HIGH-DOSAGE TUTORING

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION
GUIDE | SPRING 2021

SCORE INSTITUTE
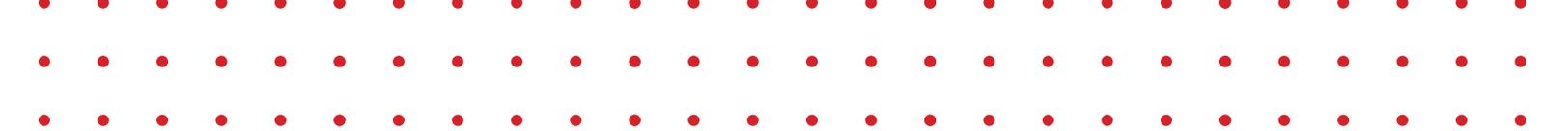
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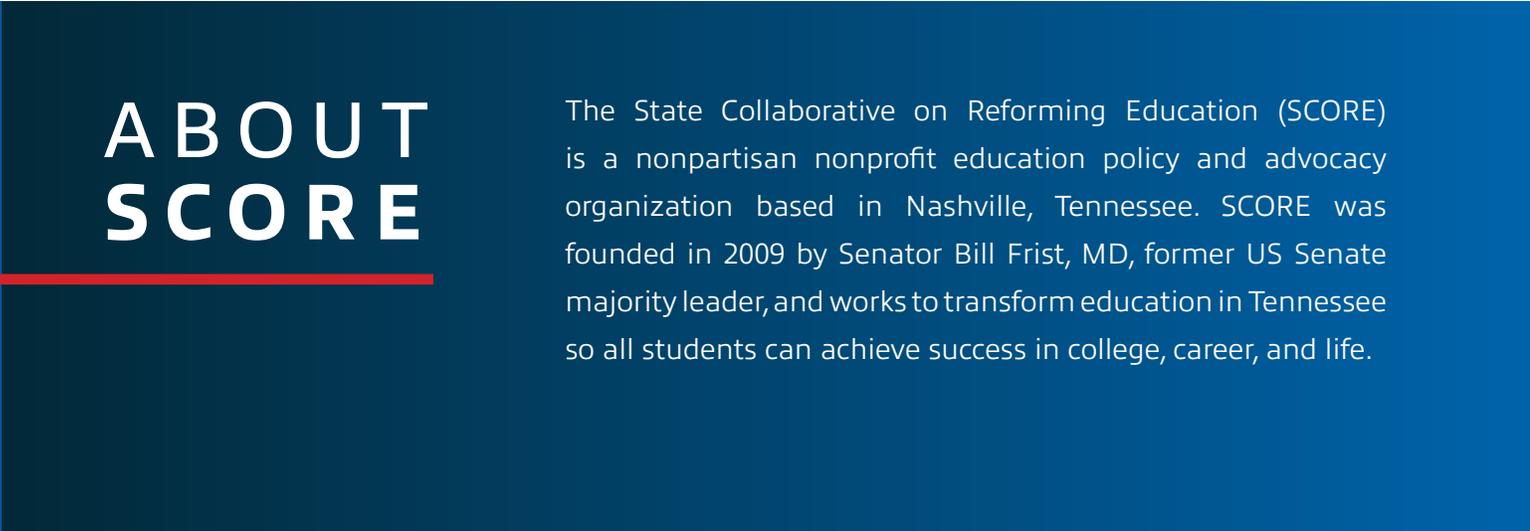
ABOUT
SCORE

The State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) is a nonpartisan nonprofit education policy and advocacy organization based in Nashville, Tennessee. SCORE was founded in 2009 by Senator Bill Frist, MD, former US Senate majority leader, and works to transform education in Tennessee so all students can achieve success in college, career, and life.

INTRODUCTION

High-dosage tutoring is a research-based practice that can help schools and districts address learning gaps and accelerate learning. This guide highlights important implementation considerations that must be a part of any effective plan to launch high-dosage tutoring in your school or district.

Many of the practices and resources highlighted in this guide come directly from the National Student Support Accelerator (NSSA). Find a complete set of resources at the NSSA website.

