RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools

RTI: Resources for Educators

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Teacher/Team: _____ Date: _____ Student: _____

Student Problem Definition #1: _____

Student Problem Definition #2: _____

[Optional] Person(s) assisting with intervention planning process: _____

Interventions: Essential Elements (Witt et al., 2004)
- Clear problem-definition(s)
- Baseline data
- Goal for improvement
- Progress-monitoring plan

Intervention Description	**Intervention Delivery**	**Check-Up Date**	**Assessment Data**
Describe each intervention that you plan to use to address the student's concern(s).	List key details about delivery of the intervention, such as:; (1) where & when the intervention will be used; (2) the adult-to-student ratio; (3) how frequently the intervention will take place; (4) the length of time each session of the intervention will last;.	Select a date when the data will be reviewed to evaluate the intervention.	Note what classroom data will be used to establish baseline , set a goal for improvement, and track the student's progress during this intervention.
			Type(s) of Data to Be Used: Baseline | Goal by Check-Up
			Type(s) of Data to Be Used: Baseline | Goal by Check-Up
		.	Type(s) of Data to Be Used: Baseline | Goal by Check-Up

Witt, J. C., VanDerHeyden, A. M., & Gilbertson, D. (2004). Troubleshooting behavioral interventions. A systematic process for finding and eliminating problems. *School Psychology Review, 33*, 363-383.

Response-to-Intervention School Readiness Survey

Introduction. The *RTI School Readiness Survey* is an informal measure designed to help schools to identify which elements of RTI that they are already skilled in and which elements that they should continue to develop.

Directions. This survey is divided into the following sections:

1. *RTI: Understand the Model*
2. *RTI: Use Teams to Problem-Solve*
3. *RTI: Select the Right Intervention*
4. *RTI: Monitor Student Progress*
5. *RTI: Graph Data for Visual Analysis*

Complete the items in each section. After you have finished the entire survey, identify any sections in which your school needs to improve its performance.

Next, go to RTI_WIRE, the online directory of free Response-to-Intervention resources, at:

http://www.jimwrightonline.com/php/rti/rti_wire.php

RTI_WIRE is organized into categories matched to those on this survey, so that you can conveniently look up the information that your school needs to successfully put the RTI model into place.

1. RTI: Understand the Model	0 Lack skills or basic knowledge of this model	1 Just starting to learn this model (Beginning Phase)	2 Developing an awareness of this model (Intermediate Phase)	3 Fully knowledgeable in this model (Advanced Phase)
Staff members of successful RTI schools understand the RTI model and believe that this approach will benefit teachers as well as struggling learners.				
At my school:				
♦ the principal strongly supports Response-to-Intervention as a model for identifying educational disabilities.				
♦ the staff has received an overview of the RTI model, understands its general features, and knows how RTI differs from the traditional 'test discrepancy' approach				
♦ the majority of the staff (80 percent or more) appears ready to give the RTI model a try, believing that it may benefit teachers as well as students.				
♦ all programs or resources that are intended to improve students' academics or behaviors are inventoried and organized into three levels, or Tiers. (Tier I contains programs available to all students, such as classwide tutoring. Tier II addresses the needs of students who show emerging deficits and includes individualized intervention plans designed by the school's Intervention Team. Tier III is the most intensive level of assistance available in a school and includes special education services as well as such supports as Wrap-Around Teams for psychiatrically involved students.)				
2. RTI: Use Teams to Problem-Solve	**0** Lack skills or basic knowledge of this practice	**1** Just starting to learn this practice (Beginning Phase)	**2** Developing skill with this practice (Intermediate Phase)	**3** Fully competent in this practice (Advanced Phase)
Successful RTI schools support teachers in the RTI process by encouraging them to refer struggling students to an Intervention Team. This Team is multi-disciplinary and follows a structured problem-solving model.				
My school's Intervention Team…				
♦ is multi-disciplinary, and has members who carry a high degree of credibility with other staff in the building.				
♦ follows a formal problem-solving model during meetings.				

