



# Explore the Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric (The IMFR!)

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Washington Office of Superintendent of  
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**INTEGRATED MTSS CONFERENCE**  
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**2024**  
**JULY 31 - AUGUST 2**  
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# Welcome!

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- **How much do you know about the IMFR?**



- I'm well versed in the project and tool.



- I've heard of it, but don't know that much.



- Never heard of it!

# In This Session

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- Overview of Integrated MTSS (I-MTSS) and the IMFR Study
- The Suite of IMFR Materials
- FAQs and Discussion

Questions and  
comments  
welcome at  
any time!



# Session Goals

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**Develop a high-level understanding of:**

- I-MTSS
- The IMFR study
- The IMFR suite of materials



# Overview

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I-MTSS

The IMFR Study

# Defining I-MTSS

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“An integrated MTSS model provides all students with the best opportunities to succeed both academically and behaviorally in school. MTSS focuses on providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need across domains and monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals. It is not simply the implementation of both academic RTI and PBIS systems. There is a systematic and careful integration of these systems to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of all school systems.”

McIntosh, K., & Goodman, S. (2016). Integrated multi-tiered systems of support: Blending RTI and PBIS. Guilford Publications.

# Non-Examples: What I-MTSS Isn't



**Siloed Tiered Systems**



**Combined Tiered Systems**

# Purposeful Integration



**Intentionally Combined Tiered Systems**

# The IMFR Study

**The Need:** Lack of a *valid* and *reliable* tool measuring the fidelity of *Integrated MTSS* implementation.

**The Goal:** Develop a reliable and valid rubric to assess I-MTSS in elementary schools.

**The Purpose of the IMFR:** To provide schools and researchers with

- *A valid and reliable measure of what a school's current I-MTSS implementation "looks like"*
- *A definition of I-MTSS via the IMFR's domains and items*
- *Specific ways to improve and sustain implementation*

## Study Details

- National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE), Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education
- July 2019 - June 2024, with NCE in 2025
- AIR and University of Missouri

# IMFR Research Team



**Dr. Allison Gandhi**  
AIR, Principal Investigator



**Dr. Erica Lembke**  
MU, Co-Principal Investigator



**Dr. Chris Riley-Tillman**  
MU, Co-Principal Investigator



**Dr. Jennifer Pierce**  
AIR, Project Director



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**Remy Wang**  
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**Nargiza Buranova  
Gabriella Donofrio  
Jiyung Huang  
Shannon Locke  
Megyn Martin  
Lizzie Thomas**

## Slide 10

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**JPO**

Addy, it's okay if you don't read the grad students' names. :)

Pierce, Jennifer, 2024-05-31T12:55:38.170

# IMFR Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

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**Dr. Matthew Burns**  
University of Florida



