



## Connecticut High Dosage Tutoring Program LEA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

To support LEAs with establishing high-dosage tutoring (HDT) programs in schools, this document addresses questions regarding scheduling, hiring and training tutors, program implementation, instructional materials, lesson-quality monitoring, student and family engagement, and evaluation of HDT program successes.

For more questions not addressed in this document, please reach out to the CSDE HDT team: John Scianimanico ([john.scianimanico@ct.gov](mailto:john.scianimanico@ct.gov)), Charles Kenyon ([Charles.Kenyon@ct.gov](mailto:Charles.Kenyon@ct.gov)), Jennifer Michalak ([jennifer.michalak@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.michalak@ct.gov)) and/or Ellen Stoltz ([improveyourschools@gmail.com](mailto:improveyourschools@gmail.com)).

### HDT Overview

#### 1. Why is the CSDE investing in and promoting HDT?

According to contemporary research, HDT is an effective strategy to accelerate learning and provide equity in accessing tutoring for all students. The intensity and frequency of HDT has been shown to accelerate learning more than any other academic intervention. An exemplary HDT model is made accessible intentionally, embedding small-group and/or individual instruction during the school day. Instructed by highly-qualified tutors, every session focuses on students' identified needs with standards-based content aligned to the LEA's curriculum, grade level performance goals, and course requirements. Research outcomes indicate that intensive models of tutoring, when implemented with fidelity, can produce learning gains for students as high as one to two years in math beyond what students typically achieve in the classroom, with reductions in failure rates by more than 50 percent.

#### 2. What are the components of a robust HDT program?

LEAs that wish to implement HDT programs in their schools must adhere to the following guardrails:

- provide one tutor per group of four or fewer students;
- provide a minimum of three sessions per week for at least thirty minutes per tutoring session;
- ensure HDT occurs during the school day, and is not a before- or after-school program or an at-home, on-demand program;
- preferably, provide HDT by an in-person tutor;



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



- provide HDT by high-quality tutors that may include certified teachers, paraeducators, community providers, private tutoring providers, and other individuals who have received training;
- use high-quality curriculum and instructional materials aligned with Connecticut academic standards, core classroom instruction, and grade-level content;
- is data-driven and where applicable, includes state-provided interim assessment blocks (IABs) and other materials aligned with the state's summative assessment;
- provide tutors with upfront, ongoing training and professional learning opportunities throughout the school year; and,
- require collaboration between tutors and regular classroom educators to ensure tutoring is instructionally aligned to classroom content.

### **3. What is the difference between HDT and other types of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) interventions?**

HDT is not a replacement for Tier I instruction. However, HDT can serve as a robust instructional strategy as part of the school's MTSS structure of tiered interventions. HDT can be provided by interventionists currently assigned to implement Tier II or Tier III interventions.

### **4. What funding sources can my LEA use for HDT?**

A number of funding sources can be used to support the costs of HDT in schools, including Title 1 funding, Title IV funding, IDEA funding, funds used for MTSS, Alliance District funding, School Improvement Grant funding, and Commissioner's Network grant funding. LEAs can also leverage Title II, Part A for preparing teachers who are implementing HDT in schools. Title II funds can only be used for teachers and paraprofessionals on the school's payroll. IDEA funds can support students with disabilities whose IEPs include tutoring as a direct service to improve skills in a content area, such as math or reading. For more information, see "Beyond Recovery: Funding High-Impact Tutoring for the Long-Term." by Accelerate on our HDT webpage.

### **5. What is the estimated cost per student of HDT?**

It is recommended that LEAs spend between \$1,500 and \$2,000 per student. Costs may include:

- contracting with a third-party tutoring organization responsible for hiring, training, and managing a cadre of tutors (who could include paraeducators, retired teachers, AmeriCorps members, and community members) to ensure staffing needs are complete;
- providing stipends to existing school-based tutors and educators responsible for providing services directly to students;



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



- hiring and/or providing a stipend to a district- and/or school-level personnel and other administrative roles to oversee creation, design, and implement the program across identified school(s);
- procuring any necessary curriculum, assessments, materials, hardware, and software to facilitate tutoring;
- providing stipends to existing LEA- or school-level personnel to serve as mentors and coaches for tutors; or
- providing initial and ongoing training, coaching and professional development for tutors, as needed.

## HDT Scheduling for Middle and High Schools

### 1. What type of scheduling is most conducive to implementing an HDT program at the middle school and/or high school level?

Schools have scheduled tutoring for students during study halls, 30-minute homeroom periods, regularly occurring intervention or What I Need (WIN) blocks, and electives like music and art. Most LEAs have adopted a pull-out model where students leave class to attend tutoring. Some LEAs have found it logistically simpler to offer tutoring on a push-in basis, particularly for students receiving special education. The CSDE strongly discourages pulling students from core instruction classes.

### 2. What does teacher-tutor collaboration look like and when should this occur to ensure high-quality instruction, while considering teacher-contracted work hours?

Some LEAs with a Math Coach or HDT Leader position have scheduled regular communication and collaboration time with the tutor(s) to review student progress through exit tickets, ensure lesson objectives align with current math instruction, and analyze student work. LEAs without a Math Coach have included a classroom teacher stipend in their HDT grant application for any collaboration time between the tutor(s) and the core classroom teacher that occurs beyond the contractual school day.