♦ creates an atmosphere in which the referring teacher feels welcomed and supported.				
♦ collects background information / baseline data on the student to be used at the initial Intervention Team meeting.				
♦ has inventoried school-wide resources that it can use in Team interventions.				
♦ selects academic & behavioral interventions that are 'scientifically based'				
♦ sets clear, objective, measurable goals for student progress				
♦ selects methods of assessment (e.g., Curriculum-Based Measurement, DIBELS) to track student progress at least weekly during the intervention.				
♦ documents the quality of the referring teacher's efforts in implementing the intervention ('intervention integrity').				
♦ holds 'follow-up' meetings with the referring teacher to review student progress and judge whether the intervention was effective.				
3. RTI: Select the Right Intervention	**0** Lack skills or basic knowledge of this practice	**1** Just starting to learn this practice (Beginning Phase)	**2** Developing skill with this practice (Intermediate Phase)	**3** Fully competent in this practice (Advanced Phase)
Successful RTI schools select interventions that match the student's underlying deficits or concerns, are scientifically based, and are feasible given the resources available.				
My school…				
♦ has put together a library of effective, research-based intervention ideas for common student referral concerns--such as poor reading fluency and defiant behavior.				
♦ considers the likely 'root causes' of the student's academic or behavioral difficulties (e.g., skill deficit, lack of motivation) and chooses intervention strategies that logically address those root causes.				
♦ tailors intervention ideas as needed to be usable in real-world classrooms while being careful to preserve the 'treatment' qualities that make each intervention effective.				
♦ formats intervention strategies as step-by-step teacher-friendly 'scripts' containing enough detail so that educators can easily understand how to put them into practice.				
♦ follows up with teachers soon after a classroom intervention has been put into place to ensure that the instructor has been able to start the intervention and is implementing it correctly,.				

4. RTI: Monitor Student Progress	0 Lack skills or basic knowledge of this practice	1 Just starting to learn this practice (Beginning Phase)	2 Developing skill with this practice (Intermediate Phase)	3 Fully competent in this practice (Advanced Phase)
Successful RTI schools have the capacity to collect baseline data, as well as to conduct frequent progress monitoring of students in academic and behavioral areas.				
My school can…				
♦ conduct structured classroom observations of students to determine rates of on-task behavior, academic engagement, work completion, and rates of positive or negative interactions with adults.				
♦ collect and assess student work products to assess the completeness and accuracy of the work--and to estimate the student time required to produce the work.				
♦ administer and score curriculum-based measurement (CBM) probes in basic skill areas: phonemic awareness, reading fluency, math computation, and writing.				
♦ use local or research norms (e.g., CBM), or criterion-based benchmarks (e.g., DIBELS) to judge the magnitude of a student's delays in basic academic skills.				
♦ create Daily Behavior Report Cards (DBRCs) or other customized rating forms to allow the instructor to evaluate key student academic and general behaviors on a daily basis.				

5. RTI: Graph Data for Visual Analysis	0 Lack skills or basic knowledge of this practice	1 Just starting to learn this practice (Beginning Phase)	2 Developing skill with this practice (Intermediate Phase)	3 Fully competent in this practice (Advanced Phase)
Successful RTI schools routinely transform progress-monitoring data into visual displays such as time-series graphs to share with teachers, Intervention Team members, parents, and others. These displays demonstrate whether the student is benefiting from the intervention.				
My school can…				
♦ convert progress-monitoring data into visual displays such as time-series graphs to aid in instructional and behavioral decision-making.				

