



NDMTSS CONFERENCE

ALIGNED FOR IMPACT: CONNECTING PEOPLE, PRACTICES, & PURPOSE

June 15-17, 2026
Holiday Inn
Fargo, North Dakota



WIFI

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Password: FARND

Meals

Breakfast, lunch, and a light snack will be provided each day. If you noted dietary restrictions in your registration, your meal instructions are indicated on the back of your name badge.

June 15 - Monday

Breakfast: Fresh Fruit & Rolls

Lunch: Mexican Buffet

Snack: Popcorn

June 16 - Tuesday

Breakfast: Yogurt Parfait & Breakfast Breads

Lunch: Boxed Lunch

Snack: Chex Mix

June 17 - Wednesday

Breakfast: Fresh Fruit & Muffins

Lunch: Backyard BBQ Buffet

Snack: Cookies

Attendance

Check-in will be located in the atrium each day before the first session. Attendance will be used in conjunction with a completed conference reflection to award continuing education credit.

Credit

One continuing education credit will be available for an additional charge through VCSU. Credit requirements include a minimum of 15 hours of learning (2 full days) and a completed conference reflection. Materials will be due by Friday, June 19, 2026.



VCSU Credit Information

Scan to learn more about credit requirements.

Roles needing specific approval/clock hours, may also be available (i.e. NASP/School Psychologists, ND/MN Administrators, and counselors).

NDMTSS CONFERENCE

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Thank you for attending the 2026 NDMTSS Conference! We invite you to provide feedback so that we can tailor learning opportunities to best meet your needs.

We want your input!

Complete the conference evaluation:

<https://tinyurl.com/NDMTSS2026>



Follow along with presenters!

Access conference materials on Padlet:

<https://tinyurl.com/2026-NDMTSS-Conference>



Want to learn more?

Sign up to receive our quarterly newsletter in your inbox.

<https://bit.ly/4wJJDv0>



DR. SARAH BROWN



Sarah Brown, Ph.D. is the President of System Impact Consulting and co-author of the books, *Effective Universal Instruction: An Action-Oriented Approach to Improving Tier 1* and *MTSS for Reading Improvement: A Leader's Tool Kit for Schoolwide Success*. During her career, Dr. Brown has had experience leading teams focused on high-quality customer education at FastBridge Learning and Illuminate Education and supporting MTSS and the FastBridge Product at Renaissance. Prior to joining corporate teams, Dr. Brown served in roles including as the Bureau Chief leading special education and MTSS implementation for the state of Iowa, district special education director, professional learning administrator, and school psychologist.

DR. ERIN CHAPARRO



Dr. Erin Chaparro has spent two decades studying what it actually takes to implement MTSS. A Research Associate Professor at the University of Oregon, she has led or co-led more than \$10 million in federally funded research, including a current \$4 million IES grant training 76 school teams in data-based decision making. She directed Oregon's statewide MTSS initiative across 22 districts, is an Implementation Partner for the National Center on PBIS, and is co-author of the widely-used textbook *Assessment in Special and Inclusive Education*. She is also the founding co-editor of the *Journal of MTSS*, published by the International MTSS Association. In 2024, she founded MTSS Solutions LLC, now serving educators across the country and internationally. Her research and practice focus on the same question: How can evidence-based systems be implemented effectively at scale to benefit students and educators?

KARI CHITTY



Kari Chitty is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst with a background in special education, behavior support, and K–12 systems improvement. She currently works with Behavior Advantage, supporting the clinical development of behavior planning software, providing professional development, and partnering with school teams on assessment, intervention, and progress monitoring. Prior to this role, Kari served in West Fargo Public Schools, North Dakota, as a special education teacher, behavior coach, and district coordinator, where she helped strengthen behavior supports, improve implementation, and build practical systems for students and staff. She also served in the Army and has supported military-connected children and families through professional and volunteer roles, including work with the Military Child Education Coalition. Kari is passionate about helping teams put effective practices into action and is known for her practical, down-to-earth approach to the real challenges of behavior support in schools.

SHANNON HARKEN



Shannon Harken, M.A.Ed., began her career as an elementary and special education teacher in 1991. She also served as a special education consultant in a problem-solving service delivery system, where she helped school-based teams use data to develop a more efficient, proactive, and systematic process to meet the needs of all students. Shannon currently works as an RtI Professional Learning and Leadership Consultant (PLLC) for Heartland AEA 11. Based on her experiences, teaching background, and knowledge from experts in the field, Shannon has spent the last 10 years, co-authoring and training RtI modules in the areas of consensus building, infrastructure development, and implementation to hundreds of school-based teams across the country interested in implementing RtI.

TRICIA MCKALE SKYLES



Tricia McKale Skyles is a senior educational consultant and featured presenter with Randy Sprick's Safe and Civil Schools. After being a classroom teacher, Tricia served as an Instructional Coach with Dr. Jim Knight. Through her initial work with coaching, she assisted teachers in implementing CHAMPS Classroom Management. After moving into the role of Behavior Coach, she began to work extensively with the Safe and Civil Schools library of resources. She now works with SCS to provide training, coaching, and consultation with district and campus leaders, coaches, and classroom teachers. A middle school teacher at heart, Tricia now resides in Rolla, MO, with her family, when she isn't flying around the country in an aluminum tube.