**Dr. Sandy Chafouleas**  
University of Connecticut



**Dr. Louis Danielson**  
AIR (Retired)



**Dr. Steven Goodman**  
Center on PBIS

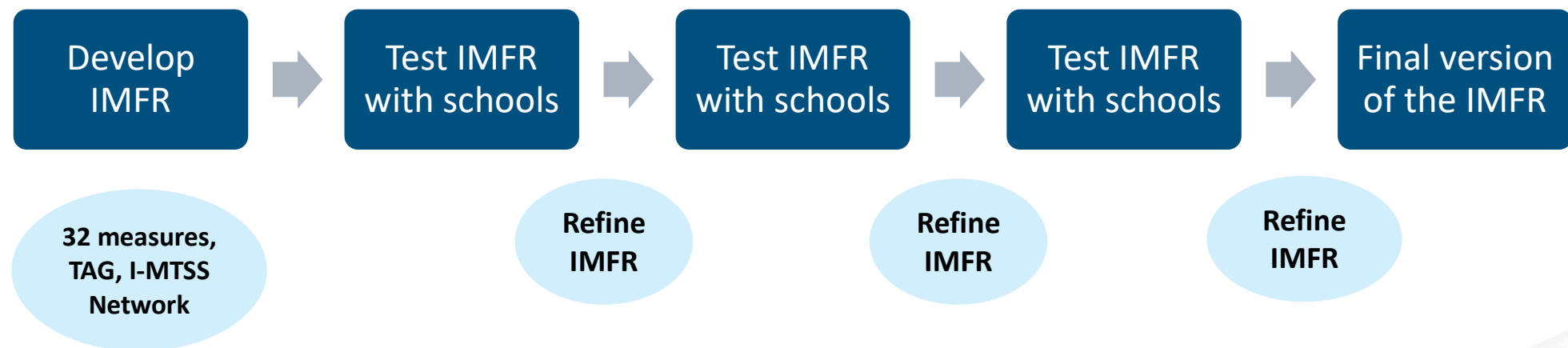


**Dr. Sara McDaniel**  
University of Alabama



**Dr. Claudia Rinaldi**  
Lasell University

# IMFR Development and Testing Process



# Key Study Findings

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- The IMFR is a **valid, reliable** measure of elementary school I-MTSS implementation.
  - Strong content validity: The IMFR items and domains define what I-MTSS is.
  - Strong structural validity: The IMFR items provide accurate ratings of a school's I-MTSS implementation.
  - Adequate substantive validity: The IMFR rating scale categories capture accurate differences in I-MTSS implementation.
  - Strong inter-rater reliability: Different users, once trained, rate schools similarly on I-MTSS.
  - Adequate social validity: Schools believe the IMFR offers useful information, is a valuable tool, but feasibility could improve.

# The Final Tool



## Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric

Domain 1. Instruction and Intervention					
Item	Beginning	Exploring	Aligning	Integrating	Sustaining
<b>1.1 Tier 1</b> <i>Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum and instructional practices delivered to all students.</i> <i>Tier 1 criteria:</i> (a) Tier 1 is evidence based. (b) Tier 1 is differentiated to address the needs of all learners. (c) Tier 1 is delivered with fidelity.	Tier 1 <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic or SEB <sup>1</sup> area.	Tier 1 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> or at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	Tier 1 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , but academic and SEB areas <u>are not combined</u> (i.e., they operate separately).	Tier 1 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and academic and SEB areas <u>are intentionally combined</u> .	For at least two years, Tier 1 has been <u>meeting all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and academic and SEB areas <u>are intentionally combined</u> and documented in <u>policies and procedures</u> .
<b>1.2 Tier 2</b> <i>Tier 2 refers to interventions and supports that supplement the core curriculum and are provided to small groups of students who need more targeted instruction.</i>	Tier 2 <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic or SEB area.	Tier 2 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> or at least <u>one</u>	Tier 2 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , but	Tier 2 <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and academic	For at least two years, Tier 2 has been <u>meeting all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and academic and SEB areas <u>are</u>

# Domains of Integrated MTSS

Domain	Items
Domain 1. Instruction and Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1.1 Tier 1</li><li>• 1.2 Tier 2</li><li>• 1.3 Tier 3</li></ul>
Domain 2. Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2.1 Universal Screening</li><li>• 2.2 Diagnostic Assessment</li><li>• 2.3 Progress Monitoring</li></ul>
Domain 3. Data-Based Decision Making (DBDM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3.1 Universal DBDM</li><li>• 3.2 Targeted DBDM</li><li>• 3.3 Intensive DBDM</li><li>• 3.4 Continuous Improvement</li></ul>
Domain 4. Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4.1 District Leadership</li><li>• 4.2 School Leadership</li><li>• 4.3 Schoolwide Culture</li><li>• 4.4 Professional Learning</li></ul>

# Content Areas Measured by the IMFR

Domain	Items
Domain 1. Instruction and Inter...	
Academics (Reading & Math) Social-Emotional Behavioral (SEB) Supports	
	4.4 Professional Learning

# The Rubric Rating Scales

**Table 2. Rating Scale for the Instruction and Intervention, Assessment, and DBDM Domains**

Beginning	Exploring	Aligning	Integrating	Sustaining
A <i>Beginning</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic or SEB area.	An <i>Exploring</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> or at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	An <i>Aligning</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , but academic and SEB areas are <u>not combined</u> (i.e., they operate separately).	An <i>Integrating</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and academic and SEB areas are <u>intentionally combined</u> .	A <i>Sustaining</i> rating on an item indicates that <u>for at least two years</u> , a school has <u>met</u>

**Table 3. Rating Scale for the Infrastructure Domain**

Initial	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
An <i>Initial</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic or SEB area.	A <i>Developing</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> or at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	A <i>Proficient</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	An <i>Advanced</i> rating on an item indicates that for at least two years, a school has <u>met all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> and at least <u>one SEB area</u> , and <u>documented in policies and procedures</u> .