RESEARCH ABOUT HIGH-DOSAGE TUTORING

Research supports high-dosage tutoring as an effective strategy for addressing learning loss and accelerating learning. The Annenberg Institute at Brown University highlights 10 design principles for effective tutoring. The most important principles are:

FREQUENCY: 30-Minute Sessions 3 Times A Week
Tutoring is most likely to be effective when delivered at least three times per week for at least 30 minutes per session. A consistent tutor helps build the relationship that supports student learning.

GROUP SIZE: No More Than 4
Tutors can effectively instruct up to four students at a time, but these higher ratios require a greater level of tutor skill. If using novice tutors, keeping group size to 1:1 or 1:2 is ideal.

SCHEDULING: During The School Day
Tutoring interventions that are conducted during the school day tend to result in greater learning gains than those that are after-school or during the summer. This also ensures equitable access for all students.

TRAINING: Preparation For Teachers And Non-Teachers
Current teachers who are serving as tutors will need training on expectations, routines, and progress monitoring. Tutors who are non-educators should receive robust training on content, instructional strategies, and relationship-building.

PROGRESS MONITORING: Data For Tailored Instruction
Tutoring programs that utilize ongoing informal assessments allow tutors to more effectively tailor their instruction. Regularly monitor the tutoring program to examine what is working, what needs adjustment, and what changes should be implemented to improve effectiveness.

TARGETED HIGH-DOSAGE TUTORING

Launching an effective high-dosage tutoring program will take time, so consider starting small by piloting your program with one or two grade levels and subject areas. Based on the current research, high-dosage tutoring seems to be most effective in **early grades literacy** and **high school math.**

Tutoring may be especially important for students who are starting school in the coming years because of the disruptions of the pandemic. Analysis of a network of Tennessee school districts that SCORE works with has shown a sizable decrease in enrollment in pre-K and kindergarten for the 2020-21 school year, which could indicate that more underprepared students will be entering the school system.

Additionally, Tennessee's recently enacted Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act increases the urgency of providing high-dosage tutoring to students in early grades. Beginning in the summer of 2023, third-grade students who are not proficient on the English language arts (ELA) portion of TNReady will be eligible for retention unless they meet an exemption pathway. Students who do not score proficient on the summer retake of the assessment will be required to participate in one-on-one tutoring for the duration of fourth grade, as a condition for advancing to the next grade. The students who will first be impacted by this law are the very students who have had an interrupted experience at the beginning of their academic careers, which means educators must act swiftly to get them on track.

COVID-19 has also increased the urgency of addressing disengagement at the high school level. SCORE's analysis with a network of districts shows that the highest level of student disengagement occurred in high school students and students learning virtually. Getting these students re-engaged is essential to ensuring that they can seamlessly enroll in postsecondary education after high school.

Which grade levels and subject areas will you prioritize for high-dosage tutoring? Use your best available assessment data to identify the students with the most urgent needs.

Complete the chart below by filling in the **estimated number of students** who will receive tutoring by grade level and subject area.

GRADE	LITERACY	MATH	OTHER	TOTAL BY GRADE
TOTAL BY SUBJECT				TOTAL # STUDENTS

STAFFING

CALCULATING HOW MANY TUTORS ARE NEEDED

Tutoring is most effective when the tutor is working with **one or two** students. However, an **experienced teacher** may be able to work with up to **four** students at a time. Complete the chart below to estimate the number of tutors that will be needed at each ratio.

GRADE	# STUDENTS	# TUTORS (1:1)	# TUTORS (1:2)	# TUTORS (1:4)
Ex.1st Literacy	20	20	10	5
Ex. 3rd Math	15	15	8	4
TOTAL				

IDENTIFYING AND RECRUITING TUTORS

Whether you plan to recruit current teachers and staff or outside candidates to serve as tutors, you should start the process with a job description that specifies the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and other qualifications that a prospective tutor will need to be successful. As a starting point, review this example from Reading Corps.

The National Student Accelerator identifies three questions that must be answered as you plan your tutor recruitment strategy:

• **Whom are you trying to recruit?** You will need to recruit four times more applicants than tutors. Depending on your context, less than half of applicants will meet your requirements. Less than half of the applicants who meet your requirements will accept your offer.

