

**Link Community Charter School  
NJ Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) Manual**

*Addressing the Academic, Social, and Emotional Needs of All Link  
Scholars in Grades K-8*

**DRAFT MANUAL  
Fall 2022**



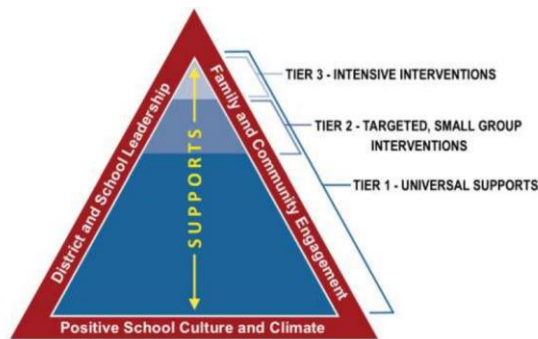
**23 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Newark, NJ**

## Background and Overview

To best support the academic, social, and emotional needs of students, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) recognizes NJ Tiered Systems of Support (NJTSS) as a framework based on best practice for providing instruction and intervention designed to meet students' diverse needs. This manual highlights the steps taken at Link Community Charter School (LCCS) to implement NJTSS in grades five through eight. Additional information regarding NJTSS can be found in the NJDOE implementation guidelines (2019) and guide decision-making at LCCS: <https://www.nj.gov/education/njtss/guidelines.pdf>.

## Essential Components of Tiered Systems of Support

Link Community Charter School (LCCS) recognizes the essential components of NJTSS, highlighted in the framework pictured below.



*Three tiers of support guide intervention based on multiple measures of student data. Included in the model are components of school leadership, family/community engagement, and positive school culture and climate.*

## Best Practices

### All Tiers

- District/schools provide Tier 1, 2, and 3 supports and interventions along a continuum based on individual student needs that are always changing, as opposed to labeling students as "Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 students" or "RTI students"
- Accommodations for students with disabilities and students who are English language learners are provided to students who need them at all three tiers of instruction and support;

*The New Jersey Department of Education recognizes tiered systems of support as a continuum supported by ongoing progress monitoring.*

### **Link Community Charter School Implementation Plan**

Based on the “Start Where You Are” guidelines highlighted in the New Jersey Department of Education Division of Student Services Implementation Guidelines (2019), Link Community Charter School is committed to building on the strength of a robust curriculum and instructional program. Timelines matched with action steps are highlighted in the table below.

Timeline/Phase	Action Steps
Spring 2022 (Phase 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Review of Data from the 2021-2022 school year</li><li>● Gather and review resources on NJTSS</li><li>● Review models of RTI and multi-tiered systems of support</li><li>● Identify research-based models of innovative practices</li><li>● Invite key stakeholders to participate in the process</li></ul>
Summer 2022 (Phase 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Administration/Leadership Retreat and Planning</li><li>● Determine vision, goals, and common language for NJTSS</li><li>● Assess the strengths and needs at LCCS</li><li>● Needs-based assessment demonstrated a need for building capacity for ELA/Math intervention</li></ul>
Fall 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Teacher Professional Development at Opening Meetings (introduce vision, goals, and common language for NJTSS/I&amp;RS)</li><li>● Introduction and Launch of the W.I.N. Period</li><li>● Data Informed Decision Making- Data Review and Tiering of Students for ELA/Math (Use of Matrices)</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction of Tier 2/Tier 3 trackers for data-driven decision making and progress monitoring</li> <li>● Literacy Interventionist (GR 5-6) appointed at LCCS</li> <li>● Identified goals and outcomes for the 2022-2023 implementation of NJTSS</li> </ul>
Winter/Spring 2023 (Phase 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess the strengths and needs at LCCS noting current resources (eg. financial, personnel, and instructional) and practices in place</li> <li>● Determine what is needed to strengthen the framework</li> <li>● Enhance family and community engagement around the NJTSS framework</li> </ul>
Summer 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use data to refine SMART goals</li> <li>● Assess NJTSS framework/sustainability at LCCS</li> <li>● Determine next steps for the 2023-2024 school year</li> <li>● Survey the school community to gather additional feedback regarding NJTSS implementation</li> <li>● Provide recommendations and a summary report to the LCCS Board of Directors</li> </ul>