DR. AMANDA VANDERHEYDEN



Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden is a policy adviser and thought leader who actively conducts research focused on improving learning outcomes for students. She has served as a standing panel member for NIH, IES at the U.S. Department of Education, an adviser and reviewer for NCII, USAID, the IRIS center, the Dyslexia Foundation, and numerous state departments of education. Dr. VanDerHeyden has authored a number of policy guides and position statements, and delivered testimony on the use of Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) to identify students for special education. She is credited with developing models of academic screening that are widely used in schools, conducting innovative research in mathematics screening and progress monitoring using mastery measurement, and the creation of SpringMath. Dr. VanDerHeyden is President of Education Research & Consulting in Fairhope, Alabama, and has a faculty affiliation with the Wheelock College of Education at Boston University.

Time	Location	Presenter	Session
7:45-8:30am	Atrium	Check-In & Breakfast	
8:30-8:45am	Crowne/Royale	Welcome & Introductions	
8:45-9:20am	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	The Evolution of MTSS: What We've Learned, What's Changed, and What Barriers Still Exist
9:20-10:35am	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Building the Foundation: Leading Tier 1 with Vision & Supporting with Systems
10:35-10:45am	Break		
10:45am-12:00pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	From Students to Systems: Using MTSS to Drive the Right Next Steps
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	The Science of Learning and Math MTSS: Designing Instruction That Predictably Produces Growth
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Before It Escalates: Prevention-First De-Escalation for Every Educator
	Dakota	Shannon Harken	Proactive by Design: Using Early Warning Systems to Identify, Monitor, and Respond at Every Level
	Conference/Director's	Ryan Lyson & Danette Brown	Educators Using ND A+ Blueprints, Interim Assessments, and Navy to Drive Instruction
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch - Pick up in Sterling		
1:00-2:15pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Support through Action: Walkthroughs within MTSS
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	Smarter Math Assessment: Improving MTSS Decisions Without Over-Testing
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Simple BIPs That Stick: When and Why Less Is More
	Dakota	Shannon Harken	Anchors of Excellence: Strengthening MTSS through Clarity and Consistency
2:15-2:30pm	Break		
2:30-4:00pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Making Reading Improvement Stick
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	Fix the Math Core First: Using Tier 1.5 Classwide Intervention
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Better Tier 2 Conversations: Function-Based Thinking for Any Student Support Team
	Dakota	Shannon Harken	NDMTSS Unstuck: Troubleshooting MTSS with Confidence
	Conference/Director's	Danette Brown & Ryan Lyson	ND A+ Summative Data Use Monitoring & Support Structures
4:00-4:30pm	Crowne/Royale	Q&A - Ask the Experts	

Time	Location	Presenter	Session
8:00-8:30am	Atrium	Check-In & Breakfast	
8:30-8:45am	Crowne/Royale	Welcome & Introductions	
8:45-10:15am <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Practice Makes Progress: Transforming Tier 1 Practice for Greater Growth for All
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	Designing Math MTSS Systems That Work: Aligning Roles, Routines, and Decisions
10:15-10:30am	Break		
10:30-11:45am <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	From Data to Decisions: Taking Action on Progress Monitoring
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	Designing for Impact: How to Bring it All Together in the Classroom
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Proactive Discipline: Building Connection Across Classrooms and Systems
	Dakota	Erica Kindem & Erica Carney	Beyond the Score: Mapping ORF Data for Targeted Action
	Conference/Director's	Melissa Stanley	Secondary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?
11:45am-1:00pm	Lunch - Pick up in Sterling		
	Crowne/Royale	Lunch Panel Begins at 12:10pm	
1:00-2:15pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Scaling and Sustaining MTSS in Reading
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	SpringMath Users Group: Getting Started with Data Driven Math Instruction and MTSS Decision Making
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Aligned Teams, Consistent Supports: Connecting MTSS and IEP Work
	Dakota	Erica Kindem & Erica Carney	The "Temperature Check": Navigating North Dakota's Dyslexia Screening Requirements in MTSS
	Conference/Director's	Melissa Stanley	Elementary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?
2:15-2:30pm	Break		
2:30-4:00pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Dr. Sarah Brown	Intervention Intensification: Diagnosing Why Students Aren't Responding and What to Do Next
	Embassy A/B	Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden	SpringMath Users Group (Advanced): Strengthening Fidelity, Intensification, and Instructional Impact Through Data
	Executive/Board	Kari Chitty	Onboarding for Success: A 30-Day Ramp-Up in Behavior Support
	Dakota	Erica Kindem & Erica Carney	Inspect What You Expect
	Conference/Director's	Melissa Stanley	Critical Wondering: How Does My Curricular Resource Align to the ND Content Standards?