# IMFR Rating Scale

This rating scale is used for 3 domains:

1. Instruction & Intervention
2. Assessment
3. DBDM

Beginning	Exploring	Aligning	Integrating	Sustaining
A <i>Beginning</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic or SEB area.	An <i>Exploring</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>or</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	An <i>Aligning</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>and</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> , <b>but</b> academic and SEB areas <u>are not combined</u> (i.e., they operate separately).	An <i>Integrating</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>and</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> , <b>and</b> academic and SEB areas <u>are intentionally combined</u> .	A <i>Sustaining</i> rating on an item indicates that <u>for at least two years</u> , a school has <u>met all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>and</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> , <b>and</b> academic and SEB areas <u>are intentionally combined and documented in policies and procedures</u> .

# IMFR Rating Scale for Infrastructure

Initial	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
An <i>Initial</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>does not meet all criteria</u> in any academic <b>or</b> SEB area.	A <i>Developing</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>or</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	A <i>Proficient</i> rating on an item indicates that a school <u>meets all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>and</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> .	An <i>Advanced</i> rating on an item indicates that for at least two years, a school has <u>met all criteria</u> in at least <u>one academic area</u> <b>and</b> at least <u>one SEB area</u> , <b>and</b> <u>documented in policies and procedures</u> .

**Support** for integration

# Administering the IMFR

Step	Time Commitment
1. Schedule a 3- to 4-hour meeting with the relevant school team. This meeting may be conducted face-to-face or virtually.	Less than 10 minutes
2. Use the IMFR Interview Protocol to ask the team about I-MTSS implementation. Take notes during the interview and audio/video-record the interview. Notes and recordings will be used in Step 3.	Approximately 3–4 hours
3. Use the IMFR Scoring Worksheet, notes, and recording to generate IMFR ratings.	Approximately 1 hour
4. Prepare the IMFR Planning Guide and share it with the school I-MTSS team, along with the completed IMFR Scoring Worksheet.	Less than 10 minutes



# The Suite of IMFR Materials

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Resources for Accessing and Using the IMFR

# Three Main Items in the Suite of Materials

## The Materials Packet

### Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric

MATERIALS PACKET | March 2024



College of Education  
& Human Development  
University of Missouri

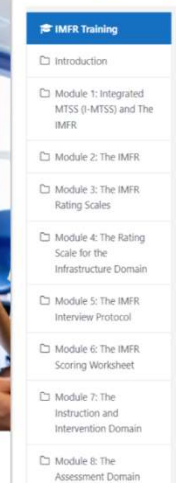


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## The Administration Manual

### Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL | MARCH 2024



Introduction

## Training Series



### Welcome

Welcome to the IMFR Training Modules! These modules contain information about administering and scoring the IMFR. Please complete each module and their associated activities before using the tool with school teams.

### Module Navigation

Use the navigation pane on the left to access each module. You may also click on module links at the top and bottom of the page to navigate to different modules. To complete an activity, click on the desired activity's link. Once you have started an activity, you may navigate to prior or subsequent activities by using the "Jump To" drop down menu or clicking on the link next to the "Jump To" drop down menu.



