# **The Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports Grant**

## 2020 Annual Report to the Legislature, Department of Finance, State Board of Education, and the Legislative Analyst’s Office



**Prepared by the**

**Educator Excellence and Equity Division**

**Instruction, Measurement, and Administration Branch**

**California Department of Education**

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*Description*: 2019–20 Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports Grant: Annual Report for (1) Scaling Up Multi-Tiered System of Supports in California Grant, and (2) Fostering a Positive School Climate Grant

*Authority*: Assembly Bill 104 (Chapter 13, Statutes of 2015) and AB 1808 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018)

*Recipients*: Legislature, Department of Finance, State Board of Education, and the Legislative Analyst’s Office

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**2020 Annual Report to the Legislature**

### Table of Contents

[**Executive Summary** 1](#_Toc25323589)

[**Legislative Reporting Requirements** 2](#_Toc25323590)

[**Summary of How Legislative Requirements Were Met** 3](#_Toc25323591)

[**1.** **(Year 5) Activities Conducted and Resources Developed** 3](#_Toc25323592)

[**2.** **(Year 5) Number of Local Educational Agencies, Educators, and Pupils Served** 4](#_Toc25323593)

[**3.** **(Year 5) Description of Strategies Identified** 4](#_Toc25323594)

[**4.** **(Year 5) Outcome Data** 5](#_Toc25323595)

[**5.** **(Year 5) Recommendations for Improving State-level Activities or Policies** 7](#_Toc25323596)

[**1.** **(Year 2) Activities Conducted and Resources Developed** 7](#_Toc25323597)

[**2.** **(Year 2) Number of Local Educational Agencies, Educators, and**](#_Toc25323598)

[**Pupils Served** 10](#_Toc25323599)

[**3.** **(Year 2) Description of Strategies Identified** 12](#_Toc25323600)

[**4.** **(Year 2) Outcome Data** 12](#_Toc25323601)

[**5.** **(Year 2) Recommendations for Improving State-level Activities or Policies** 13](#_Toc25323602)

## California Department of Education

## Report to the Legislature, Department of Finance, State Board of Education, and the Legislative Analyst’s Office

**The Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports Grant** **2020 Annual Report to the Legislature**

### Executive Summary

This report is required by Section 57 of Assembly Bill (AB) 104 (Chapter 13, Statutes of 2015) as well as Section 143 of AB 1808 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018). The Budget Act of 2015 appropriated $10 million for a competitive grant requiring the grantee to provide technical assistance and develop and disseminate statewide resources. The purpose of the technical assistance and resources is to encourage and assist local educational agencies in establishing and aligning schoolwide, data-driven systems of learning and behavioral supports to meet the needs of California’s diverse learners in the most inclusive environments possible. The Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) was awarded the **Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports (ISABS): Scaling Up Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Statewide (SUMS) in California** grant. The Budget Act of 2016 augmented the original appropriation with an additional $20 million.

Additionally, AB 1808 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018) established a new component of the ISABS, which focuses specifically on fostering a positive school climate. The Budget Act of 2018 appropriated $15 million for this purpose. The purpose of this work is to expand restorative justice, bullying prevention, positive behavior interventions, and minimize the use of emergency interventions.

This report provides an overview of the ISABS grant reporting requirements; a summary of the ISABS 2020 annual reports in their original form, as provided to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) by the OCDE; and a link to the full ISABS 2019–20 annual reports (*ISABS: Scaling Up MTSS in California [Year Five]* and *ISABS: Fostering a Positive School Climate [Year 2])* in their original form on the OCDE website, as submitted to the SSPI by the OCDE.

If you have any questions regarding this report or would like to request a hard copy, please contact Julia Agostinelli, Education Programs Consultant, Educator Excellence and Equity Division, by phone at 916-322-9503 or by email at [JAgostinelli@cde.ca.gov](mailto:JAgostinelli@cde.ca.gov).

You can find this report on the California Department of Education MTSS web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/>. The OCDE’s annual reports are available on the OCDE California SUMS Initiative web page at <http://www.ocde.us/MTSS/Pages/California_SUMS_Initiative.aspx>.