• **When should the recruitment timeline start and end?** Determine how many total tutors you will need and when their training will start. Create deadlines and benchmarks to ensure that you meet your targets.

• **How will you recruit?** In addition to leveraging the professional networks of your current teachers and staff, consider how to partner with local organizations, such as colleges, universities, nonprofits, churches, businesses, and other community organizations. Make sure information about your tutoring program and the application process is easily accessible via your website and other recruitment materials.

When possible, start your search for tutors with **current teachers and staff** before considering other talent pipelines, such as retired teachers, pre-service teachers, and college students.

Complete the chart below to estimate your **current availability of tutors** and **how many more you will need to recruit** from available talent pipelines.

PIPELINE	# CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	# NEEDED
Current Teachers		
Current Educators		
Retired Educators		
Pre-service Educators		
College Students		
Community Members		
TOTAL		

HIRING AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

Tutor selection should follow an efficient and uniform process to ensure equity and fairness. Follow these steps to plan your tutor selection process:

- **Identify the criteria of an effective tutor.** What are the mindsets, knowledge, and skills a tutor needs to demonstrate to be successful? Make sure the criteria you identify are aligned to the criteria outlined in your job description.

- **Identify leading indicators.** Consider the observable behaviors that you will look for during the selection process to determine if a prospective tutor has met your criteria.

- **Map out your selection process.** Determine the steps that need to be included in the process to give you an opportunity to assess whether a candidate meets your criteria.

You might consider including students as part of your tutor selection process. This could take different forms, including student interview panels or sample tutoring sessions with students. Here are additional resources for the tutor selection process.

To ensure the safety of students, you are legally required to include background checks into your tutor selection process. Here is additional guidance on background checks from the National Student Support Accelerator.

COMPENSATION

If you plan to pay tutors, consider the following planning questions:

- How much will you pay tutors? Will compensation be based on level of education and experience?

- How often will tutors be paid? Weekly or bi-weekly?

- How will tutors be expected to report their work on a daily and weekly basis?

- Will you need different payment systems for district tutors and non-district tutors?

Here is a sample tutor pay scale from a district utilizing high-dosage tutoring that differentiates compensation based on education and experience level. The tutor pay scale will vary from district to district based on local context.

EXPERIENCE	HOURLY COMPENSATION
Current College Student	$15
Bachelor's Degree, No Experience	$20
Limited Teaching Experience	$25
Significant Teaching Experience	$30
Master Teacher	$35
Master Teacher, Tutoring Lead	$40

TUTOR COORDINATOR AND IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

In addition to identifying tutors, you should designate **a tutor coordinator** and **implementation team.** The tutor coordinator will be responsible for the launch of tutoring, monitoring progress, and making strategic adjustments to ensure success. When identifying a tutor coordinator, consider the following questions:

• Will this need to be a full-time position?

• Does this person have the time and capacity to lead an implementation team? If not, are there regular duties of this person that can be reassigned to someone else?

• How will you ensure this person has the autonomy and flexibility to make strategic decisions and adjust course quickly? What supports will this person need to be able to lead the team?

• How will you create a communication process that ensures efficient delivery of timely information to appropriate stakeholders?

Members of the implementation team will help plan, launch, and monitor the effectiveness of tutoring. Depending on your context, an implementation team may be small or large. Consider including the following roles on the team:

• A highly effective literacy teacher

• A highly effective math teacher

• An administrator or instructional coach

• School support staff member

• Representative from the district office

SCHEDULING

Begin thinking about how to schedule tutoring by considering the following questions:

- **When:** How will tutoring be **embedded during regular school hours** to eliminate barriers to participation? How will you ensure tutoring sessions do not conflict with students' core instruction time?

- **Frequency:** How will you ensure that each student consistently receives at least **three 30-minute tutoring sessions** a week with the same tutor?

- **How:** How will tutoring be delivered—**in person** or **virtually**? Or both?

Depending on which grade levels will receive tutoring, your answers to these questions may vary. Following is an overview of how three districts in Tennessee have embedded high-dosage tutoring during their regular school day.