# The Materials Packet

## The IMFR ("The Rubric")

### Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric (IMFR)

Domain 1. Instruction and Intervention				Interview Protocol
Item	Beginning	Exploring	Aligning	
<b>1.1 Tier 1</b> Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum and instructional practices delivered to all students. Tier 1 criteria: (a) Tier 1 is evidence based. (b) Tier 1 is differentiated to address the needs of all learners. (c) Tier 1 is delivered with fidelity.	Tier 1 does not meet all criteria in any academic or SEB <sup>1</sup> area.	Tier 1 meets at least one criterion in any academic or SEB area.		<b>SECTION 3</b> <b>DOMAIN 1. INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION</b> <b>TIER 1: READING, MATH, &amp; SEB (SCORING WORKSHEET 1.1, Q1)</b>  We'll start with Tier 1. When I say Tier 1, I am referring to the core curriculum and instructional practices delivered to all students.  <b>A. Scoring Criterion: Tier 1 is evidence based.</b>  1. What Tier 1 curriculum is used for <b>reading</b> ?  a. [Follow-up if needed] Who selected this curriculum?  b. [If not district selected] Was there consideration of the curriculum selection process?  2. What about in <b>math</b> ? What Tier 1 curriculum is used? Who selected it? Consideration of research on it during the selection process?  3. What about in <b>SEB</b> ? What Tier 1 curriculum is used? Who selected it? Consideration of research on it during the selection process?  <b>B. Scoring Criterion: Tier 1 is differentiated to address the needs of all learners.</b>  1. What data do teachers use to determine how Tier 1 <b>reading</b> instruction is delivered? ➤ E.g., universal screening data, unit assessments.  a. [Follow-up if needed] How do teachers differentiate Tier 1 <b>reading</b> instruction? ➤ E.g., use of centers/stations, small-group instruction, varied assignments, computer-based programs.  b. [Follow-up if needed] Which students receive differentiated instruction?  2. What about in <b>math</b> ? What data do teachers use to determine how Tier 1 is differentiated? How do teachers differentiate? Which students receive differentiated instruction in Tier 1?  3. What about in <b>SEB</b> ? What data do teachers use to determine how Tier 1 is differentiated? How do teachers differentiate? Which students receive differentiated instruction in Tier 1?
<b>1.2 Tier 2</b> Tier 2 refers to interventions and supports that supplement the core curriculum and are provided to small groups of students who need more targeted instruction. Tier 2 criteria: (a) Tier 2 is evidence based. (b) Tier 2 is supplemental to Tier 1. (c) Tier 2 is delivered with fidelity to a targeted group of students.	Tier 2 does not meet all criteria in any academic or SEB area.	Tier 2 meets at least one criterion in any academic or SEB area.		

## Scoring Worksheet

### IMFR Scoring Worksheet

#### Domain 1. Instruction and Intervention

##### 1.1 Tier 1

Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum and instructional practices delivered to all students.

Q1. Tier 1 Criteria by Area Table	Reading	Math	SEB
<b>a. Tier 1 is evidence based.</b> At least one Tier 1 curriculum/instructional practice is deemed evidence based by an external source or selected by the district. ➤ External source e.g., EdReports, What Works Clearinghouse, Evidence for ESSA.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>b. Tier 1 is differentiated to address the needs of all learners.</b> Educators use data to inform when and how to differentiate instruction. ➤ E.g., universal screening data, unit assessments, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) data. Educators provide differentiated instruction. ➤ Academic e.g., use of centers/stations, small-group instruction, varied assignments, self-leveling computer-based programs. ➤ Social, Emotional, and Behavioral (SEB) areas e.g., reteaching expectations, behavior safe seat/cool-down corner, classwide group contingency system (token economy, Class-Wide Function-Related Intervention Teams). Differentiated instruction is provided for all students who need it, not just those with individualized education programs (IEPs) and/or behavior plans.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>c. Tier 1 is delivered with fidelity.</b> Delivery of Tier 1 is monitored two to three times per year by principals, coaches, or other staff who conduct fidelity checks as part of walk-throughs or observations. The fidelity checks show that Tier 1 is consistently implemented as expected in most settings. ➤ E.g., most teachers use the curriculum as it was intended to be used; most teachers have behavioral expectations posted.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Fully implemented.</b> Yes is selected for all criteria in the column above.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

IMFR Materials

## Planning Guide

### SECTION 2 IMFR RATINGS AT-A-GLANCE

#### Summary of Administration

Teachers and administrators at [School Name] participated in a [face-to-face or virtual] interview on [Month Day, Year] with a [Name of Person Conducting the IMFR interview]. During this interview, team members answered questions related to topics on reading, math, and SEB based on 1-MTSS implementation during the current school year.