### Legislative Reporting Requirements

The Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports (ISABS) grant was established by Assembly Bill 104 (Chapter 13, Statutes of 2015) and later amended by Senate Bill 828 (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2016). The 2015 Budget Act appropriated $10 million to ISABS, and the 2016 Budget Act augmented the original appropriation with an additional $20 million. The legislation required that the grantee provide technical assistance (TA) and develop and disseminate statewide resources. The purpose of the TA and resources is to encourage and assist local educational agencies (LEAs) in establishing and aligning schoolwide, data-driven systems of learning and behavioral supports to meet the needs of California’s diverse learners in the most inclusive environments possible.

In 2016, the California Department of Education (CDE) selected the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) as the recipient of the ISABS grant through a competitive grant process for their Scaling Up Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Statewide Initiative (also known as the CA SUMS Initiative). The OCDE subcontracted with (1) the Butte County Office of Education (BCOE) for rural representation and partnership in planning and conducting grant activities, and (2) the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Technical Assistance Center at the University of Kansas to provide TA and professional learning opportunities to participating LEAs.

AB 1808 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018) established an additional component of the ISABS that required the OCDE to subcontract with a California postsecondary educational institution to expand the state’s MTSS framework to foster a positive school climate in both academic and behavioral areas including, but not limited to, positive behavior interventions and support, minimizing the use of emergency interventions, restorative justice, bullying prevention, social and emotional learning (SEL), trauma-informed practice, and cultural competency. The Budget Act of 2018 appropriated $15 million for this purpose.

In 2018, the OCDE and BCOE partnered with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for the Transformation of Schools (CTS) to expand the state's MTSS framework with an emphasis on promoting a positive school climate statewide.

The CDE has an administrative role in this grant program, including conducting the award process, distributing funding, and providing technical oversight of the items contained within the original Request for Applications document. The CDE does not receive funding for the administration of this grant program.

Both AB 104 (Chapter 13, Statutes of 2015) and AB 1808 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2018) require that the grantee provide the following information on an annual basis:

*Each annual report shall include all of the following:*

*(1) A summary of the activities conducted and resources developed.*

*(2) The number of LEAs, educators, and pupils served by the activities and resources.*

*(3) A description of effective evidence-based strategies identified for implementing the practices described in subdivision (c).*

*(4) A summary of any data that is available on outcomes resulting from the activities conducted, including any data reported by LEAs.*

*(5) Recommendations for improving state-level activities or policies.*

Due to the emergency measures taken at schools to respond to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the 2020–21 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill SB 98 (Chapter 24, Statutes of 2020) Section 101 extended the OCDE’s reporting date from September 30, 2020, to June 30, 2021. This was due to the reported challenges of collecting the necessary data from participants due to COVID-19 school closures.

### Summary of How Legislative Requirements Were Met

The OCDE provided the 2019–20 ISABS Annual Report (Year 5) and the ISABS: Fostering a Positive School Climate (Year 2) to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) on June 30, 2021. These documents are posted on the OCDE California SUMS Initiative web page at <http://www.ocde.us/MTSS/Pages/California_SUMS_Initiative.aspx>.

Included in this Legislative Report is the grantee’s high-level summary (italicized below and edited only for CDE correspondence requirements) obtained from the grantee’s annual reports provided to the SSPI, which describes the use of grant funds during the 2019–20 fiscal year.

### Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports: Scaling Up Multi-Tiered System of Support in California (Year 5)

#### **(Year 5) Activities Conducted and Resources Developed**

* + The OCDE and the SUMS partners built a four-tiered network of coaches and trainers to provide statewide professional learning and TA to LEAs, including charter schools.
  + The OCDE hosted the Third Annual California MTSS Professional Learning Institute (PLI) on July 29−31, 2019, at the Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach. The conference theme “All Means All—Know My Name, Face, and Story" focused on promoting excellence, equity, and access for all learners. The OCDE planned and scheduled the 2020 CA MTSS PLI for July 28−30, 2020, in Anaheim, California, but canceled the event in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  + The OCDE and partners created the *California MTSS Foundational Training for LEA Leadership Teams*, an online course designed to support LEA leadership with the utilization of CA MTSS (<https://ocde.instructure.com/courses/59>).
  + Each region or county office of education formed a community of practice (CoP) to provide ongoing TA and support for LEAs that have completed the MTSS training series as they continue to scale up and sustain MTSS implementation.

