Using *i-Ready* to Support MTSS

Curriculum Associates Guidance Brief | April 2025

Guidance Overview

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) defines a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) as "a proactive and preventative framework that integrates data and instruction to maximize student achievement from a strengths-based perspective."

Because *i-Ready* integrates the different elements of intervention—screening, targeted instruction, and progress monitoring—into one dashboard, we offer educators the resources they need for planning impactful interventions. Additionally, *i-Ready* received high ratings in reading and mathematics from the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), a nationally recognized technical assistance center that is managed by AIR, in all three categories NCII reviews: Academic Screening, Academic Progress Monitoring, and Academic Intervention.

This document and the *i-Ready* Intervention Resource Hub have been developed to support our district partners interested in integrating *i-Ready* resources into their systematic approach to MTSS. We know that intervention plans and resources differ from district to district, so our intent is to share ideas to inform implementation conversations. We understand that educators know best how to serve the students in their district, and our guidance is never intended to supersede any state or local provisions.

If you have questions or are looking for additional guidance on your district's approach to MTSS, please contact your *i-Ready* Partner Success Manager.

Useful Document Shortcuts

Guidance Summary

Component 1: Universal Screening

Component 2: Multi-Level Prevention

Component 3: Progress Monitoring

Component 4: Data-Based Decision Making (DBDM)

i-Ready and the Four Elements of Academic Intervention

This guidance document outlines how *i-Ready*'s suite of assessments and connected instructional resources can be used to support the major elements of MTSS for academic intervention, commonly known as response to intervention. *i-Ready* integrates the different elements of academic intervention into one dashboard to support student outcomes. AIR identifies MTSS's four major components as:

- Screening
- Multi-level prevention system
- Progress monitoring
- DBDM

Component 1: Universal Screening

i-Ready meets NCII's rigorous technical standards as an academic screener and provides teachers with immediately available, easy-to-read reports to help educators identify students who may warrant support for academic risk within a tiered framework.

When using *i-Ready* for universal screening, teachers can start the school year with a clear understanding of a student's strengths. This asset-based approach is critical when planning tiered instruction to support grade-level core instruction for all. Administrators can use grade-, building-, and district-level reports to identify key learning priorities.