### Ten Key Points for Success @ Link

- 1. **Awareness**-I see and get the need.
- 2. **Resources**-I have the resources I need.
- 3. **Research**- I understand the research-practice connection.
- 4. **Expertise**- I acknowledge the role of experts in this process.
- 5. **Building**- I know the stronger Tier 1 is the stronger the foundation is.
- 6. **Coordination**- I know tiered systems must be flexible.
- 7. **Instruction**- I know intervention feels “intervention-like.”
- 8. **PD** -I recognize staff development makes this work.
- 9. **Admin-Support**- I should be able to share my successes and confusions openly.
- 10. **Purpose**- I know the “why” behind this model.

*A reflective practice set of guiding questions for implementation at LCCS.*

The following goals guide NJTSS implementation at LCCS for the 2022-2023 school year:

<b>2022-2023 NJTSS Goals at LCCS</b>
1. Engage teachers/instructional staff in the review of academic data in ELA/Math using multiple measures to identify trends with high, medium, and low groups of students.
2. Provide ongoing small group instruction in ELA across disciplines, communicating expectations with content area teachers and engaging interventionists/coaches.
3. Utilize instructional coaches and leadership team members throughout the NJTSS/I&RS process to effectively monitor successes and needed interventions.

## **Roles and Responsibilities at Link**

Leadership Team-(eg. Head of School, Principal, Vice-Principals, Supervisor of K-4, Dean of Students)

- The roles and responsibilities of the leadership team are to articulate the purpose and components of the RTI process, while fostering a safe and trusted environment for all stakeholders. The leadership team shall guide the collaborative efforts of all team members to ensure the involvement of an active teaching and learning cycle, that includes school goals, data analysis, best practices, and research.

Coaches -(eg. Literacy Coach, Math Coach)

- The roles and responsibilities of the instructional coaches are to support the implementation of effective instructional strategies, while promoting the implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). The instructional coaches will assist in facilitating collaborative data driven conversations and decision making for schoolwide achievement and mastery of learning goals.

Interventionists (eg. Literacy Interventionist)

- The roles and responsibilities of the interventionists are to provide specific, targeted instruction to individual students, while providing small groups for students who have been identified for Tier III instruction and/or recommended by the I&RS committee. The interventionists shall work in conjunction with the classroom teacher while assessing student progress for 4-6 weeks at a time.

### Social Workers

- The roles and responsibilities of the school social workers are to provide support and guidance in designing, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of school-wide universal supports, targeted group interventions, and intensive individual interventions in objective and measurable terms. The school social workers will provide relevant background information and will serve as liaisons for children and families, while providing individual and small group behavioral and social-emotional strategies in continuous cycles.

### Teachers

- The role and responsibilities of teachers as instructional leaders are to provide a variety of instructional strategies, activities, and assessments within the general education setting to assist students of all abilities and tiers. The instructional leadership team may include the classroom teachers, special education teachers, teachers of specific content areas, and paraprofessionals. Each of these individuals play an important role in the NJTSS process, I&RS referral process, and progress monitoring.