#### **(Year 5) Number of Local Educational Agencies, Educators, and Pupils Served**

Participating schools continued applying the information and strategies

from the training series to implement schoolwide changes on their campuses. The OCDE used enrollment and staffing information from CDE DataQuest to determine the number of educators and pupils potentially served:

* + 216,492 educators
  + 1,479,462 pupils

#### **(Year 5) Description of Strategies Identified**

The OCDE’s evidence-based strategies remain the same from the previous year of the grant. The following objectives and accomplishments were noted in the annual report:

* + Objective 1: Existing Evidence-Based Resources

The OCDE reported using the following resources: SWIFT Domains and Features, implementation science, universal design for learning, whole-child approach, English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework, culturally responsive practices, schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

* + Objective 2: Professional Learning Activities

The ISABS staff developed a customized professional learning series based on SWIFT’s five evidence-based domains and the SWIFT Center’s Six Steps of TA Process to ensure the long-term sustainability of the MTSS infrastructure. The BCOE supported the development of the professional learning series and TA model by providing insight into the barriers and unique needs faced by rural districts, small communities, and remotely located LEAs.

* + Objective 3: Other efforts currently available at the state, federal, and local levels.

The OCDE provided MTSS expertise and support to the following organizations: National Title I Association, California Title I Conference, California PBIS Coalition, California Collaborative on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, International Institute for Restorative Practices, Inflexion aka Educational Policy Improvement Center School Partnerships.

* + Objective 4: New evidence-based resources and activities

The OCDE worked with the SWIFT Center and BCOE to develop a professional learning series to train Region Transformation Teams across the state.

* + Objective 5: County Office of Education (COE) leading local communities of practice via web tools or in-person networks

The OCDE reported that each region or COE has formed a CoP. There they provide ongoing TA either in-person or online and support for LEAs who have completed the MTSS training series. Resources are housed on Digital Chalkboard.

* + Objective 6: Develop a tool to capture qualitative information regarding LEAs’ MTSS implementation policies and processes

The OCDE collects qualitative reports describing the process and progress of implementing, integrating, and scaling up their MTSS supports.

#### **(Year 5) Outcome Data**

* + *An average of 34 hours of TA was provided to LEAs and focused on Coaching and Facilitation and Priority and Practice with more intensive support.*
  + The **LEA-Self Assessment** is a tool for District Leadership Teams to examine the current status of systemic practices that have been consistently demonstrated through research to be the components of effective district systems. All three cohorts conducted a follow-up self-assessment in spring 2020 or fall 2020, and their aggregated results show that LEAs maintained or improved implementation levels in nearly all components and overall.
  + The**SWIFT-Fidelity Integrity Assessment (SWIFT-FIA)** is a self-assessment used by School Leadership Teams to examine the current status of schoolwide practices that have been demonstrated through research to provide a basis for successfully including all students who live in the school community. School-based teams can administer the SWIFT-FIA through a structured conversation accompanied by a review of evidence to substantiate the assigned ratings.

Although there was a decrease in the number of schools/sites that completed SWIFT-FIA for the 2019–20 grant year, **73 percent** of respondents from Cohorts 1 and 2 and **63 percent** from Cohort 3 reported that they were making progress in either implementing or sustaining implementation on a majority of the practices described in the SWIFT-FIA.

