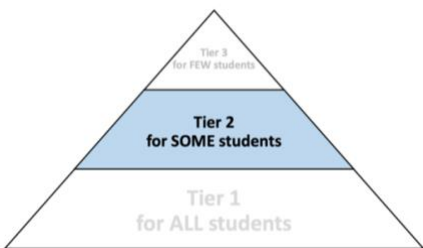# Tier 2: rationale for a targeted approach– ==ELEMENTARY LEVEL==

What is the purpose of a Tier 2 targeted approach?

Within a multi-tiered system of support framework, Tier 2 refers to the practices and systems that enable targeted interventions for **some students** (approx. 10-15% of students) who need further accompaniment to succeed, beyond what Tier 1 interventions alone can provide. The focus at Tier 2 is to preventively provide targeted supports to students who are at risk for developing more serious challenges, which would overtime require intensive and individualized support if not answered. Essentially, interventions at this level are more targeted than Tier 1 but less intensive than Tier 3. The support provided at Tier 2 may involve small-group interventions where the number of students participating would depend on the grade level and specific student needs. Tier 2 targeted measures can also be provided to students on an individual basis, where supports are strategically assigned and/or scheduled for the student upon their needs, challenges, and individual differences. Moreover, Tier 2 supports can be applied as a short-term plan, on a more intensive basis, in order to answer to a particular objective. For more information on targeted measures, we invite you to consult the Tier 2 practices, checklist, and considerations documentation on the CEBM website. Please note that the CEBM model of the pyramid of interventions differs from other multi-tiered system of support frameworks, as it based on a neurodevelopmental attachment-based lens, which also promotes inclusion and trauma-informed practices.

How does Tier 2 fit in a multi-tiered system?

Multi-tiered systems of support stem from having a strong foundation of Tier 1 support. With schoolwide systems in place (both during class time and during transitions), schools can readily identify students for whom Tier 1 alone has not met their needs. If effective Tier 1 supports are missing, the context could potentially deteriorate over time and lead to students requiring more intensified supports at Tiers 2-3 to function, which would then increase the pressure onto the system for additional supports and resources. Keep in mind that the success of Tier 1 practices rests on matching the appropriate practices to the needs and composition of the whole student group. Please note that for the students who would benefit from receiving Tier 2 supports, these are meant to be complimentary and need to be put into place as an add-on to Tier 1, not as a replacement.

Identifying students for Tier 2 supports

Students should be considered for Tier 2 measures if they are not adapting well to their environment with Tier 1 supports alone. Another element to consider is whether the student seems to benefit from a small-group setting for certain tasks and activities. It is important to ensure that the Tier 1 system is being implemented as planned, and that all considerations at that level of support have been reflected upon. We invite you to consult the CEBM Tier 1 practices and considerations before moving towards more targeted and intensive measures. Since there is no such thing as a 'one-size-fits-all' approach when supporting a student at Tier 2, the practices will need to be selected according to the student's targeted needs, challenges, and individual differences.

Important note: If more than 20% of the student population demonstrates a need for Tier 2 targeted supports, the school team needs to examine the quality of the Tier 1 practices, materials, and environments to ensure it is differentiated to meet current student needs.

Key fundamental elements of Tier 2 supports

The implementation of the following elements has been shown to help increase the likelihood of success of Tier supports:

- Using a proactive approach where support measures are assigned and scheduled preventively rather than waiting for problems to arise to address them

- Increasing the adult accompaniment, being intentional in the setup of the environment, and being mindful of the adult posture/approach to match the targeted needs and challenges of the students

- Assigning a significant adult (in addition to the homeroom teacher) to support the student through check-ins and other targeted measures

- Selecting tools and support measures that match the student's targeted needs, challenges, and individual differences

- Providing ample opportunities for practice in times when the student is regulated, receptive and engaged with the adult accompanying them

- Ensuring that the student has reserved blocs of time for scheduled breaks

- Engaging the parents/caregivers to increase collaboration and improve communication

- Monitoring the student's progress to help inform practice (relying on data informed decision making)

Examples of Tier 2 small-group supports (3-5 students)

In the classroom	In alternate settings	In the schoolyard
- Small-group **instruction** while the whole group is doing **activities by stations** - Peer **tutoring** in dyads - Small-group projects where there are **differentiated assignments**	- Small-group targeted supports for **emotional and social development** (e.g. role playing, team building activities, etc.) – during recess, lunch, or class time (lead by Support Staff) - Small-group targeted supports for **academics** (lead by Resource Teacher)	- Dividing the **schoolyard into sections** to offer a variety of games and activities that cater to different needs and interests (keeping in mind our Tier 2 students) - Small-group targeted supports for **emotional and social development** (e.g. structured outdoor games and activities) – during recess, lunch, or class time (lead by Support Staff)

Examples of Tier 2 targeted supports for individual students

At Tier 2, students benefit from targeted supports that have been specifically assigned and/or scheduled for them with a particular objective in mind. For example, assigning a particular flexible seat to help the student focus. These tools need to be introduced (having the purpose explained to the student), modeled (what to do and what not do to), tried out to ensure it's the right fit, practiced and followed up upon to ensure the purpose of the tool is being fulfilled. Other examples may include preferential seating, check-ins, scheduled time in the designated area in the classroom or at the movement station in the hallway, scheduled break in an alternate location (e.g. You've Got Mail, Foster Class, NSC/Oasis room), accompaniment during transitions, etc. For more ideas, we invite you to consult the Tier 2 practices webpage.