To learn more about data considerations related to intervention planning, educators can reference this paper: Data Guideposts: A Beacon for Consistent and Equitable Determination of Student Need within a Tiered Instructional Framework. Additional ideas are highlighted in Component 4: DBDM.
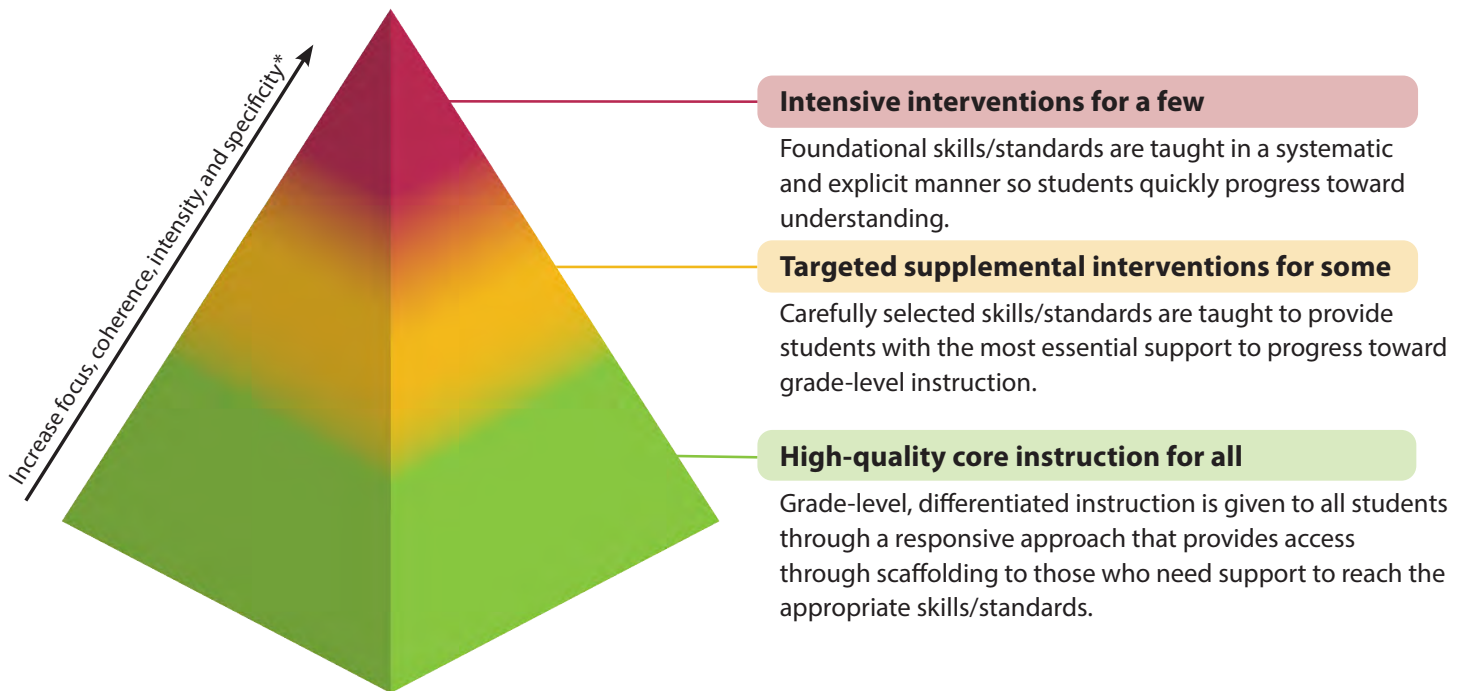
Component 2: Multi-Level Prevention

The purpose of tiered instruction is to provide a continuum of preventative supports, including the most impactful intervention: high-quality, differentiated, core instruction. Because some students need supplemental or intensive supports to access grade-level core instruction, a framework of instruction is often organized and operationalized across three tiers, as illustrated in Figure 1 on the next page.

According to AIR, if universal screening indicates more than 20% of students are at risk of low academic outcomes, then analysis of core instruction is needed. Our paper Putting the "Response" Back in Response to Intervention offers insights into how *i-Ready* data can strengthen core intervention by supplying teachers and students with supplemental resources that can address prerequisite skills needed for grade-level core instruction.

To learn more about how our products support a tiered intervention framework, please review Figure 2 on page 5 and *i-Ready*: Tools to Drive Impactful Intervention.

Figure 1: Example of a Multi-Level Prevention System: Implementation Considerations

Increase focus, coherence, intensity, and specificity*

Intensive interventions for a few

Foundational skills/standards are taught in a systematic and explicit manner so students quickly progress toward understanding.

Targeted supplemental interventions for some

Carefully selected skills/standards are taught to provide students with the most essential support to progress toward grade-level instruction.

High-quality core instruction for all

Grade-level, differentiated instruction is given to all students through a responsive approach that provides access through scaffolding to those who need support to reach the appropriate skills/standards.

*Tiered instruction applies to all students, including those with documented needs like English Learners, students with disabilities, and students in gifted and talented programs.

Component 3: Progress Monitoring

The *i-Ready Assessment* suite has received high ratings from NCII as a progress monitoring tool. Our assessments are regularly used by educators across the country for monitoring learning outcomes and growth.

For an overview of progress monitoring considerations when using *i-Ready*, please reference Progress Monitoring with *i-Ready Assessment*. Specific progress monitoring suggestions are provided here: Quickstart Guide: Progress Monitoring Using *i-Ready*. We share these resources so our district partners understand our thinking, but we know that state and local guidelines on progress monitoring vary. Our support documentation is never intended to supersede any state or local provisions.