DISTRICT	GRADE(S) AND SUBJECT AREA(S)	SCHEDULE
Trousdale County Schools	First-Grade Literacy	Students receive tutoring four times a week for 30 minutes during their intervention block.
Metro Nashville Public Schools	Grades 3-5 Literacy Grades 6-8 Numeracy Ninth-Grade Literacy	Students who have not already been targeted for intervention receive tutoring three times a week for at least 30 minutes during their Personalized Learning Time block from a trained volunteer tutor.
Lenoir City Schools	12th-Grade ACT Math	Students receive tutoring daily during their 30-minute homeroom block.

Complete the following chart to plan your tutoring schedule.

GRADE AND SUBJECT AREA	# STUDENTS	# TUTORING GROUPS	WHEN?	WHERE?

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Effective pre-service training and on-going support for tutors are essential to launching a successful high-dosage tutoring program. It is particularly important to provide tutors who are non-educators with robust training on content, instructional strategies, and relationship-building.

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

The National Student Support Accelerator identifies three principles that should be considered when designing pre-service training:

1. **Map out knowledge, skills, and mindsets.** Design training sessions that map directly to the most important knowledge, skills, and mindsets that you have identified as important for tutors to demonstrate.

Make sure this information matches the expectations outlined in your tutor job description.

2. **Combine asynchronous and synchronous components**. Assign pre-work that tutors can complete online before an in-person training session. Reserve in-person training sessions for interactive discussion, skill-building practice, and reflection.

3. **Ground training in diversity, equity, and inclusion.** Provide opportunities for tutors to reflect on their own experiences and explore their own implicit biases. Make sure tutors build knowledge of the local context.

The National Student Support Accelerator also identifies universal topics that should be a part of any tutor pre-service training.

TRAINING TOPIC	KEY IDEAS	RESOURCES
Tutor Expectations	• Discuss the criteria of a successful tutor • Provide tutors with written expectations • Provide tutors time to review and ask questions about expectations	National Student Support Accelerator-Setting Expectations with Tutors
Tutor-Student Relationships	• Provide specific guidance about what a professional and effective tutor-student relationship looks like • Provide tutors time to practice and receive feedback about relationship-building activities and skills • Provide tutors guidance about mandated reporting	National Student Support Accelerator-Strong, Academically Focused, Tutor-Student Relationships National Student Support Accelerator-Relationship-Building Activities
Content Proficiency	• Review and practice strategies for delivering content effectively • Review and practice strategies for identifying and addressing student misunderstandings • Introduce any specialized content knowledge or skills that tutors must have to be successful	National Student Support Accelerator-Example Tutoring Session Structure Saga Sample Lesson & Activity
Effective Facilitation	• Review and discuss the elements and structure of an effectively facilitated tutoring session • Provide tutors with strong examples of effective facilitation of a tutoring session • Provide tutors the opportunity to role play and receive feedback on their facilitation of a tutoring session	National Student Support Accelerator-Facilitation Moves Checklist: One-on-One Tutoring
Data Practices	• Review and discuss the specific data collection tools that tutors will be expected to use • Review and discuss expectations and policies related to student data use and privacy	National Student Support Accelerator-Examples of Data Collection Tools National Student Support Accelerator-Student Data Privacy Guidance
Supporting Students with Thinking And Learning Differences	• Provide opportunities for tutors to review, discuss, and practice using strategies for supporting students with thinking and learning differences	National Student Support Accelerator-Accessibility Checklist National Student Support Accelerator-Personalizing a Tutoring Session

As you start creating your tutoring pre-service training, review Saga Education's pre-service training schedule.
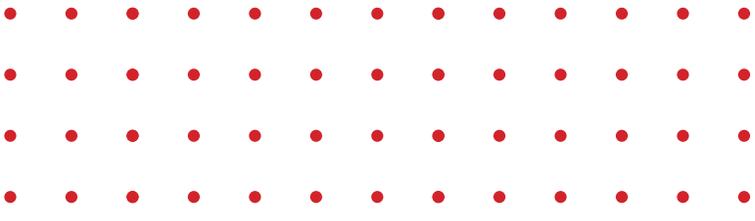
MONITORING PROGRESS

GOALS AND DATA TOOLS

ONGOING SUPPORT

In addition to planning pre-service training, you should also develop structures for providing tutors with ongoing support. The tutor coordinator and implementation team should play important roles in the development of support structures that:

- Refresh and spiral information covered in pre-service training

- Provide time for ongoing development of essential tutor knowledge and skills

- Provide individualized feedback through one-on-one observation and coaching

- Collect ongoing data and feedback about student experience and tutor effectiveness

You should set clear and measurable **short- and long-term goals** for your high-dosage tutoring program. In general, goals should fall into three domains:

- Student engagement

- Academic growth

- Perception and satisfaction (students, families, and tutors)

Carefully consider what measures will be used to assess progress in each goal domain. Once you have established clear and measurable goals, you should select **data tools** that will help you monitor progress toward them.