### 3. Is there a minimum number of weeks for students to receive HDT?

There is no minimum, but the CSDE strongly recommends that students receive at least one full semester (or 18 weeks) of tutoring.

## Hiring and Training Tutors

### 1. What sources can my HR department tap to find tutors?



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



In addition to contracting with an approved vendor from the [CSDE Approved Tutoring Organizations List](#), LEAs may also hire local tutors with experience in education or teaching. LEAs may directly hire interventionists, retired teachers, paraeducators, or local university students majoring in education. For more information on engaging paraprofessionals as tutors, see [this brief](#) by the National Student Support Accelerator (NSSA).

### **2. How are tutor salary or hourly rates calculated?**

Tutor vendors set the hourly rate when supplying their tutors to an LEA, though LEAs may negotiate tutor rate as necessary. LEAs who directly hire part-time or full-time tutors set their own rate based upon contractual language and local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

### **3. What should initial and continuous training for tutors look like?**

Some LEAs have built in an orientation day preceding the tutoring start date. The orientation includes introduction to staff and students, touring the school, identifying the tutoring space, and reviewing instructional materials and schedule. LEAs have invited HDT tutors to participate in school- or district-provided staff development focused on math instruction. This aligns classroom instruction to the expectations of the district's curriculum and instructional methods.

Some tutor vendors provide their own initial and/or continuous training as part of the tutoring contract. This training often includes critiquing previous lessons, reviewing new curriculum and CT Core Math Standards, and administering program and diagnostic assessments.

### **4. Can my LEA contract with more than one tutor vendor?**

Yes, LEAs may contract with more than one vendor and/or use a combination of a vendor and their own locally-sourced tutors.

### **5. Which tutor vendors can supply bilingual tutors?**

We recommend reviewing the [CSDE Approved Tutoring Organizations List](#) for a detailed description of the offerings on all the approved vendors.



## Program Implementation

- 1. Please describe how an HDT summer learning program would look like considering the evidenced-based model for implementing a successful HDT program?**

LEAs may use the funding for summer learning, as long as the CSDE guardrails (30-minute sessions, 3 sessions a week, one tutor for every four students, etc.) are followed.

- 2. How will block scheduling affect students who receive tutoring on an A-B schedule when dosage requirements change week-to-week?**

The minimum HDT dosage is a 30-minute session at least three times per week, regardless of whether students are on a block schedule or traditional daily schedule.

LEAs experiencing difficulty with this model are encouraged to reach out to the CSDE HDT team immediately to arrange a solution compatible for the school schedule and any grant requirements.

- 3. Can we hold larger tutor to student ratios (i.e. 1:5 or 1:6) or hold 25-minute tutoring sessions if we have not secured all our tutors?**

No. The CSDE HDT model is based in the evidence of what works provided by the National Student Support Accelerator. The quality of the tutoring sessions (which includes 30-minute sessions in groups of no more than four students per tutor) must not come at the expense of serving more students. With approval from the CSDE, schools may scale back the number of students they expected to serve until they have secured all their tutors.



## Instructional Materials and Lesson Quality

### 1. What math programs and materials does the CSDE suggest for HDT sessions in grades 6-8? Grade 9?

All programs and materials used in HDT sessions must align with state mathematics standards and district curricula. LEAs are encouraged to examine the following to support making resource decisions.

- [National Center on Intensive Intervention](#)
- [Evidence for ESSA](#)
- [What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- [GOOpenCT](#)
- [Tools for Teachers](#)
- [Interactive Coherence Map](#)

### 2. What do other LEAs do to ensure lesson quality?

LEAs ensure ample time for tutors, classroom educators, and/or math coaches to meet to ensure instructional coherence between tutoring content and classroom content. District or school-based staff also set aside time for informal observations. These informal observations provide direct information about lesson quality, lesson differentiation for learning levels, tutor-student actionable feedback, and engagement with lesson materials.

### 3. Should my school use proprietary benchmarking systems to monitor progress in HDT?

When monitoring progress during the HDT program, districts and tutoring partners should utilize formative approaches. These include Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) that best align with the areas of instruction being addressed by the tutors, combined with exit tickets, analysis of student work, teacher feedback in the regular classroom, and other formative measures. Note that the IABs as well as the Focused-IABs can be administered in standard and non-standard ways. See [Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments \(ct.gov\)](#) for additional information about the Smarter Balanced IABs and F-IABs.



## Student and Family Engagement

### 1. What should I expect tutors to do to ensure all students are actively engaged in lessons?

Tutors should connect with their students to develop trusting relationships. Research has found that a consistent, reliable tutor can have a profound impact on student engagement and belonging during tutoring sessions. Tutors should provide direct, actionable feedback in a positive manner to each student, celebrating skillset successes along the way.

Students should be actively engaged, as demonstrated by attention to tasks, asking or responding to questions, demonstrating how to solve problems with accuracy, and accepting corrections to ensure accuracy.

### 2. What strategies have LEAs used to inform and engage families of the school's HDT program?

Schools have adopted a variety of strategies to inform families of the HDT program and of their child's selection to participate. Schools have hosted parent nights, sent letters home, and called parents of students participating in the program. **Schools that engaged families early and framed the HDT program as an opportunity for students to accelerate their mathematics education have experienced low attrition rates and received support from parents for their child to participate.** For more ideas on how to strengthen family engagement with HDT programs, see [this brief](#) by the National Student Support Accelerator (NSSA).