Component 4: DBDM

The promise of *i-Ready* is its ability to provide educators with actionable assessment data that informs instruction. By analyzing *i-Ready* data, educators can accurately identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement. For more information on how *i-Ready* supports MTSS, please review 10 Steps: Using *i-Ready* for Intervention. Instead of using a single cut score, Curriculum Associates recommends looking at multiple data points within the *i-Ready* system to best understand student need. Because *i-Ready* provides a

variety of data, including overall score, percentile data, and domain-level placement data for each student, educators get a more holistic, nuanced view of student need compared to reliance on a single data point for decisions relating to tiered instruction.

For an overview of our recommended approach, we have published a paper called Data Guideposts: A Beacon for Consistent and Equitable Determination of Student Need within a Tiered Instructional Framework and developed 10 Steps: Using *i-Ready* for Intervention. These resources provide examples of how *i-Ready* can be used to inform DBDM for impactful multi-tiered interventions. Additionally, our paper Using Assessment Data to Supercharge Academic Intervention includes four strategies, with an emphasis on using *i-Ready* data for more consistent eligibility decisions.

High Ratings from NCII

i-Ready received high ratings in reading and mathematics from NCII in all three categories NCII reviews: Academic Screening, Academic Progress Monitoring, and Academic Intervention. These ratings signify that *i-Ready* can be used to identify students who may be at risk of poor academic outcomes, monitor students' academic progress, and serve as an academic intervention program that addresses students' specific needs.
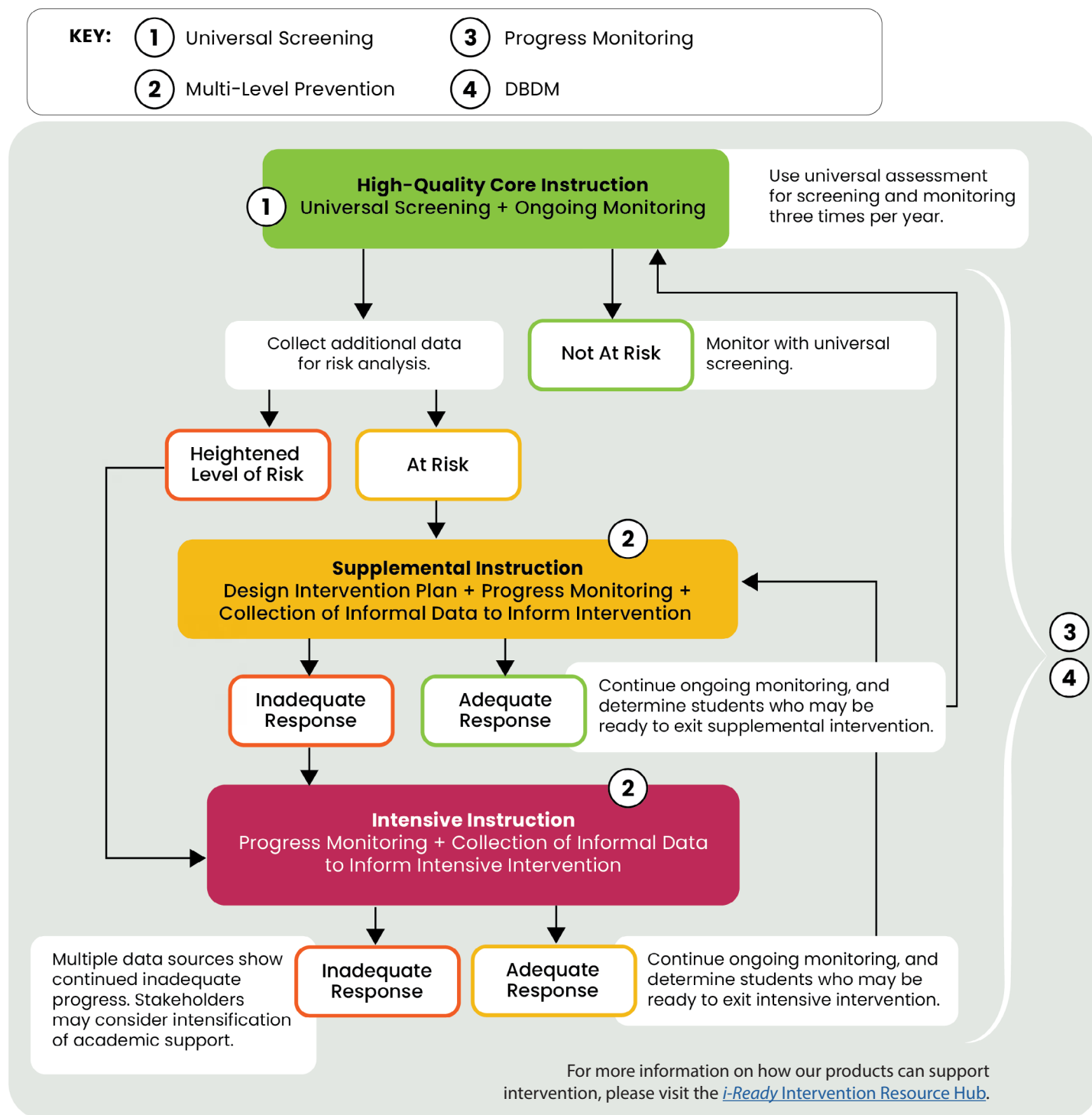
A Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The flowchart below (Figure 2) illustrates how universal screening provides data to inform risk evaluations for tiered, preventative instructional support. These supports are organized and operationalized within three tiers, as illustrated in Figure 1. The numbered components indicate elements that are supported by *i-Ready*.