## **Data-Driven Decision Making and Progress Monitoring**

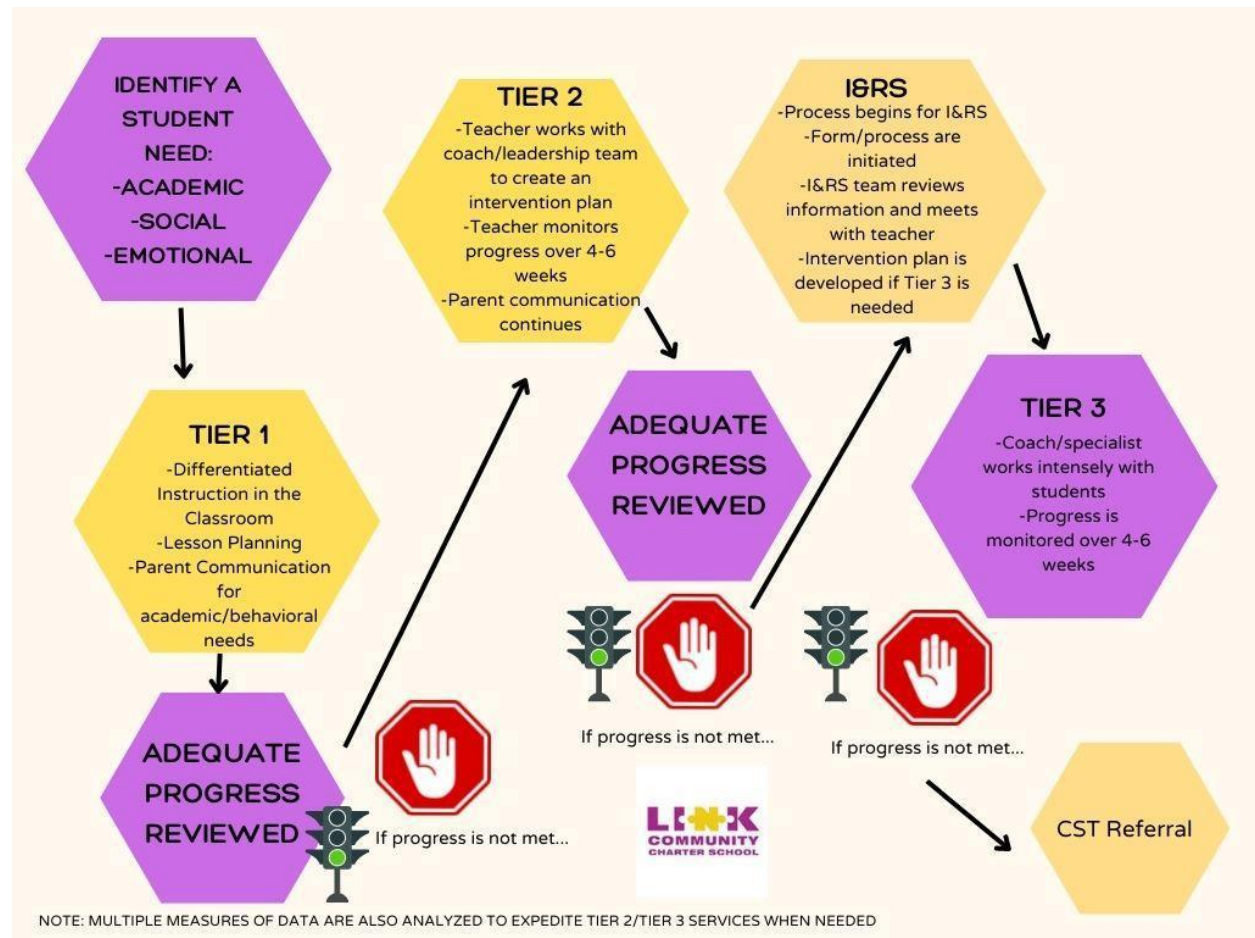
Matrices - Teachers and instructional leaders review data at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year to determine trends across tiers in ELA and Math (See Appendix). Students who receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 support are monitored over a 4-6 week instructional cycle, as interventions and supports are in place.

Data Walls- Recognizing that implementing tiered systems of support is a continuum and students' needs change throughout the year, data walls for ELA and Math are updated in the Fall/Winter/Spring of each school year.

Staff Development- Ongoing staff development is provided to review updates and ongoing processes and procedures regarding NJTSS and I&RS. Department meetings, grade-level meetings, and professional development days are utilized to review successes and challenges around tiered interventions.

Advisory-Through the Advisory structure at LCCS, advisors meet with scholars regularly to have intentional conversations around each individual scholar's data, goals, and interventions.

## NJTSS Process Flowchart



## 2022-2023 W.I.N. (What I Need) Period

During the 2022-2023 school year, Link Community Charter School established a W.I.N. period as part of the instructional day to...

### Student Expectations

Opportunities to work on skills on their own in...

- Math (IXL)
- ELA; (Newsela, Mindplay, or SSR)
- Homework Help/Study Skills

Opportunities to work on skills with teacher-directed small group support.