As you get started, review Lenoir City Schools' goal-tracking template. The following table highlights possible measures and data tools for each goal domain. For more information review the National Student Accelerator's Examples of Data Collection Tools.

DOMAIN	POSSIBLE MEASURES	DATA TOOLS
Student Engagement	• Daily school attendance • Attendance to tutoring sessions • Observations of students during tutoring sessions	• Student information system • Tutoring attendance log • National Student Support Accelerator-Observation Rubric
Academic Growth	• Exit tickets • Growth on formative assessments • ACT growth • Student work samples	
Perception And Satisfaction	• Student surveys • Student interviews • Tutor surveys	• Annenberg Student and Tutor Surveys

As you begin setting goals and selecting data tools, you may want to create a formal performance measurement plan that links end-of-year goals, benchmarks, and data collection tools. You can find more [information about goals and data collection tools](#) at the NSSA website.

MONITORING ROUTINES

In addition to developing goals and selecting data tools, you should plan the **data collection and review routines** you will use on an ongoing basis. Your tutor coordinator and implementation team should be involved in planning and carrying out these routines. Depending on your context, these routines may include:

- Walkthroughs of tutoring sessions

- Extended observations of tutoring sessions

- Data review and planning meetings

- Quarterly step back meetings

Use the following chart to plan your monitoring routines.

| MONITORING ROUTINE	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE

COMMUNICATION

Clear, positive, and timely communication with students, families, and teachers is important to launching and maintaining an effective high-dosage tutoring program. The NSSA identifies a three-part structure to effective stakeholder communication:

- **Kick-off conversations.** Initial communication should ensure all stakeholders receive information about the goals of high-dosage tutoring, logistics, and their role moving forward.

- **Continual updates.** Communication should keep all stakeholders updated on what is happening and the progress toward goals.

- **Punctuated reflection.** Summative progress toward goals should be shared with all stakeholders and time should be allotted for receiving feedback and reflecting on how it will inform future plans.
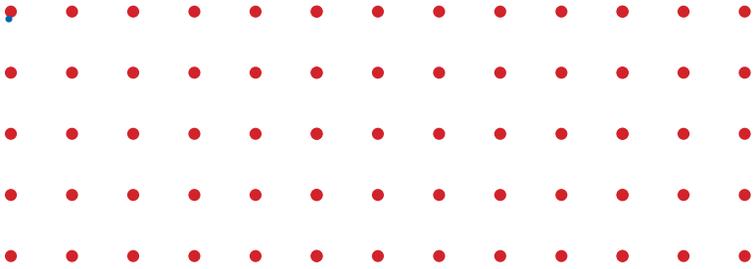
KICKOFF MESSAGES

Kickoff messages explain the "why" behind tutoring, build excitement, and share the most critical logistical information. These messages should be carefully planned and communicated to students, families, and teachers.

If you are prioritizing tutoring for students who are behind academically, then careful consideration should be given to communicating positive messages that frame tutoring as an opportunity rather than a punishment.

Plan the **three to five most important kickoff messages** for students, families, and teachers in the following chart.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	KICKOFF MESSAGES
Students	
Families	
Teachers	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

These are additional resources as you plan for communicating with students, families, and teachers.

COMMUNICATION	RESOURCES
Students	• National Student Support Accelerator-Student Goal Tracker
Families	• National Student Support Accelerator-Tutoring Permission Slip • National Student Support Accelerator-Family & Student Checklist
Teachers, Tutors	• National Student Support Accelerator-Teacher & Tutor Communication
Schools	• National Student Support Accelerator-Tutoring Program-School Communication

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