* + **SWIFT-Fidelity Implementation Tool** independently assesses the extent to which a school is implementing the SWIFT framework. The OCDE reported that schools showed a decrease in the number of practices from the SWIFT-FIA that they had implemented in spring 2019. The report notes, “Many sites in all three (3) cohorts in 2018–19 experienced a turnover in staff and requested to be assessed the following year to give the new staff members time to familiarize themselves with the efforts they had made.” Due to COVID-19 school closures, they were unable to complete the final assessment.
  + **LEA qualitative reports** illustrate (1) an increase or an improvement in providing services to students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, foster youth, and/or English learners, (2) in how they leverage and coordinate multiple school and community resources, (3) and in using data to drive decision making.
  + The OCDE collected data from **LEA annual reports, California School Dashboards, California Healthy Kids Survey LEA Reports**, and other public data. The OCDE reported that “Overall, LEAs in all cohorts maintained or showed improvement on several indicators. The most notable are increases in the graduation rate, decreases in the dropout rate, more schools and LEAs performing at the blue or green levels on the California School Dashboard, and increases in Positive School Engagement and Supports.”

#### **(Year 5) Recommendations for Improving State-level Activities or Policies**

The OCDE made the following recommendations to improve state-level activities or policies:

* Continue funding to support site implementation of CA MTSS (e.g., coaching for site leadership teams and extra pay/sub-release time for educator training).
* Include the FIA and LEA Self-Assessment (LEASA) as district and school site self-assessments to report as local indicators on California School Dashboard.
* Leverage the CA MTSS Framework as the organizing framework for the System of Support work to ensure that students are provided with the most inclusive learning environments, where diversity is valued and respected and equity is delivered.
* Train all educators in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to thoughtfully plan the first best instruction for each and every child.

### Developing, Aligning, and Improving Systems of Academic and Behavioral Supports: Fostering a Positive School Climate (Year 2)

#### **(Year 2) Activities Conducted and Resources Developed**

**The Executive Leadership Team** met weekly via phone conference calls and video conference calls. The executive leadership team includes:

* OCDE, Associate Superintendent, Christine Olmstead, Ed.D.
* BCOE, Director of California Rural California MTSS, Rindy Devoll
* UCLA CTS, Director, Joseph Bishop, Ph.D.

**Developed Plan of Action**

The UCLA CTS, the OCDE, and the BCOE co-designed the plan of action, which is based upon a theory of action connecting evidence-based, positive approaches to school discipline to ongoing efforts to address the educational needs of students. A summary of the plan of action is as follows: (1) engage key partners, (2) develop an evidence-based curriculum for schools, (3) train educators on how to apply the curriculum to the daily practices, (4) pilot the program at selected sites, (5) connect MTSS to response to intervention and continuous improvement frameworks, and (6) determine impact using qualitative and quantitative analysis.

**Design Team Meetings Held.** The OCDE provided the following highlights from   
the design team meetings**:**

* + July–August 2019 highlights:
    - Third Annual California CA MTSS Conference held in Long Beach with approximately 3,200 people in attendance
    - Research and development meeting held at UCLA with researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from around the state
    - Additional resources were identified and adjustments to the macro/micro statements were made
  + October–December 2019 highlights:
    - Pilot Kick-Off event in Sacramento with county, district, and school site personnel
    - Pilot school sites engaged in the first Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle
    - School sites were assigned a CA MTSS coach
  + January–February 2020 highlights:
    - Data collection begins
    - 65 interviews conducted
    - 14 schools and approximately 70 classrooms visited
  + March–May 2020 highlights:
    - Global pandemic shuts down schools
    - CA MTSS coaching goes virtual

**Launched the School Climate Pilot in October**

The SUMS team held a school climate pilot kick-off convening in Sacramento with representatives from the 14 school sites chosen to participate in the pilot. During this two-day event, the OCDE reported that school site leadership teams (SLT):

* Walked through the school-level approach and the macro/micro statements crafted by the Design Team.
* Left with a rough nine-week plan aimed at addressing issues surrounding their schools’ identity and/or vision for readiness.
* Obtained a coach to provide leadership assistance in implementing plans.

Since the event, the 14 school sites engaged in the first PDSA cycle and are working toward addressing the problem of practice. The CA MTSS coaches virtually meet with the principal every week for check-ins and bi-monthly for updates, reviews, and problem-solving.

**California Multi-Tiered System of Support Pathway Certification for Schools**

The OCDE and team created an online certification course for CA MTSS to be utilized as professional learning for pilot districts. The OCDE’s intention for the CA MTSS Pathway Certification for Schools is to build participant knowledge of the CA MTSS by making explicit and meaningful connections to the participant’s work as an educator. They hope the training will result in more inclusive and equitable learning environments for all students and families; regardless of age, race, zip code, language, physical challenge, intellectual ability, capacity, or competency.