Time	Location	Presenter	Session
8:00-8:30am	Atrium	Check-In & Breakfast	
8:30-8:45am	Crowne/Royale	Welcome & Introductions	
8:45-10:00am <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Tricia McKale Skyles	A Chicken and Egg Conundrum: How Academics and Behavior Impact Each Other
	Sterling	Dr. Erin Chaparro	Your MTSS Operating System: How Leadership Teams Grow and Sustain What Works
10:00-10:15am	Break		
10:15-11:30am <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Tricia McKale Skyles	Come One, Come All: Building a Culture of Attendance
	Sterling	Dr. Erin Chaparro	From Data Overload to Clear Next Steps: Practical Protocols for MTSS Decision Making
	Dakota	Kaye Andersen	Math Fact Fluency: Why It Matters & How to Build It
	Embassy A/B	Shannon Harken	All In: Igniting Secondary Student Engagement in All Content Areas Using High Impact Literacy Routines
Lunch - Pick up in Executive/Board. Keynote "Beacons of Hope" begins at 12:00pm.			
11:30am-1:00pm	Crowne/Royale	Tricia McKale Skyles	Beacons of Hope
1:00-2:15pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Tricia McKale Skyles	Connecting Students to the School: Early Stage Interventions for Chronically Challenging Behaviors
	Sterling	Dr. Erin Chaparro	Better Meetings, Better Decisions: An Introduction to Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)
	Dakota	Ryan Lyson & Kaye Andersen	Toolkit: Assisting Students Struggling with Math
	Embassy A/B	Shannon Harken	It's Not Too Late: Targeted Literacy Interventions for Secondary Struggling Readers
2:15-2:30pm	Break		
2:30-4:00pm <i>Select a Session.</i>	Crowne/Royale	Tricia McKale Skyles	Tackling the Tiers: Finding Your Place in a Multi-Tiered Framework
	Sterling	Dr. Erin Chaparro	Celebration is the Fuel: Foster Commitment to Maintain Momentum

MONDAY, JUNE 15 KEYNOTES | 8:45-10:35AM**The Evolution of MTSS: What We've Learned, What's Changed, and What Barriers Still Exist**

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

After more than 20+ years of MTSS implementation, schools are no longer asking whether MTSS works—but why results vary so widely. This opening keynote examines what research and practice have taught us about MTSS, how the framework has evolved, and which persistent barriers continue to limit impact. Participants explore how misalignment among people, processes, and purpose undermines effectiveness, particularly when data, instruction, and decision-making are disconnected. The session reframes MTSS as a system for improving instruction rather than simply assigning tiers and highlights the importance of instructional alignment, efficient use of data, and intentional system design.

Building the Foundation: Leading Tier 1 with Vision & Supporting with Systems

Dr. Sarah Brown

Together, we'll explore how leaders can move beyond "one more thing" to create coherent support structures that empower teachers to deliver high-quality instruction every day. Discover practical strategies for balancing coaching with accountability, providing meaningful feedback that drives improvement, and building a culture where teachers feel supported, not judged, as they refine their practice. Walk away energized, equipped, and ready to lead a Tier 1 transformation that celebrates success, honors the complexity of teaching, and creates the conditions for every student to thrive.

MONDAY, JUNE 15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:45AM-12:00PM | SELECT A SESSION**From Students to Systems: Using MTSS to Drive the Right Next Steps**

Dr. Sarah Brown

The perspective we take with our data determines our next steps. When we look only at student-level data, we end up with another list of students who need intervention and one more thing for teachers to carry. However, when we zoom out to consider patterns across groups, we start to see system stories, not just student problems. In this session we'll explore how to balance student-level and system-level data use within MTSS. Participants will consider how to empower educators with agendas and data protocols that help them address both system and student needs throughout a school year, particularly to get ready for the back-to-school season.

The Science of Learning and Math MTSS: Designing Instruction That Predictably Produces Growth

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

This session examines math MTSS through the lens of the science of learning, focusing on why outcomes vary when instruction is misaligned with how students learn mathematics. Participants explore how MTSS can function as a system for delivering explicit, efficient, and high-leverage instruction across tiers. Grounded in learning science and implementation research, the session highlights how principles such as mastery, cumulative learning, active responding, and feedback should drive instructional and intervention decisions. Emphasis is placed on improving instruction early and consistently, particularly in math, where gaps compound quickly. Participants leave with a clearer understanding of how aligning MTSS practices to the science of learning leads to more equitable, efficient, and sustainable math outcomes.

Before It Escalates: Prevention-First De-Escalation for Every Educator

Kari Chitty

This session gives school teams a clear, shared playbook for responding to escalation in all its forms, including high-intensity moments and shut-down responses. Participants learn to notice early cues and triggers that signal rising stress, then respond with calm, predictable adult moves across each stage of the escalation cycle (trigger, escalation, peak, recovery). The focus is on practical strategies any educator can use, including co-regulation, minimal language, protecting space, structured choices, and avoiding power struggles. The session includes guided practice and quick role-play scenarios so staff can rehearse the "First 30 Seconds" routine and leave ready to use it in real moments. Teams also leave with guidance for building a consistent crisis response plan so students experience steady support across adults and settings.

