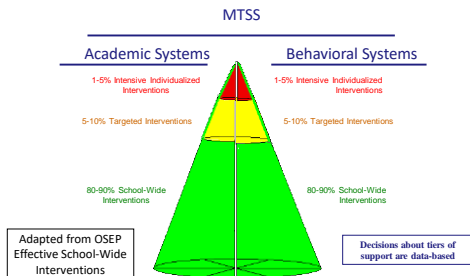
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### MTSS Model in Early Childhood



DEC's Position Statement on MTSS Framework in Early Childhood (2021)

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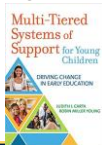
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### Core Components of MTSS (Carta, 2019)

- Evidence-based instruction and intervention practices.
- Emphasis on ensuring implementation fidelity.
- Universal screening & progress monitoring.
- Layered continuum of supports
- Data-based problem solving and decision making.
- Shared leadership.
- Family, school, and community partnering.




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### Literacy Analysis & Planning Guide (LAP-G)

- Ohio has a long history of state-level work in MTSS (OISM in the 1990s – early 2000s)
- This tool has evolved across time and used in a variety of projects (Murdoch & Ihlo, 2006).
- Our PARTNERS project further developed the tool and we are establishing usefulness and support for implementation.
- Teams analyze each tier and plan supports.
  - Professional Learning
  - Assessment System
  - Instructional Materials & Delivery
  - Implementation
  - Family Connections

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Tier 1 – ASSESSMENT TOOLS		
Tier 1: Screening Results	Score (1-3)	Evidence
<b>Screening Results</b>		
1. At least 80% of students reach benchmark goals and there are no achievement gaps between subgroups.		
1. All key early literacy skills are assessed with reliable and valid universal screening. □ Phonemic Awareness (C-1) □ Phonics (C-2) □ Reading Fluency (1-3) □ Comprehension (3) □ Vocabulary and oral language skills are considered – valid and reliable screening measures of these important skills are not widely available. However, these aspects of reading are considered.		
2. The individual student reports have been analyzed by knowledgeable school personnel and screeners report adequate reliability and validity data.		
3. Only one screening assessment is used to assess the same skill (don't want over assessment).		
4. Screeners are used to help make decisions regarding differentiation of instruction. (small group instruction, who needs targeted instruction).		
5. Professional development for use of assessments includes: □ Delivery by an accredited teacher □ Reliable administration, data analysis and use □ Consideration of linguistic and cultural factors in administration and data analysis □ Reliability checks (including reliability practice) and retest/re-assess (each year)		
6. All staff have been trained & there is a clear plan for providing support for new staff on the use of assessment.		
7. Use of an electronic database to manage and document student data and all staff are trained on how to use it.		
8. There is a clear plan for universal screening data collection including: a.) when data will be collected b.) who will administer and score c.) how NEW students are assessed when they arrive across the school year d.) how to check on-going reliability of data.		
9. Teachers routinely (at least 2 times per year) analyze data and meet in grade-level teams to review data and make instructional changes.		
10. All students are meaningfully included in screening (approved accommodations are used when needed).		
11. There is a clear and complete written plan regarding decision rules for which students need supplemental Tier 1 and/or intervention supports. The plan includes: <input type="checkbox"/> a. how data are validated <input type="checkbox"/> b. which assessments are used <input type="checkbox"/> c. criteria used for each decision		

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Step 2b: Prioritize Areas in Need of Support for Tier 1

Tier 1: Summary of Needs for Support from Analysis – Tier 1		
Component	Strengths	Concerns
Assessment System		
Philosophical Assumptions		
Alphabet Knowledge		
Oral Language and Vocabulary		
Listening Comprehension		
Implementation		
Differentiation		
Family Partnership		

Tier 1: Prioritize Needs—What to work on first, second, etc. Consider the key areas of need for this specific grade level.

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Steps 3 and 4: Plan and Implement Support – Tier 1

What steps need to be taken to build a three-tier model of supports in our school?				
What needs to be done?	What are the steps to get this done?	Who?	When?	How Will It Be Monitored
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				

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## PARTNERS School #2

### The Team

- Principal
- Preschool Teachers
- K-3 Teachers
- ELL Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Reading Interventionist
- Title 1 Teacher

### How They Started

- Spring of 2021
- Began Tier 1 LAP-G
  - Acadience Training and implementation
  - LETRS Training

Note – 2021 -2022 was during the height of Pandemic restrictions. Like all schools, school #2 faced high staff and student absences due to illness and quarantines, masking, and social distancing.

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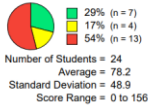
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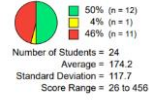
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#### Middle of Year



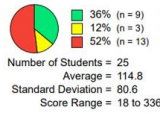
### 2<sup>nd</sup>

#### Middle of Year



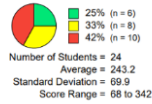
### 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

#### Middle of Year



### 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Middle of Year




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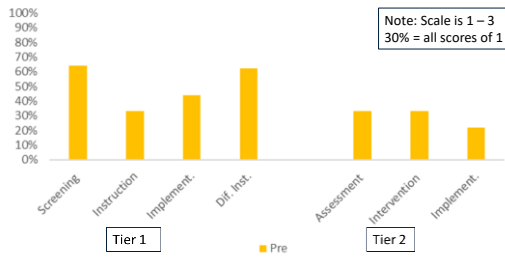
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### KG -1st Grade LAP-G Scores



**Tier 1 Needs:** Screening System, Core program not being used to full potential, make differentiation more effective, start LETRS training. \*Core program is too hard\*  
**Tier 2 Needs:** Need coordination of intervention supports.

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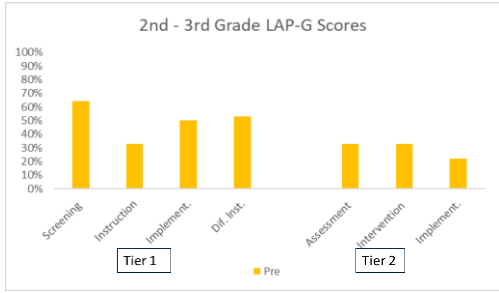
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**Tier 1 Needs:** Assessment System, weak PA, Phonics, & Fluency, limited writing instruction, limited differentiation. \*Looks too hard\*

**Tier 2 Needs:** All of it!

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Plans for Fall

**K-1**

- Summer Training on MTSS & Continue LETRS Training
- Strengthen phonics with differentiation and small groups in Tier 1
- Coordinated Tier 2
- Data-Based Decision Making
  - Screening to form groups
  - Progress Monitoring for Tier 2
  - Monthly Team Meetings

**2-3**

- Summer Training on MTSS & Continue LETRS Training
- Choose a phonics program
  - Went through curriculum review of 3 programs choose 95% Phonics Lesson Library
- Implement small groups in Tier 1
- Coordinated Tier 2
- Data-Based Decision Making
  - Screening to form groups
  - Progress Monitoring for Tier 2
  - Monthly Team Meetings

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Schedule – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

Time	Subject	How
7:30 – 7:40	Homeroom	Whole Group- CT only
7:40 – 8:25	ELA Block 1: Read Aloud & Writing	Whole Group – CT & ELL Teacher
8:25 – 9:10	ELA Block 2: Small Groups	CT – On-Level Grp 1 & 2    Title – Grp 3    RI – Grp 4
9:10 – 9:55	Science/Social Studies	Whole Group – CT only
9:55-10:40	Math	Whole Group – CT Only
10:40 – 11:25	Lunch & Recess	Lunch & Recess
11:25 – 12:25	Reading Intervention & Enrichment	CT – Grp 3    CT – Grp 4    Volunteer – Grp 1 & 2 (30 min)    Centers – Grp 1 & 2
12:35 – 1:40	Break & Specials	Specials Teachers
1:40 – 2:15	Religion	
2:15 – 2:30	Dismissal	

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## Meaningful Small Group Work

- Word work centers, spelling, writing, fluency practice with decodable readers, computers
- Utilizing adults – Especially in Early KG
  - Teaching Assistant – Did language comprehension work from Super Kids program
  - Volunteer – Word work center
  - Computer Center
  - Teacher Center




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## Effective Small Group Differentiation

- Coordination of support – everyone working together.
- Use of data – screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring.
- Size depends on needs.
- Strongest educators with neediest students. The teacher sees all students.