**WIN (What I Need) Period**

- WIN Overview:
  - Supports Link's focus on improving intervention (academic, social, and emotional) in GR 5-8.
- The leadership team created this slideshow to facilitate the WIN period in your classrooms.
- It is important to recognize that WIN period is different than a traditional "study hall" and is more student-centered.
- Your feedback throughout the implementation is helpful and will continue to improve interventions offered at LCCS.
- Coaches and members of the leadership team are available to assist with planning and feedback.

*An overview of LCCS's W.I.N. period in grades 5-8.*

### **Launch Lessons**

At the launch of the W.I.N. period, LCCS teachers provide a lesson set for introducing W.I.N. and setting expectations for the school year. Students in grades 5-8 are introduced to the purpose of W.I.N. as a student-centered period for intervention and independent practice. Students [create profiles](#) based on their individual needs and begin to track their progress in student folders. In addition, students reflect on the LCCS Homework Policy and discuss a plan for success in alignment with Link's Core Values. A homework survey is distributed and results are analyzed and discussed with scholars. All students sign a compact to demonstrate their understanding of the W.I.N. period. Follow-up lessons include discussions around available student data provided by the New Jersey Department of Education (eg. NJSLA; Start Strong). Students complete a [W.I.N. reflection](#) with the support of their teacher through conferring. Finally, students are ready to actively participate in the W.I.N. period and maintain a track record utilizing the "W.I.N. Progress Monitoring Form."

### **Leadership Support for WIN**

- Academic Planning
  - ELA-Dr. Ken Kunz
  - Math-Danielle Perrotta
- WIN Support Planning/Homework Help/Study Skills-Grade Level Meetings
- Scheduling & Logistics- Kathleen Hester; Hannah Kennedy; Crystal Covington
- Restoration & Reflection-Ameenah Brown

*Contact information for W.I.N. support and implementation.*



## Restorative Justice and Tiered System of Supports

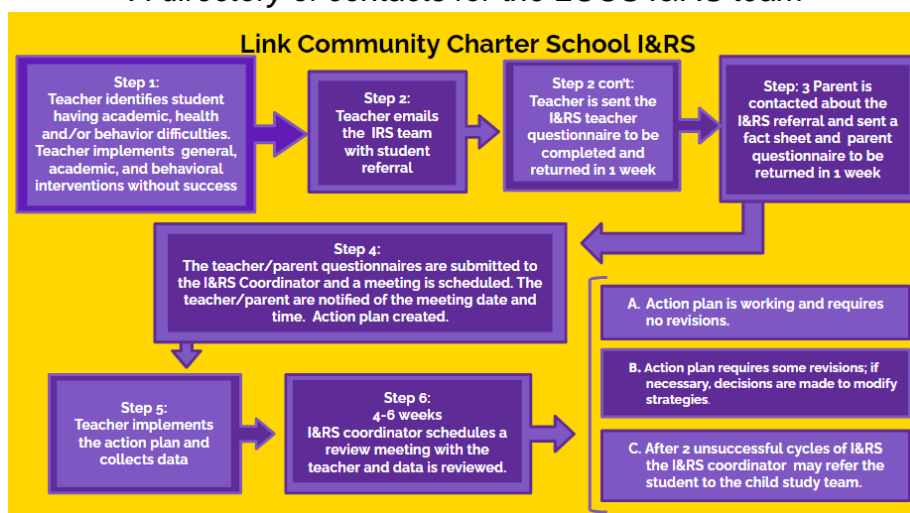
The school utilizes the strategy of Restorative Justice to handle conflict between students or between students and staff. Restorative Justice focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all those affected by an issue through guided conversation. It includes taking responsibility, problem solving and mediation, thereby providing a learning opportunity and consequences rather than just punishment.

## Connections to I&RS

The LCCS team of social workers provides an annual training to staff at the launch of each school year to review the processes and procedures for I&RS. Included in this presentation are the (1) overview of I&RS, (2) steps for identifying students, (3) and the flowchart for implementation. Included below are the I&RS team members.



*A directory of contacts for the LCCS I&RS team*



*A flow chart for implementation of I&RS at LCCS*

**Additional Resources:** <https://www.nj.gov/education/njtss/>

## **Contact Information**

Questions regarding New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) and the I&RS process can be directed to participating members of the leadership team and individuals highlighted in this manual. For general information, please contact Kathleen Hester at [khester@linkschool.org](mailto:khester@linkschool.org).