Proactive by Design: Using Early Warning Systems to Identify, Monitor, and Respond at Every Level

Shannon Harken

Early Warning Systems give schools the power to identify and support students before small concerns become major barriers. This session introduces the research behind Early Warning Systems, explores the key indicators most predictive of student success, and walks participants through practical protocols, meeting structures, and intervention response strategies to act on what the data is saying at the district, building, grade level, small group and individual levels.

Educators Using ND A+ Blueprints, Interim Assessments, and Navvy to Drive Instruction

Ryan Lyson & Danette Brown

This session is designed for educators seeking to strengthen instructional decision-making through purposeful use of ND A+ Blueprints, interim assessments, and Navvy formative tools. Participants will explore how ND A+ Blueprints clarify what standards are assessed, the depth of knowledge required, and how summative expectations connect to interim and classroom-level assessments. Educators will learn how Navvy supports standard-level learning checks by providing timely, actionable data aligned to blueprint standards. The session will include guidance on scheduling formative checkpoints, accessing Navvy through LaunchPad, and interpreting student responses and instructional recommendations. Using real-world case studies, participants will practice analyzing Navvy results to identify trends, create flexible student groups, and plan targeted reteaching or extension opportunities. By the end of the session, teachers will have practical strategies for aligning assessment data to instruction, ensuring standards-driven planning that supports student growth and instructional responsiveness.

MONDAY, JUNE 15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:00-2:15PM | SELECT A SESSION**Support through Action: Walkthroughs within MTSS**

Dr. Sarah Brown

Join us for an interactive session exploring how classroom walkthroughs can transform from compliance tools into powerful support and accountability systems that drive instructional improvement. Whether you're an administrator looking to refine your walkthrough practice, an instructional coach seeking to maximize coaching impact, or a teacher leader building a collaborative culture, this session will equip you with concrete strategies to create a culture of collective efficacy.

Smarter Math Assessment: Improving MTSS Decisions Without Over-Testing

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

This session focuses on improving math MTSS decision-making while reducing assessment overload. Participants learn how to use fewer, better-aligned measures—such as mastery-based curriculum-based measurement—to increase decision accuracy, clarify instructional needs, and eliminate redundant testing across tiers.

Simple BIPs That Stick: When and Why Less Is More

Kari Chitty

This session helps school teams understand when a Simple BIP is the right next step and why a “right-sized” plan often leads to stronger implementation. Participants learn the essential components of a Simple BIP, including clear behavior definitions, likely function, a small set of high-impact prevention strategies, a teachable replacement skill, and consistent adult response steps. The session is hands-on and includes guided practice using free planning tools, a strategy bank, and simple data collection options so teams can monitor progress without overcomplicating the process. Current Behavior Advantage users are welcome to build and track their plan in the platform, while others can use the free templates and resources.

Anchors of Excellence: Strengthening MTSS through Clarity and Consistency

Shannon Harken

High-performing MTSS systems don't happen by chance—they're anchored by intentional leadership practices and essential tools. In this interactive session, participants will explore three Annual Essential MTSS tools that elevate implementation fidelity: strategic calendar use, self-assessment routines, and the creation and ongoing refinement of a district or building MTSS Playbook. Leaders will leave with practical strategies to bring structure, clarity, and consistency to their MTSS practices all year long.

MONDAY, JUNE 15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 2:30-4:00PM | SELECT A SESSION**Making Reading Improvement Stick**

Dr. Sarah Brown

Reading improvement doesn't happen through isolated interventions or one-time professional development, it happens when schools build systems that sustain change. In this engaging session, you'll explore why so many well-intentioned reading initiatives fail to produce lasting results and, more importantly, what to do differently. Grounded in implementation science and the MTSS framework, this session will challenge you to shift from a student-focused lens to a systems-thinking mindset, a move that unlocks meaningful, measurable improvement across your entire school.

Fix the Math Core First: Using Tier 1.5 Classwide Intervention

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

Rather than escalating large numbers of students prematurely to individual interventions, this session focuses on learning how to respond to math screening patterns that signal problems in core instruction and using Tier 1.5/classwide intervention to address shared gaps in math instruction. Participants learn how to interpret screening data, design classwide instructional responses, and strengthen core instruction to reduce overidentification for intensive support.

Better Tier 2 Conversations: Function-Based Thinking for Any Student Support Team

Kari Chitty

This session helps school teams strengthen Tier 2 problem-solving conversations using a function-based approach that fits a variety of team structures. Instead of jumping straight to a favorite intervention, participants learn how to clarify the concern, identify likely function and skill gaps, and select supports that match what the behavior is accomplishing. We review a practical menu of Tier 2 options, including Check-In/Check-Out, small group skill instruction, self-monitoring, behavior contracts, scheduled breaks, and pre-corrections, and show how to keep goals and progress monitoring simple enough for staff to use. Teams leave with decision rules to determine whether to continue, adjust, or intensify support.