RTI/Secondary: Top Tasks for Implementing RTI at the Middle & High School Level	**0** Work has not yet begun toward the goal	**1** Work toward the goal has begun (Beginning Phase)	**2** Progress has been made but the goal has not yet been attained (Intermediate Phase)	**3** This goal has been accomplished (Advanced Phase)
My middle or high school has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Screening procedures in place to locate students at risk. The school has procedures and decision rules to identify students who should be referred to the RTI Problem-Solving Team for academic or behavioral concerns. For example, the school may ♦ Monitor 5- and 10-week grade reports and refer any student who receives two or more failing grades. ♦ Track office disciplinary referrals and refer students with repeated referrals who have not responded positively to lesser forms of intervention such as an administrator/parent conference. ♦ Monitor student attendance and tardiness rates. ♦ Maintain a 'watch list' of at-risk students from year to year, including students transferring into the school from lower grades. ♦ Screen the student population with academic measures -- e.g., Oral Reading Fluency, CBM Reading Comprehension Maze Passages, CBM Math Computation, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) from www.nwea.org.				
Reached a shared understanding among faculty about how to provide Tier 1 interventions in a consistent manner across classrooms. Standardizing Tier 1 interventions across the school requires: ♦ Consensus regarding the minimum effort that is reasonable for teachers to expend in Tier 1 (classroom) interventions ♦ Creation of a menu of feasible classroom strategies to address common student concerns such as lack of organization skills or limited reading comprehension ♦ Provision of staff development, coaching and other support to teachers initially to encourage their adoption of an expanded range of Tier 1 interventions.				

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My middle or high school has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Made supplemental academic interventions available for students found at-risk through school-wide screenings. The school has established supplemental (Tier 2) services where appropriate for students struggling with academic skills. Those services may be delivered through small-group instruction or computer-assisted instruction. ♦ Tier 2 groups should be capped at 7 students. All students enrolled a given group should have a similar set of academic needs to allow them all to benefit from the same group intervention procedures. Instruction/interventions should be evidence-based. ♦ Tier 2 computer-assisted instruction should be evidence-based.				
Put into place a formal process for Tier 3 (RTI Team) referrals. The school has a defined process in place for referring students to the RTI Team. That referral process includes these elements: ♦ Student referrals can originate from a number of sources (e.g., classroom teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, guidance counselor, administration, parent, etc.). ♦ People who can refer students understand the profile of academic or behavioral concerns that warrant referring a student to the RTI Team. ♦ The school designates a small number of contact people (e.g., school social worker, school psychologist, guidance counselors, school administration) through whom student referrals are channeled.				

RTI/Secondary: Top Tasks for Implementing RTI at the Middle & High School Level	0 Work has not yet begun toward the goal	1 Work toward the goal has begun (Beginning Phase)	2 Progress has been made but the goal has not yet been attained (Intermediate Phase)	3 This goal has been accomplished (Advanced Phase)
My middle or high school has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Created consistent and fair policies throughout the school for homework assignments and acceptance of late work. Ideas to be considered for a schoolwide homework/late work policy include: ♦ Setting a reasonable cap on the amount that homework counts toward the course grade (e.g., 10-20 percent). ♦ Establishing guidelines across classrooms for the acceptance of late work, including penalties and conditions (such as illness) under which those penalties are to be waived. ♦ Requiring that all teachers hand out periodic (e.g., weekly) outlines detailing all upcoming classwork and homework assignments. ♦ Allowing the RTI Team latitude on a case-by-case basis to modify a student's homework expectations or allow an extension in the acceptance of late student work if evidence shows that the student has otherwise mastered essential course concepts (e.g., the student is passing quizzes and tests).				

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My middle or high school's **RTI Team** has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Adopted an efficient problem-solving model. The problem-solving team is a multi-disciplinary team that meets regularly to discuss student referrals. This 'RTI Team': ♦ Follows a consistent, structured problem-solving model. ♦ Schedules initial meetings to discuss student concerns and follow-up meetings to review student progress and judge whether the intervention plan was effective. ♦ Develops written intervention plans with sufficient detail to ensure that the intervention is implemented with fidelity across settings and people. ♦ Builds an 'intervention bank' of research-based intervention ideas for common student academic and behavioral concerns.				
Identified RTI-relevant existing (archival) data to be routinely brought to RTI Team meetings. The RTI Team surveys the data already collected and stored by the school (existing or 'archival' data') and decides (1) what specific data should routinely be brought to RTI Team meetings and (2) who is responsible for bringing it. Examples of data that would be useful at initial intervention team meetings include: ♦ Attendance records ♦ Current quiz, test, and homework grades ♦ Office disciplinary referral information.				

RTI/Secondary: Top Tasks for Implementing RTI at the Middle & High School Level	**0** Work has not yet begun toward the goal	**1** Work toward the goal has begun (Beginning Phase)	**2** