**Littleton STEM Academy - Step to Success: Middle School Intervention and Extension Program**

Step to Success ™ (S2S) is a grass-roots intervention and extension program that offers tier II and III interventions for all 6th -8th grade students in ELA, math, and coding. S2S was designed on-site at Littleton STEM Academy by the middle school team. Initially - we had no intervention program in place for middle school. All teams were working in their grade level PLC’s and self-selecting interventions. Additionally, only one grade level team was pulling tier II intervention groups in their content classrooms. We found that we were struggling to close gaps in need and intervene successfully for MTSS students.

As such - the middle school team decided to make significant and structural changes in their approach to interventions using the PLC process. Overall, of the nine middle school teachers, only three of us had any significant experience in small group learning as well as RTI (Response to Intervention) - at any level. Leads drafted a proposal. The proposal required tier II small group interventions for “bubble” (students who are very close to proficiency) in all daily content classrooms. These tier II interventions were not limited to math and ELA classrooms - all teachers, regardless of content, took up the challenge of tier II, content specific, small group instruction. These “in-grade level” groups were determined by the grade level PLC and backed by CFA’s, Illuminate data, and other crucial data markers. The proposal also took our “flex” (end of the day period) and created a structured tier III intervention block that focused on our student’s highest needs - which was phonics intervention. At first, our S2S program was “self-contained to grade levels.”

During this “self-contained” period, lead staff trained and supported team members who were unfamiliar with tier II / III interventions. Once staff felt comfortable - S2S was rolled out and became a shared intervention / extension program for all 6th - 8th graders at Littleton STEM Academy. Students were assigned interventions based on data, PLC, and highest need to close reading, math, or extension gaps. Staff meet bi-weekly to have a vertical PLC that focuses on progress monitoring, data, and student needs. Our main driver is phonics - however, we recognize the very critical need to intervene in math. We are currently building and testing new math interventions for our students. We have a limited number of math intervention/extension groups at this time.

At this point, we are providing tier III interventions and extensions to most of our 180 middle school students. Students who receive interventions are monitored weekly. We created our own data tracker to track phonics and math. Our data tracker is evolving as we refine our process. Some students are receiving two tier III interventions per day - meaning upwards of 60 minutes of targeted tier III phonics or math interventions. Adding to that, students are still receiving tier II interventions in their daily content classrooms. The data identified 78 students in high need of consistent tier III phonics intervention. Of those 78 students - 51 of them have increased their phonics skills since the full implementation of Step to Success. We have found that about seven of those students are “stuck” in their phonics skills. When a student is “stuck” we meet with our vertical PLC - and rotate that student to a different intervention teacher. Our flexibility, open discussion, and regular monitoring has decrease the amount of “stuck” students on a skill.

Step to Success has been a growth opportunity in applying tier II / III interventions for the needs of all middle school students. We have gathered and developed resources, created our own data tracker for two different types of data, modified our data analysis protocol to support this level of intervention, while intervening and extending in two different core contents. In the next school year - we are training more staff on tier II / III skills so that all teachers can intervene in math, ELA, and provide extensions. We will also add our 5th grade team to our S2S program to support their scholars - but also to prepare them for middle school by introducing essential skills for success.

Staff have wholeheartedly embraced a brand new, self and site created program. We also found that our students have embraced our program. Students understand that S2S is “nothing personal, just business” and that we are using it to “add more planks to their bridge of learning - it’s easier to cross your bridge when there are no gaps.” We have leveraged our knowledge of the PLC process, the professional knowledge of our staff, the tools provided by our district, honesty, and enthusiasm to create a program that allows all of our students' needs to be met in a targeted, data-centered way. Our interim and district-level standardized scores reflect the success of this program. Overall, we have found our Step to Success program proving to be a success and we are seeing excellent student growth.