“As fast as you can and as slow as you must”

- Pam Kastner

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## Effective Use of Specialists

	Reading Interventionist	Title One Teacher	ELL
7:40 – 8:25	KG	KG	1 <sup>st</sup>
8:25 – 9:10	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
9:10-9:55	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	KG
9:55 – 10:40	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Afternoons – provide additional support 2 -3 days per week in each grade level K - 3			

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### Changes Made for 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Year

- K-1 found small group instructional materials not powerful enough
- Implemented Phonics Lesson Library in 1<sup>st</sup>
- Implemented 95% Core Phonics Program in KG

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### Preschool

- Their LAP-G was much stronger as they began this work with Project Ready.
  - Had screening in place
  - Use of research-based curriculum

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### Assessments Used

Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI)  
<https://acadiencelarning.org>

- Standardized
- Meaningful Benchmark Goals
- Researched to demonstrate strong technical adequacy
- Developmentally appropriate—storybook format that is highly engaging to young children
- Subtests: Letter Names, Oral Language, Vocabulary, Listening Comprehension, Phonological Awareness

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## Implementation

- 16 weeks, approximately 60 minutes each day
- Classroom-based instruction with small group work.
- Teacher Professional Development with Coaching
- Family Education
- Playful Interventions




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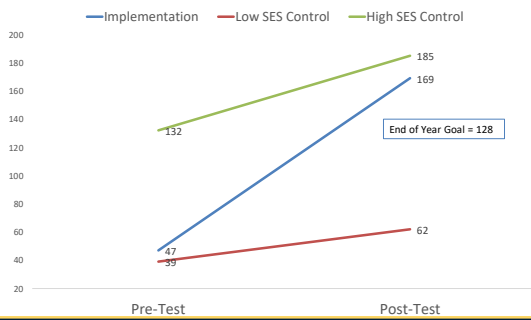
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PELI Composite Scores  
3 Year Olds




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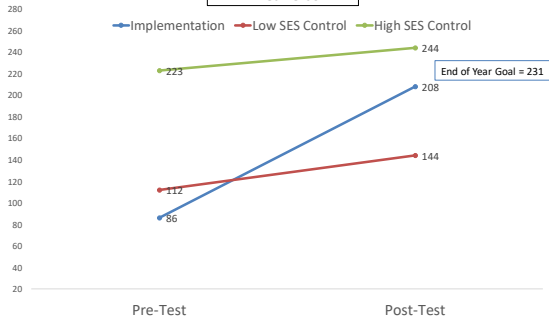
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PELI Composite Scores  
4 Year Olds




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### Pilot Study Published in Peer Reviewed Journal



<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10573569.2021.1954570>

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### Preschool – LAP-G

- Identified the following needs
  - Training of new teachers
  - Support with small group differentiation using PELI Data
  - Classroom Centers
  - Family Engagement

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#### Instructional Needs Based on PELI Data

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_ Benchmark: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs BOTH Language Comprehension & Alphabets

Needs Language Comprehension Support: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs Alphabets Support: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs a mix of language and alphabets (Check the skills below benchmark):

<input type="checkbox"/> PA	<input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension
_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> PA	<input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension
_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> PA	<input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension
_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> PA	<input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension
_____	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> PA	<input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehension
_____	_____	_____	_____

On Track in All Areas – Language, Comprehension, Letters, PA

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### Example Small Group Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday & Friday
Teacher 1: Alpha. & Math (differentiated by skill needs)	4 Alpha. 0 Math	3 Alpha. 2 Math	2 Alpha. 2 Math	4 Alpha. 1 Math
Meets with 4 - 5 groups each day. Group size varies based on needs. Students with highest needs get smallest group and alphabetics each day. Each child gets 2-4 groups of Alphabetics per week and 2-3 math groups per week.				
Teacher 2: Language	123 Story	TTT	123 Story	TTT
Meets with 3 groups each day works with all children (groups of 5). Alternates doing a small group with center engagement. Each child gets a language group each day.				

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### Learning Together Family Packs

- Connected to each unit.
- Family meetings to go over and then went home for 1 week.
- Each bag contained:
  - Letters Activity used in Alphabetics
  - Numbers Activity used in Math
  - Wordless Book from the Unit
  - Theme book & activity done in class
  - Puppet kit from Telling Terrific Tales already learned.