Matching the right supports to answer to the student's needs

It is important that tools and support measures are matched to the student's needs, challenges, and individual differences. For example, a student might benefit from a flexible seat, but not all seats are made equal, so we need to ensure the tool selected is helping rather than distracting. Same idea for sensory tools; each type of tool offers something different with its own purpose whether to soothe, help focus, or get the student to activate their senses. Check-ins also need to be strategically scheduled according to the student's needs. Some students benefit from a morning, while others would require one following recess. In terms of brain breaks, similarly to flexible seating and sensory tools, they do not all give the same outcome. Certain brain breaks level up the student's energy, while other will level down that energy. Some students do not benefit from high level energy activities; rather than helping them release their pent-up energy, the activity overloads their sensory gating system and overstimulates/overwhelms the student, which may dysregulate them further. Matching the right supports required to try a range of tools and support measures and proceed through a trial-and-error process. The exploration and experimenting helps the student discover themselves and become more self-aware of their needs, triggers and individual differences. This hands-on experience will help them gain confidence in their abilities when well supported and to become better advocates for themselves.

The need for individual visual schedules at Tier 2

At Tier 2, students may require an individual visual schedule, especially if they have reserved blocs of time in their daily schedule for breaks and other targeted supports (e.g. small-group targeted support for emotional and social development, or for academics, in an alternate setting. Individual visual schedules can help with structure, predictability, organization, time management, task initiation, etc. The visual portion of the schedule helps for students who need reminders in other ways than verbal prompting. Having a visual schedule can also help the adults minimize their talking and rather let the tool provide the structuring, which helps with students who have the instinct to resist and oppose adult directives, prompts and reminders. To increase the success of the use of the visual schedule, the adult needs to sit down with the student and explain the purpose of the schedule, how they will use it, where they will put it, etc. It might be a good idea to tape it to the student's desk or in their planner or folder. Laminating the schedule can allow the student to make marks next to items as they complete them and then wipe it clean for the next day. Remind the student frequently to refer to their schedule when they don't know what to do, are finished with the current task, are inattentive, off task, unfocused, distracted, etc. Be sure to include the parent in the support measure, calling them and explaining the schedule to them as well as sending a copy of the schedule home.

Monitoring progress at Tier 2

Progress monitoring Tier 2 supports should occur frequently and in various aspects of the student's day (during class time, transitions, etc.). At this level of support, a student would benefit from having a student active prevention plan, as well as perhaps a student safety plan, if needed. These plans would permit the adults involved to be on the same page about the student's needs, challenges, individual differences, as well as the priorities to consider in terms of supports in place. In the student active prevention plan, there is also a section reserved for student follow up and progress monitoring.

Suggestions to ease Tier 2 implementation

Tier 2 is often overlooked in how powerful of an intervention tool it can be, in part because it is somewhat hard to define in practice. Tier 2 measures should be readily accessible to support students as they demonstrate need. Here are some steps to make this actionable within a school setting:
- Tier 2 measures should be pre-designed, scheduled, and require low effort for teachers or interventionists to support.
- Schools need to allocate resources (like time, staff, and materials) to targeted interventions at the beginning of the year so there are no surprises.
- School teams must know how and when to access or apply for targeted supports.

Considerations prior to moving on to Tier 3 individualized intensive supports

If Tier 2 practices no longer seem to be sufficient to support the student, we suggest you consult the CEBM Tier 2 checklist, as well as the Tier 2 considerations documentation to make sure all points have been covered before increasing the tier of support. Tier 3 practices require a lot more material and human resources and must be decided upon analysis and reflection.

Conclusion

Although Tier 1 universal supports should be a standardized practice throughout all schools, Tier 2 targeted measures also need to have their own place in accompanying students, as they are a powerful tool when used correctly and consistently. Not only does the presence of Tier 2 measures help minimize the overuse of intensive individualized resources, but also reduce the number of students who fall into exacerbated behaviours due to the lack of well-adapted supports. Keep in mind that some of the keys to successful Tier 2 targeted measures are to pre-plan, to be intentional in the selection and implementation, and to follow up to ensure all is going according to the plan.