NDMTSS Unstuck: Troubleshooting MTSS with Confidence

Shannon Harken

Even well-designed MTSS frameworks can hit roadblocks—but the best teams know how to get unstuck. In this interactive session, participants will uncover common implementation challenges and apply research-backed, practical solutions that are realistic for everyday school settings. With access to the NEW 2026 NDMTSS Troubleshooting Guide and insights from peers across the state, educators will leave with clear, doable strategies to strengthen their MTSS systems.

ND A+ Summative Data Use | Monitoring & Support Structures

Danette Brown

Administrators and instructional leaders will learn how to confidently interpret summative data, communicate results clearly, and use outcomes to guide staffing, scheduling, PD, and student supports.

MONDAY, JUNE 15 AFTER HOURS BONUS | 4:00-4:30PM**Ask the Experts - Q & A**

Join national experts and NDMTSS team members after hours to get your questions answered!

TUESDAY, JUNE 16 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 8:45-10:15AM | SELECT A SESSION**Practice Makes Progress: Transforming Tier 1 Practice for Greater Growth for All**

Dr. Sarah Brown

What if the key to better student outcomes isn't adding more interventions, but redesigning how we use instructional time in Tier 1? This engaging, practical session considers how to maximize student practice during Tier 1. Participants will learn practical strategies to match practice with student needs and find ways to increase practice opportunities for all students without finding additional time in an already busy day.

Designing Math MTSS Systems That Work: Aligning Roles, Routines, and Decisions

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

This session focuses on math MTSS as a coordinated instructional system. Participants examine how unclear roles and fragmented routines undermine effectiveness and learn how to align leadership roles, team routines, and data use to ensure MTSS decisions drive instructional improvement rather than placement alone. Teams are encouraged to reflect, ask questions, and identify areas for improvement and action steps for aligning their own systems.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:30–11:45AM | SELECT A SESSION**From Data to Decisions: Taking Action on Progress Monitoring**

Dr. Sarah Brown

Progress monitoring is only as powerful as the actions it informs. In this session, participants will build confidence in using student data to inform next steps. We'll explore strategies to better collect, interpret, and act on data to make meaningful intensification decisions. Participants will practice interpreting graphed PM data using the 4-Point Rule and Future Trend Line analysis, learn how to navigate common barriers to consistent data collection, and leave with practical tools and protocols to support classroom teachers and intervention staff. Whether your team is just getting started with progress monitoring or looking to sharpen your data decision-making practices, this session will give you the clarity and confidence to make every data point count.

Designing for Impact: How to Bring it All Together in the Classroom

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

Join us for an interactive session exploring the current state of math in ND and how to align supports to improve math instruction and learning outcomes for students. Bring your questions around all things math for an open Q&A with Dr. VanDerHeyden and ND REA Math Specialists! The panel will answer questions, talk evidence-based strategies, share a new math resource hub, as well as share NEW ND COUNTS opportunities tied to recent ND math legislation.

Proactive Discipline: Building Connection Across Classrooms and Systems

Kari Chitty

This session helps educators move from managing behavior to teaching behavior by building connection and trust across classrooms and school systems. Participants will explore proactive strategies that strengthen relationships, clarify expectations, and support students before challenging behavior arises. We will focus on real-world practices any educator can use, including co-regulation, consistent positive feedback, classroom norms, and routines that promote a sense of belonging and shared responsibility for behavior. The session includes guided practice and implementation planning so staff leave ready to train colleagues, reinforce positive behavior with intention, and align proactive discipline practices with schoolwide expectations and data monitoring.

Beyond the Score: Mapping ORF Data for Targeted Action

Erica Carney & Erica Kindem

Explore how to bridge the gap between screening data and instructional action by integrating the Science of Reading with the Instructional Hierarchy. This session highlights Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) as a powerful indicator of comprehension and a critical tool for identifying students who require additional support. Participants will learn to use a 4-quadrant data sort to analyze student rate and accuracy, effectively pinpointing specific needs in acquisition, fluency, or generalization. By categorizing data into actionable groups, educators can move beyond simple scores to design targeted interventions. Join us to discover how these visual data-mapping techniques foster grade-level consistency and empower teachers to make informed, instructional decisions for every learner.

Secondary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?

Melissa Stanley

Providing instruction support to educators is critical! This session will focus on examining quality core instruction puzzle pieces: Standards + Curricular Resources + Explicit Instruction + Student Performance Data for impactful teaching and learning. Join us for clarity around the Pieces of the Core Instruction Puzzle to support teaching and learning.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:00-2:15PM | SELECT A SESSION**Scaling and Sustaining MTSS in Reading**

Dr. Sarah Brown

Reflect and build on local school practices to guide next steps for students, teachers, and systems. Participants will learn how to facilitate structured conversations that examine Tier 1 effectiveness, evaluate intervention impact, identify likely barriers to student growth, and determine responsive instructional actions within MTSS, including issues related to implementation, instructional match, dosage, and engagement. Use these insights to strengthen teacher understanding of explicit instruction, connect science of reading practices to classroom implementation, and draft coaching and professional learning priorities for 2026–2027 that are grounded in school data and designed to improve reading outcomes.

