

A primary goal of the Illinois MTSS Network is to provide research-based professional learning and coaching to assist school districts in building educators' capacity and confidence in implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The purpose of this conversation guide is to help clarify differences among common types of supports offered to students: interventions, accommodations and modifications.

MTSS depends upon the provision of effective research-based interventions that are matched to students' needs coupled with monitoring students' responses to this additional support. To make accurate decisions based on student response, it is important that a student receive an academic behavioral, social emotional or attendance intervention, rather than an accommodation or a modification. Interventions, accommodations and modifications are all forms of support given to students, but these supports vary in terms of their goal for implementation. *Accommodations* are intended to provide greater access to curricula, *modifications* have the goal of changing expectations for mastery of curricula. *Interventions* have the goal of increasing student skills toward mastery of identified curriculum and/or skills.

The chart below provides a definition and an example for each of these identified student supports.

Definition	Examples
<p>Intervention: An intervention is a specific skill-building strategy implemented and monitored to improve a targeted skill and achieve adequate progress in a specific area (academic, behavioral or attendance). This often involves changing instruction or providing additional instruction to a student in the area of difficulty.</p>	<p>As an example of an academic intervention, a teacher may use a strategy like CRA (Concrete-Representational-Abstract) using appropriate resources (models) to develop students' conceptual and/or procedural understanding.</p> <p>For behavior, SEL, or attendance a team might determine that CICO (Check In, Check Out) would be a good fit intervention. CICO involves a caring adult meeting with a student at the beginning and end of the day to check in and discuss how things are going. This intentional adult contact provides support for students and alerts adults when more involvement is needed.</p> <p>An intervention <u>may</u> be found in the form of a published program, but research based interventions are applications of strategies that include reduced</p>

	group size for greater student feedback and narrowing of the focus to allow more practice.
<p>Accommodation: An accommodation is intended to provide full access to and participation in the regular education curriculum. Its purpose is to eliminate obstacles that would interfere with a student’s ability to perform or produce at the <u>same standard</u> of performance expected of general education students.</p>	<p>An accommodation may be to allow a student additional time to complete a math test. An accommodation for unmotivated students may be to break large assignments into smaller ‘chunks’ and to provide positive feedback for each completed ‘chunk’ of assigned work (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). An accommodation for attendance might be giving consideration to the student’s schedule. Enrolling them in core classes that don’t begin first thing in the morning-electives first. An option for a SEL need might be increased use of technology to complete assignments if students experience anxiety.</p>
<p>Modification: A modification is an instructional change that <u>lowers the standards</u> of performance; altering what a student is expected to know or to be able to do.</p>	<p>An example of an academic modification would be to give a student five math computation problems for practice instead of the 20 problems assigned to the rest of the class. Instructional modifications are essential elements on the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans of many students with special needs.</p>

In an MTSS system, the desired outcome of any academic, behavioral, social emotional or attendance intervention is a closing of the gap between a student’s skills/outcomes and those of his or her peers. Frequently used interventions include skill based instruction that includes an increase in opportunities for greater practice with feedback by increasing instructional time, narrowing the focus of instruction, and/or reducing group size.

For more information:

- IRIS Center from Vanderbilt University, Module on Accommodations:
<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/acc/#content>
- Batsche, G. M., Elliott, J., Graden, J., Grimes, J., Kovalski, J. F., Prasse, D., Reschly, D. J., Schrag, J., & Tilly III, W. D. (2005). Response to Intervention: Policy considerations and implementation. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.
- Guiding Tools for Instructional Problem Solving (GTIPS), www.florida-rti.org/docs/gtips/pdf
- Nordlund, Natalie. Accommodations, Modifications, Interventions,
https://www.ilispa.org/assets/docs/ResourceLibrary/Natalie%20Nordlund_AccommodationsModifications%20Interventions1.pdf