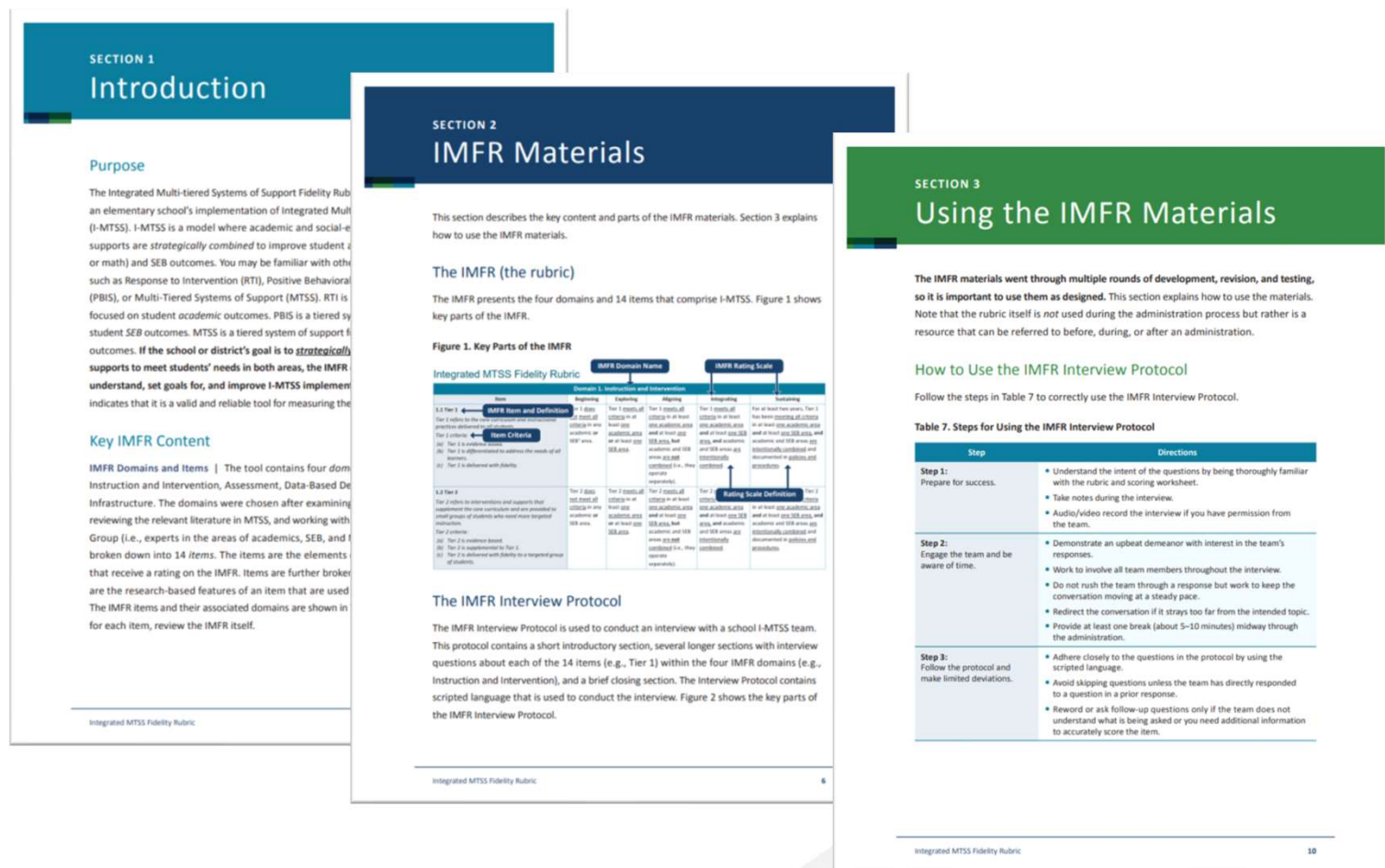
#### Ratings At-A-Glance

Item	Beginning	Exploring	Aligning	Integrating	Sustaining
Domain 1. Instruction and Intervention					
1.1 Tier 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Tier 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3 Tier 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 2. Assessment					
2.1 Universal Screening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Diagnostic Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Progress Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 3. Data-based Decision Making					
3.1 Universal DBDM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Targeted DBDM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Intensive DBDM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Continuous Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item	Initial	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	
Domain 4. Infrastructure					
4.1 District Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.2 School Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.3 Schoolwide Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.4 Professional Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