SpringMath Users Group (New & Emerging): Getting Started with Data-Driven Math Instruction and MTSS Decision-Making

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

This introductory session is designed for educators new to SpringMath or considering implementation. Led by Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden, participants will learn how SpringMath supports math instruction within an MTSS framework, explore key features and recent updates—including the Data Dashboard—and understand how SpringMath data can be used to determine response to intervention and guide instructional decisions. Guided discussion and Q&A will help participants clarify next steps for getting started.

Aligned Teams, Consistent Supports: Connecting MTSS and IEP Work

Kari Chitty

Students with behavior needs are often discussed in multiple spaces across the school. This session shows how to align those conversations so supports feel consistent instead of fragmented. Participants learn practical ways to clarify roles across teams, use shared behavior data to guide decisions, and prioritize implementation and fidelity before changing a plan. The session includes a simple meeting agenda protocol and examples of how to differentiate meeting focus by tier, including Tier 1 systems review, Tier 2 and Tier 3 student problem-solving, and IEP progress monitoring. We will also discuss elementary, middle, and high school adaptations, especially when multiple teachers, transitions, and settings affect consistency.

The "Temperature Check": Navigating North Dakota's Dyslexia Screening Requirements in MTSS

Erica Carney & Erica Kindem

This session examines how universal screening serves as a vital "temperature check" within an MTSS framework to identify students at risk for dyslexia early in their educational journey. In accordance with North Dakota law (NDCC 15.1-32-26) passed in 2023, participants will explore the mandated screening of children age seven and younger in the core components of phonemic awareness, decoding, and spelling. We will discuss how these screening results align with the revised 2025 IDA definition of dyslexia. Finally, the session highlights how early identification helps mitigate secondary consequences, such as reading comprehension challenges and impacts on psychological well-being.

Elementary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?

Melissa Stanley

Providing instruction support to educators is critical! This session will focus on examining quality core instruction puzzle pieces: Standards + Curricular Resources + Explicit Instruction + Student Performance Data for impactful teaching and learning. Join us for clarity around the Pieces of the Core Instruction Puzzle to support teaching and learning.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 2:30-4:00PM | SELECT A SESSION**Intervention Intensification: Diagnosing Why Students Aren't Responding and What to Do Next**

Dr. Sarah Brown

When students aren't responding to intervention, the instinct is often to wait and see, or simply try harder with the same approach. But sustainable reading growth requires a more diagnostic lens. In this practical session, you'll learn a clear framework for identifying why an intervention isn't working and exactly how to intensify it in ways that are targeted, actionable, and tied to real student data. Using real-world scenarios, participants will work through four key dimensions that determine intervention effectiveness and practice matching the right response to the right problem.

SpringMath Users Group (Advanced): Strengthening Fidelity, Intensification, and Instructional Impact Through Data

Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden

This advanced session is designed for experienced SpringMath users seeking to deepen implementation and instructional impact. Facilitated by Dr. Amanda VanDerHeyden, the session focuses on improving fidelity, analyzing SpringMath data to determine response to intervention, using case-based examples to guide intensification and individualization, supporting teachers through data-informed coaching, and leveraging year-end reports for planning and continuous improvement. Time will also be allotted for Q&A and shared problem-solving.

Onboarding for Success: A 30-Day Ramp-Up in Behavior Support

Kari Chitty

This session walks school leaders and coaches through a practical behavior support onboarding process designed to set new staff up for success in the first 30 days. Participants will be introduced to a behavior support onboarding checklist that outlines key milestones, expectations, and learning steps new hires need to confidently support students. The session also highlights how to use the Behavior Advantage PD Series as part of structured onboarding, and includes a workshop format with guided practice so teams can customize onboarding plans for their school. Attendees leave with ready-to-use tools, a clear early implementation plan, and strategies for ongoing support as staff get started.

Inspect What You Expect

Erica Carney & Erica Kindem

Tier 1 instruction sets the foundation for student learning. In this session, participants will explore how to define clear standards of practice for Tier 1 instruction and communicate those expectations. Participants will also examine how to plan for implementation and measure implementation through specific, observable evidence—learning to truly “inspect what you expect” in classrooms.

Critical Wondering: How Does My Curricular Resource Align to the ND Content Standards?

Melissa Stanley

How does my curricular resource align to the ND Content Standards? Findings such as gaps, overlaps, and omissions provide educators with the opportunity to be responsive to unfinished learning. Be part of this conversation for clarity on what we want students to know and be able to do and the use of quality resources during core instruction.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 8:45-10:00AM | [SELECT A SESSION](#)**A Chicken and Egg Conundrum: How Academics and Behavior Impact Each Other**

Tricia McKale Skyles

When building multi-tiered systems of support, educators are asked to look at both academics and behavior. They are often treated separately but are linked inextricably. Whether approaching curriculum through an academic model, behavior model, or both, this session will provide concrete ways to integrate them through the same instructional lens.