Figure 2: Example of Tiered Academic Intervention and Screening Process

KEY:
- **1** Universal Screening
- **2** Multi-Level Prevention
- **3** Progress Monitoring
- **4** DBDM

1 High-Quality Core Instruction
Universal Screening + Ongoing Monitoring

Use universal assessment for screening and monitoring three times per year.

Collect additional data for risk analysis.

Not At Risk — Monitor with universal screening.

Heightened Level of Risk

At Risk

2 Supplemental Instruction
Design Intervention Plan + Progress Monitoring + Collection of Informal Data to Inform Intervention

Inadequate Response

Adequate Response

Continue ongoing monitoring, and determine students who may be ready to exit supplemental intervention.

3
4

2 Intensive Instruction
Progress Monitoring + Collection of Informal Data to Inform Intensive Intervention

Multiple data sources show continued inadequate progress. Stakeholders may consider intensification of academic support.

Inadequate Response

Adequate Response

Continue ongoing monitoring, and determine students who may be ready to exit intensive intervention.

For more information on how our products can support intervention, please visit the *i-Ready* Intervention Resource Hub.

Resources That Informed This Paper

American Institutes for Research. (2023). *Center on multi-tiered system of supports*. AIR.
https://mtss4success.org/

Brown-Chidsey, R., & Bickford, R. (2016). *Practical handbook of multi-tiered systems of support:
Building academic and behavioral success in schools.* Guilford Press.

Georgia Department of Education. (2024). Dyslexia Informational Handbook Guidance for Local School Systems.
https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/4a506b87-b36d-46d0-95d6-f6503446562a/1/GaDOE_Dyslexia Informational_Handbook.
pdf

National Center on Intensive Intervention. (2025). *Tools chart overview*. NCII.
https://intensiveintervention.org/tools-charts/overview

Sain, J. (2024). *Using assessment data to supercharge academic intervention*. Curriculum Associates.
https://cdn.bfldr.com/LS6J0F7/at/m4sgfjpxbh5ttpngpzrk/iready-assessmentsupercharge-your-intervention-paper.pdf