### **Fall 2022 NJTSS Manual Planning Team**

Dr. Ken Kunz, Literacy Specialist and Coach  
Crystal Covington, Vice Principal  
Eugenia Cooley, Reading Specialist

Reviewed by Kathleen Hester, Principal, October 2022

## Appendix A: Math Matrix, Grades 5-8

Name\_\_\_\_\_ Team\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level\_\_\_\_\_

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
NJSLA Score of 4-5	NJSLA Score of 3	NJSLA Score of 1-2
Start Strong No Support	Start Strong Some Support	Start Strong High Support
IXL Benchmark TBD	IXL Benchmark TBD	IXL Benchmark TBD
Add'l Data TBD	Add'l Data TBD	Add'l Data TBD

### Progress Monitoring

Beginning of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

Middle of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

End of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: ELA Matrix, Grades 5-6

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Team \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

### Tier 1 and Tier 2 Criteria

Tier 1	Tier 2
NJSLA Score of 4-5	NJSLA Score of 3
Start Strong No Support	Start Strong Some Support
Literably-on or above instructional level	Literably-1-2 years below instructional level
Newsela Data TBD	Newsela Data TBD
Add'l Data TBD	Add'l Data TBD

### Tier 3 Criteria

5th Grade	6th Grade
*If Available *Spring 2022 NJSLA ELA Score of 1 (Did Not Yet Meet Expectations) or 2 (Partially Met Expectations)	Spring 2022 NJSLA ELA Score of 1 (Did Not Yet Meet Expectations) or 2 (Partially Met Expectations)
Literably Reported Reading Level >2 Years Below Reading Level Fall Instructional Target: S/T	Literably Reported Reading Level >2 Years Below Reading Level Fall Instructional Target: V/W
Fall 2022 Start Strong ELA Report of: Strong Support May Be Needed	Fall 2022 Start Strong ELA Report of: Strong Support May Be Needed
SIPPS Plus Placement Test Decoding Support for Older Readers (1st/2nd Grade Reading Level)	
*Optional *ELA data collected and shared through I&RS/teacher referral	*Optional *ELA data collected and shared through I&RS/teacher referral

**Progress Monitoring**

Beginning of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

Middle of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

End of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C: ELA Matrix, Grades 7-8**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Team\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher\_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level\_\_\_\_\_

<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Tier 3</b>
NJSLA Score of 4-5	NJSLA Score of 3	NJSLA Score of 1-2
Start Strong No Support	Start Strong Some Support	Start Strong High Support
Literably-on or above instructional level	Literably-1-2 years below instructional level	Literably->2 years below instructional level
Newsela Data TBD	Newsela Data TBD	Newsela Data TBD
Add'l Data TBD	Add'l Data TBD	Add'l Data TBD

**Progress Monitoring**

Beginning of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

Middle of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

End of the Year

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Tier \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D: Reading/Writing Phonics Matrix  
Grades K-1**

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Map Score Hi Average, High	Map Score of Average	Map Score of Low, Low Average
Brigance >88	Brigance 61-88	Brigance <61
F &P Benchmark Assessment On or above instructional level	F &P Benchmark Assessment 1 year Below instructional Level	F &P Benchmark Assessment >2 years below instructional level
Sipps Placement Assessment K:Beginning Level	Sipps Assessment 1 year below instructional level	Sipps Assessment >2 years below instructional
Conferences/Guided Reading	Small Group/Individual Conferences	*1:1 LLI Intervention

\*Grades 2, 3 and 4 to be added

\*LLI Launching in fall 2022

**Progress Monitoring**

Beginning of the Year

Date:\_\_\_\_\_ Tier:\_\_\_\_\_

Middle of the Year:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_

End of the Year:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix E: Math Matrix  
Grades K-1**

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Map Score: Hi Average, High	Map Score: Average	Map Score: Low, Low Average
Brigance >88	Brigance 61-88	Brigance <61
*Additional Data TBD IReady	*Additional Data TBD IReady	*Additional Data TBD IReady

\*Grades 2, 3 and 4 to be added

**Progress Monitoring**

Beginning of the Year

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle of the Year:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_

End of the Year:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tier: \_\_\_\_\_