Your MTSS Operating System: How Leadership Teams Grow and Sustain What Works

Dr. Erin Chaparro

Growing an MTSS system is hard. Sustaining one is harder. MTSS isn't a program you add to your school — it's the operating system underneath everything you're already doing. In this opening keynote, we'll map how your teams, roles, data systems, and instructional supports connect into one coherent structure. We'll explore why some schools sustain MTSS through leadership transitions and competing priorities while others quietly lose ground, and what the research, and real schools, tell us about the difference. You'll leave with concrete next steps for strengthening your leadership team's role in the system and a fresh perspective on how to use the SAND to identify the data-based decision making practices that drive the most impact.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 10:15-11:30AM | [SELECT A SESSION](#)**Come One, Come All: Building a Culture of Attendance**

Tricia McKale Skyles

Chronic absence has emerged as one of the most critical issues in education today. Historically, approaches to absenteeism provided too little intervention, too late. This session applies proven principles of behavioral change to the issue of absenteeism, shifting the focus of school efforts to proactive approaches that teach, motivate, and involve all stakeholders in preventing and solving absenteeism problems.

From Data Overload to Clear Next Steps: Practical Protocols for MTSS Decision Making

Dr. Erin Chaparro

Most school leadership teams aren't short on data. They're short on a clear system for deciding what to do with it. In this hands-on session, we'll map out the decision-making flowchart your team needs to move from data collection to confident, consistent action. You'll explore practical tools — decision trees, meeting protocols, and data decision guidelines — and leave with next steps for reducing cognitive load for teachers. Applicable across academic and behavioral data, this session is designed for school-based leadership team members who are developing usable data decision guidelines to define flow between tiers. Participants will receive a Data Decision Guidelines Template to begin building their own system.

Math Fact Fluency: Why It Matters & How to Build It

Kaye Andersen

Math fact fluency, the ability to quickly and accurately recall basic math facts, is crucial for success in math because it frees up mental energy for more complex problem-solving. Participants will learn the recommendations from the IES (Institute of Educational Science) on how to help students achieve fact fluency and draft a fluency plan for implementation in the fall.

All In: Igniting Secondary Student Engagement in All Content Areas Using High Impact Literacy Routines

Shannon Harken

When students talk, read, and write with purpose across every subject, learning goes deeper. This session equips secondary educators with ready-to-use Tier 1 literacy routines — including Accountable Talk, Paragraph Shrink, vocabulary and fluency routines, and writing summaries — that build speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills while increasing engagement and achievement in any content area.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 KEYNOTE | 12:00-1:00PM**Beacons of Hope**

Tricia McKale Skyles

Schools serve as a primary hub for many communities, often serving to fill in the gaps for much-needed resources. Capitalizing on the characteristics of safety, civility, and productivity, schools can create a culture of hope for students and families craving connectedness. A campus built on connectedness and hope is a campus where students and staff want to attend.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 1:00-2:15PM | SELECT A SESSION**Connecting Students to the School: Early Stage Interventions for Chronically Challenging Behaviors**

Tricia McKale Skyles

It's easy to connect with students who are fully engaged and in compliance with our expectations. Students with challenging behaviors often test our ability to make those healthy connections. In this session, participants will explore early stage interventions to create proactive plans in addressing misbehavior while building relationships and maintaining healthy connections between the student and the classroom.

Better Meetings, Better Decisions: An Introduction to Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)

Dr. Erin Chaparro

Most school teams are meeting regularly — but not always deciding efficiently and effectively. Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS) is a scientifically-based model that gives school data teams the structure they need to move from data to action with confidence. In this introductory session, we'll walk through the three core components of TIPS (i.e. Meeting Foundations, Problem Solving, and Solution Implementation) and apply them to real behavioral scenarios. You'll leave with a concrete understanding of how to structure your team meetings, define problems with precision, build a measurable goal, and monitor whether your solutions are working.

Toolkit: Assisting Students Struggling with Math

Kaye Andersen & Ryan Lyson

NEW! The Institute of Education Sciences released a new toolkit on Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics in Grades 3-6! The toolkit offers a high-quality professional development (PD) course that districts can implement with classroom and intervention teachers of grades 3-6. The course modules include classroom videos, readings, example math activities, and instructional routines to actively engage teachers in building their knowledge and use of the recommended strategies. The toolkit also offers leadership resources to support math directors and other administrators in implementing the course and strengthening intervention practices in their districts. A district could offer this PD for their teachers or administrators and teachers can join teachers from across ND in a 2 credit continuing education course. The course will consist of individual asynchronous work and virtual PLC sessions. It will be offered during the first semester of the 2026-2027 school year.

It's Not Too Late: Targeted Literacy Interventions for Secondary Struggling

Shannon Harken

Every secondary student deserves a pathway to becoming a confident, capable reader. Once instructional needs are identified, the real work begins. This session dives into targeted Tier 2 and Tier 3 strategies across decoding, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary — giving educators the tools to design intentional, data-matched instruction that actually moves struggling readers forward.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 BREAKOUT SESSIONS | 2:30-4:00PM | SELECT A SESSION**Tackling the Tiers: Finding Your Place in a Multi-Tiered Framework**

Tricia McKale Skyles

Move beyond theory by physically positioning yourself within the different levels of support to better understand the student experience. You'll gain a practical look at how resources shift and intensify as student needs change. You will leave with a clearer sense of how to transition support between tiers and get the right resources to the right students at the right time.