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### Two Year Cycle

Year 1	Year 2
Welcome	Welcome
Kindness	Kindness
North America	North America
Astronomy	Astronomy
South America	Asia
My Amazing Body	My Amazing Body
Africa	Australia
Seasons & Weather	Seasons & Weather
Botany	Botany
The Arts	The Arts

10 Units Each Year

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Astronomy

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	Learning Together Family Bag		Supplies & Activities
✓ Astronomy Unit Activity			
Letter Activity S s			
Number Activity 123			
Wordless Book			
Telling Terrific Tales			
Signatures	One memory from our time spent learning together:		

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## Measuring Use



### Evidence of Use Score

Strong = clear use with 4 or more things used = Play-Doh, puppets, tools used (crayons, glue), other = disarray, missing items, roughed up materials, completed materials sent back

Good = 3 items showed evidence of used

Some = 2 items showed evidence of used

Little = 1 item showed evidence of used

None = no evidence of use

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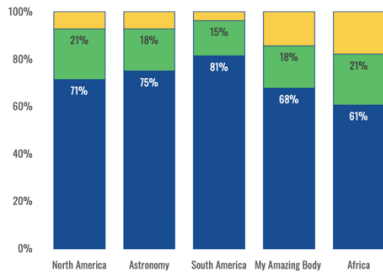
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The majority of children from the school returned the take home activity bags with **strong** or **some** evidence of use.




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### End of Year 1 Results

- Put in place universal screening and progress monitoring
- K-3 Staff Going Through LETRS Training
- Data-Based Decision Making Across the Tiers 1 & 2
- Small-Group Differentiated Instruction in Tier 1
- Research-based phonics instruction across Tier 1 and 3
- Coordination of instructional supports

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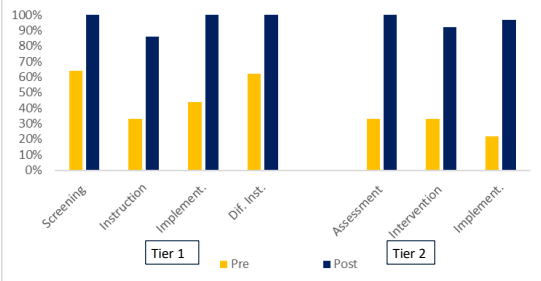
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### KG -1st Grade LAP-G Scores