IMFR Planning Guide

# The Administration Manual

- Designed to *supplement* the online training series



# Self-Paced Online Training Series

- Mimics the training used during the study
- Features 11 modules on the key content of the IMFR, the materials, and how to use them
- Includes written content, videos, checks for understanding, and practice opportunities

**Important!**  
**Completing the training series supports accurate IMFR administration and scoring.**

## Interview Practice

### Activity 5a: IMFR Interview Practice

Practice using the IMFR protocol and respond to the questions below after completing the module. You

> **Find a partner.**

> **Review roles.**

> **Practice using IMFR Protocol.**

## Scoring Practice




# Let's Explore!

- Visit the [IMFR website](#), search for *IMFR* on AIR.org, or scan the QR code.



01 MARCH 2024 | GUIDE/TOOLKIT

## Integrated MTSS Fidelity Rubric (IMFR)




The Integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Fidelity Rubric (IMFR) is a tool created to assess an elementary school's implementation of Integrated Multi-tiered Systems of Support (I-MTSS). I-MTSS is a model where academic and social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) supports are strategically combined to improve students' academic (e.g., reading and/or math) and SEB outcomes.

The tool was developed by researchers at AIR and the University of Missouri (MU) as a part of a five-year study funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Investigators included Dr. Allison Gandhi (AIR, principal investigator), Dr. Erica Lembke (MU, co-principal investigator) and Dr. Chris Riley-Tillman (MU, co-principal investigator). Jennifer Pierce (AIR) served as project director and Heather Smith (MU) served as project coordinator.


Psychometric testing on over 100 elementary schools indicates that the IMFR is a valid and reliable tool for measuring the implementation of I-MTSS.

### Overview of the IMFR



Watch on YouTube

#### Contact



**Jennifer Pierce**  
Senior TA Consultant

#### Related Work

Center on Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS Center) ►

#### Related Topics

- Education ►
- District and School Improvement ►
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (formerly RTI) ►

#### Services


- Research & Evaluation ►

# Accessing the Suite of Materials

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- Scroll to the bottom of the page to the section called **Where Can I Get the IMFR?**
- Complete the form.

## Where Can I Get the IMFR?



Please complete this short form to gain access to the IMFR materials. You will be asked to provide your name, email address, role, and whether you will be using the IMFR for research purposes. After submitting the form, you will receive an email with the IMFR tool, interview protocol, scoring worksheet, planning guide, and self-paced training course. [Contact us](#) for more information.

- You will receive an email from Airtable with a link to the Dropbox folder that houses the materials.
  - You do not need to log into Dropbox.
- An IMFR team member will automatically enroll you in the IMFR Training Series after you complete the form. Expect an email from Moodle with a username and password.



**Mizzou**  
University of Missouri



**AIR**  
Advancing Evidence.  
Improving Lives.

# FAQs and Discussion

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# IMFR-Specific FAQs

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## **Does the IMFR measure other tiered systems fidelity tools?**

- No! The IMFR has a specific purpose: To measure the integration of academic and behavior tiered systems. If a school/district/state/researcher's need matches that purpose, the IMFR may be useful.

## **Why does it take so long to administer the IMFR?**

- The study team found that several hours were needed to fully understand tiered systems implementation and to gather adequate information to accurately rate the implementation effort.

## **Can a school MTSS team member and/or school-based coach administer the IMFR?**

- Yes, however the IMFR was not formally tested in these conditions. Results may or may not be accurate.

# Discussion and Reflection

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- What FAQs are important to add to the current list of questions?
- What are you hearing in the field about I-MTSS and/or the IMFR?
- What questions do you have about I-MTSS and/or the IMFR?
- What is one key take-away from this session?



# Contact Us

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- Jennifer Pierce [jpierce@air.org](mailto:jpierce@air.org)
- Heather Smith [hsmith@missouri.edu](mailto:hsmith@missouri.edu)



# Thank You!

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