Celebration is the Fuel: Foster Commitment to Maintain Momentum

Dr. Erin Chaparro

Implementation doesn't stall because people stop caring — it stalls because leaders forget to refuel the adults doing the work. In this closing keynote, Dr. Erin draws on stories from her research and years in the field to explore what coherence really means in schools — and what quietly gets in the way. You'll examine how the decisions leaders make about roles, systems, and recognition either build momentum or slowly drain it, and why celebration isn't a reward you hand out at the finish line — it's the fuel that keeps teams moving toward goals in the first place. You'll leave with low-burden, high-impact strategies to foster commitment, distribute leadership, and build acknowledgment into your everyday practice — so your team goes into the year with a full tank.

What are 2-3 main points/relevant considerations that you learned from this session?

What is one way that you will take what you have learned and integrate it in your work/practice?

Additional Notes/Comments:

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #1 Monday, June 15 | 10:45AM-12:00PM

- From Students to Systems: Using MTSS to Drive the Right Next Steps
 - The Science of Learning and (Math) MTSS: Designing Instruction That Predictably Produces Growth
 - Before It Escalates: Prevention-First De-Escalation for Every Educator
 - Proactive by Design: Using Early Warning Systems to Identify, Monitor, and Respond at Every Level
 - Educators Using ND A+ Blueprints, Interim Assessments, and Navvy to Drive Instruction
-

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What is one way that you will take what you have learned and integrate it in your work/practice?

Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #2 Monday, June 15 | 1:00-2:15PM

- Support through Action: Walkthroughs within MTSS
 - Smarter Math Assessment: Improving MTSS Decisions Without Over-Testing
 - Simple BIPs That Stick: When and Why Less Is More
 - Anchors of Excellence: Strengthening MTSS through Clarity and Consistency
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #3 Monday, June 15 | 2:30-4:00PM

- Making Reading Improvement Stick
 - Fix the Math Core First: Using Tier 1.5 Classwide Intervention
 - Better Tier 2 Conversations: Function-Based Thinking for Any Student Support Team
 - NDMTSS Unstuck: Troubleshooting MTSS with Confidence
 - ND A+ Summative Data Use | Monitoring & Support Structures
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #1 Tuesday, June 16 | 8:45-10:15AM

- Practice Makes Progress: Transforming Tier 1 Practice for Greater Growth for All
 - Designing Math MTSS Systems That Work: Aligning Roles, Routines, and Decisions
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #2 Tuesday, June 16 | 10:30-11:45AM

- From Data to Decisions: Taking Action on Progress Monitoring
 - Designing for Impact: How to Bring it All Together in the Classroom
 - Proactive Discipline: Building Connection Across Classrooms and Systems
 - Beyond the Score: Mapping ORF Data for Targeted Action
 - Secondary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #3 Tuesday, June 16 | 1:00-2:15PM

- Scaling and Sustaining MTSS in Reading
 - SpringMath Users Group: Getting Started with Data Driven Math Instruction and MTSS Decision Making
 - Aligned Teams, Consistent Supports: Connecting MTSS and IEP Work
 - The "Temperature Check": Navigating North Dakota's Dyslexia Screening Requirements in MTSS
 - Elementary: Interested in the Core Instruction Puzzle?
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #4 Tuesday, June 16 | 2:30-4:00PM

- Intervention Intensification: Diagnosing Why Students Aren't Responding and What to Do Next
 - SpringMath Users Group (Advanced): Strengthening Fidelity, Intensification, and Instructional Impact Through Data
 - Onboarding for Success: A 30-Day Ramp-Up in Behavior Support
 - Inspect What You Expect
 - Critical Wondering: How Does My Curricular Resource Align to the ND Content Standards?
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

KEYNOTE: TRICIA MCKALE SKYLES

Wednesday, June 17 | 12:00-1:00PM

Beacons of Hope

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BREAKOUT SESSION #3 Wednesday, June 17 | 1:00-2:15PM

- Connecting Students to the School: Early Stage Interventions for Chronically Challenging Behaviors
 - Better Meetings, Better Decisions: An Introduction to Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)
 - Toolkit: Assisting Students Struggling with Math
 - It's Not Too Late: Targeted Literacy Interventions for Secondary Struggling Readers
-

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Additional Notes/Comments:

BREAKOUT SESSION #4 Wednesday, June 17 | 2:30-4:00PM

- Tackling the Tiers: Finding Your Place in a Multi-Tiered Framework
 - Celebration is the Fuel: Foster Commitment to Maintain Momentum
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Thank You for Attending the 2026 NDMTSS Conference!

We want to hear from you!
Complete the conference evaluation:



<https://tinyurl.com/NDMTSS2026>