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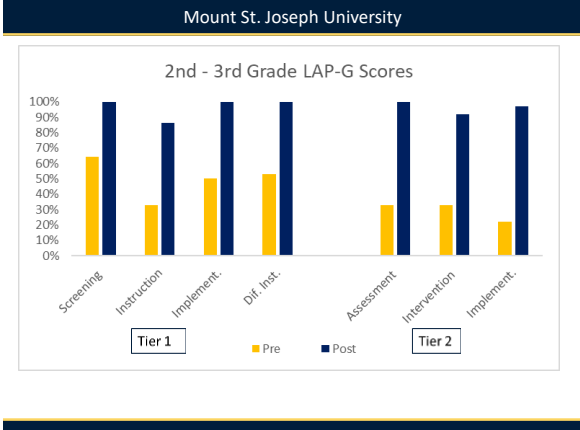
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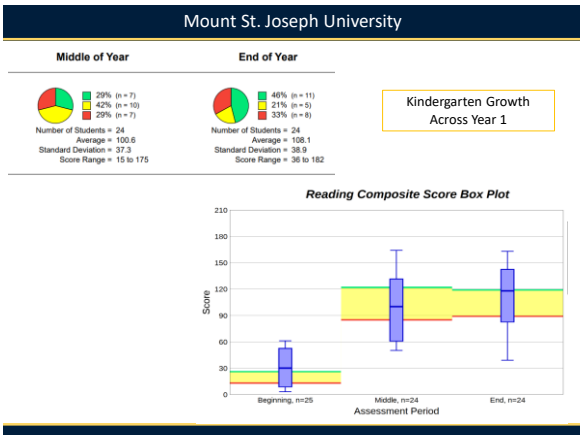
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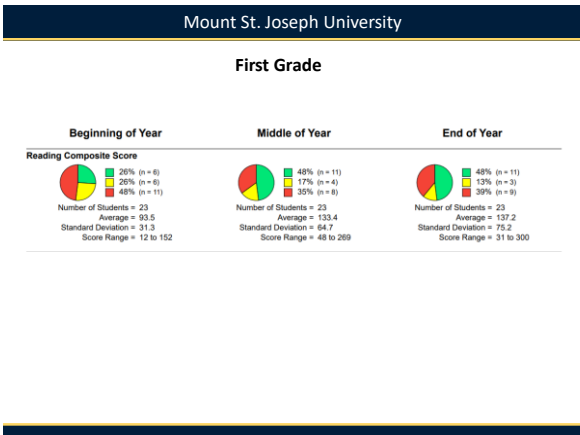
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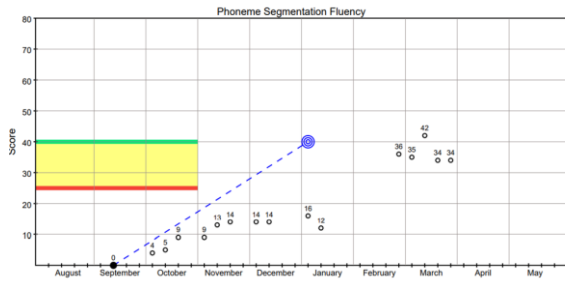
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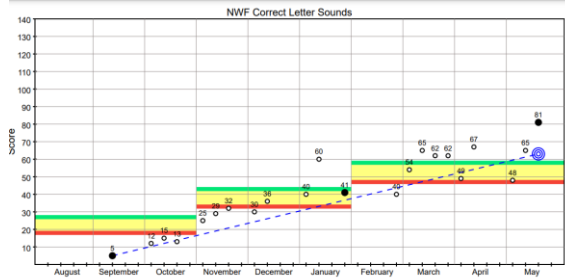
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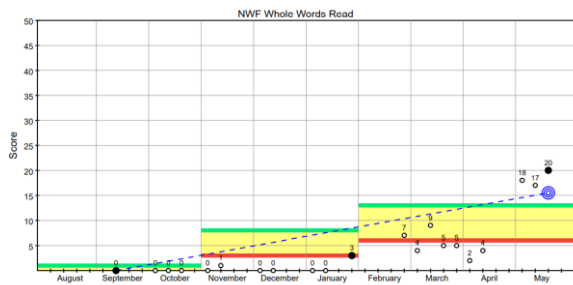
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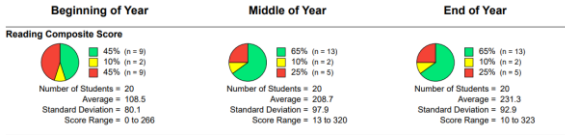
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2<sup>nd</sup> Grade




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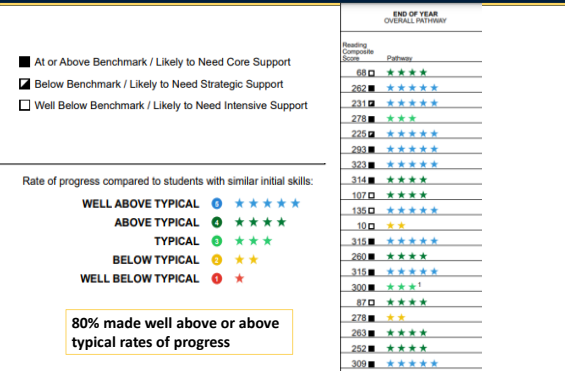
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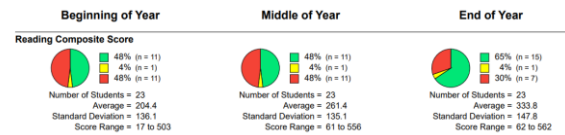
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3<sup>rd</sup> Grade




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### What Does it Take to Create Such a System?

- Knowledgeable Teachers, Administrators, and Support Staff
- Creation of the Tiers—the what, the how, the when, the who
- Data based decision making
- Belief—The Heart




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### Cultivating Relationships

- Children
- Families
- Educators
- Administrators

We can only change behavior when there is an agreement to engage. When we are seen as knowledgeable & skilled but, also kind & trustworthy.

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### Questions/Discussion




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