Course learning objectives include:

* Deepening the understanding of the What, Why, and How of CA MTSS
* Discovering resources to support the implementation of CA MTSS in the work as educators, support inclusive and equitable learning environments, and engage students and families in the community
* Collaborating with other educators to share practices that support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional success of all students
* Determining CA MTSS/Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) alignment to support working with students in order to enhance and implement LCAP and school site goals and services

**Communities of Practice**

Each region or COE has formed a CoP to provide ongoing TA and support for LEAs who have completed the CA MTSS training series. The CoPs are hosted in-person, online (e.g., via Zoom), or a combination. Each CoP identifies one of the CA MTSS domains or features to further explore and then shares practices.

**California Multi-Tiered System of Support Professional Learning Institute**

The OCDE hosted the third annual CA MTSS PLI on July 29−31, 2019, at the Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach. The conference theme “All Means All—Know My Name, Face, and Story" focused on promoting excellence, equity, and access for all learners. Participants had the opportunity to engage deeply with the CA MTSS Framework and the CDE's School Conditions and Climate Work Group Recommendation Framework. Stakeholders were also invited to share promising practices that support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional success of all students. The annual institute was a major educational event for educators, administrators, and policymakers committed to creating inclusive and equitable school conditions for students and families. Approximately 3,200 education stakeholders attended the PLI, growing attendance by over a thousand from the previous year's conference. Over 200 sessions centered on:

* + Access and Equity
  + Deep Learning
  + CA MTSS
  + Relevant Scholarship
  + School Conditions and Climate

The OCDE planned and scheduled the 2020 CA MTSS PLI for July 28–30, 2020, in Anaheim, California, but cancelled the event in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Executive Team and the Planning Committee held the 2021 CA MTSS PLI virtually on July 20−22, 2021, with a theme of “Know Me, Include Me.”

#### **(Year 2) Number of Local Educational Agencies, Educators, and** **Pupils Served**

**School Climate Pilot Program Participation (Phase 2A)**

The OCDE selected one school district from each California Geographic Lead Area. The first convening was held in October 2020 in Sacramento. The OCDE set the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding and received a commitment from each district. Each school district identified two schools to participate in the pilot program, for a total of 14 schools. Participation is voluntary.

**Table 1. Pilot Program Participants for Phase 2A**

**\****Staffing data for 2019–2020 was not available at the time of this report.*

| **Geographic Lead Agency** | **School District** | **Schools** | **Number of Educators** | **Number of Pupils (2019–20**  **enrollment)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Shasta COE | Oroville City Elementary District | Oakdale Heights Elementary | \* | 340 |
| Shasta COE | Oroville City Elementary District | Ishi Hills Middle School | \* | 336 |
| Sonoma COE | Fort Bragg Unified School District | Dana Gray Elementary | \* | 408 |
| Sonoma COE | Fort Bragg Unified School District | Fort Bragg Middle | \* | 387 |
| Placer and Sacramento COEs | Center Joint Unified School District | Center High School | \* | 1,297 |
| Placer and Sacramento COEs | Center Joint Unified School District | Oak Hill Elementary School | \* | 708 |
| Alameda COE | Pittsburg Unified School District | Rancho Medanos Jr. High | \* | 891 |
| Alameda COE | Pittsburg Unified School District | Martin Luther King Jr. Jr. High | \* | 691 |
| Tulare COE | Madera Unified School District | George Washington Elementary | \* | 714 |
| Tulare COE | Madera Unified School District | Thomas Jefferson Middle | \* | 1,009 |
| Kern County Superintendent of Schools | Pomona Unified School District | Decker Elementary | \* | 520 |
| Kern County Superintendent of Schools | Pomona Unified School District | Lorbeer Middle | \* | 658 |
| Riverside and San Diego COEs | Morongo Unified School District | Palm Vista | \* | 418 |
| Riverside and San Diego COEs | Morongo Unified School District | Twentynine Palms Jr. High | \* | 484 |
| **Total** | **-** | **-** | \* | **8,861** |

**School Climate Pilot Phase 2B**

The OCDE developed plans to distribute sub-grants to schools that would participate in the CA MTSS Pathway Certification for Schools in 2021. Participating school sites are eligible for up to $150,000. Funds may be used to provide stipends/release time for educators who participate and complete the course within an 18-month period. Twenty-one school sites will be selected representing the seven California Geographic Lead Areas. Awardees from each area will include one elementary, one middle school, and one high school. During the review process, the OCDE will give priority to schools that demonstrate the capacity and willingness to evaluate their school conditions and climate and create the systemic change needed to improve outcomes for all learners. The OCDE will require grant awardees to commit to ensuring that a minimum of 90 percent of their school staff complete the course within an

18-month period and agree to become a CA MTSS Pathway Certification for Schools Demonstration Site.

#### **(Year 2) Description of Strategies Identified**

The OCDE noted:

As per the legislation, evidence-based resources and activities, professional development activities, and any other efforts currently available at the state, federal, and local levels, designed to help LEAs across the state to create a positive school climate shall be informed by the results of the pilot program*.*

#### **(Year 2) Outcome Data**

The OCDE uses the following measures to assess the sites’ ability to implement a school culture/climate training based on the CA MTSS framework and show positive student outcomes over time. Detailed results of the assessments may be found in OCDE’s 2019–20 annual report.

* **Schoolwide Implementation Tool (SIT).** The SIT is a self-assessment used by SLTs to examine the current status in addressing the four domains necessary for schools to improve climate and culture. In fall 2019, staff **from most pilot school** sites used the SIT to rate the initial implementation of the first two domains: Shared Vision for Readiness and School Identity. During the 2019–20 school year, the OCDE was not able to elicit responses from all 14 school climate pilot participants. Please note that each measure has a different N size.
* **SWIFT-FIA.** The OCDE provides this self-assessment to School Leadership Teams. The purpose is to examine the current status of schoolwide practices that have been demonstrated through research to provide a basis for successfully including all students who live in the school community.The OCDE reported that the FIA results show that schools and sites made progress toward Implementing or Sustaining Implementation on the practices described in the FIA but remain at the Installing level on most items.
* **Coaching/TA Feedback.** This survey gathers sites’ feedback on coaching/TA quality, relevance, and usefulness. Additionally, the survey seeks to determine how much the TA sites received impacted their confidence or efficacy to implement the envisioned changes, access resources needed to make the changes envisioned, and build capacity to transform and sustain. In 2019−20, the OCDE received responses from only one school climate pilot participant; the feedback from the one school site was positive.
* **LEASA.** The OCDE provides this self-assessment to District Leadership Teams to examine the current status of systemic practices. Essentially, the LEASA results provide LEAs with a picture of their current implementation of the CA MTSS Framework. LEASA results for the three LEAs required to respond show that in 2020 most are in the Installing or Implementing stages.
* **LEA/School Reports.** Qualitative reports from school sites detail progress in fostering positive school climate and conditions, improving pupil-teacher relationships, increasing pupil engagement, and promoting alternative discipline practices. Quantitative reports provided in the OCDE annual report present a challenge in analyzing, due to the changes in N size, which is in part due to reporting challenges as a result of school closures.

#### **(Year 2) Recommendations for Improving State-level Activities or Policies**

The OCDE identified the following recommendations for improving state-level activities (which are summarized below):

* Establish CA MTSS as the primary framework and change strategy for school sites, districts, and COEs as central to the Statewide System of Support.
* Link federal and state priorities around learning accelerationto CA MTSS.
* Continue toprioritize strategies for the social-emotional well-being of school site staff as schools reopen.
* Equip educators with new tools for student engagement and student learning, especially those considered universal supports.
* Support school sites to utilize data to inform decisions around implementing social-emotional supports in addressing:
  + Discipline disparities apparent by race,
  + The overidentification of students of color for special education services, and
  + In improving school climate.
* Foster opportunities for collaborative relationships with families and communities.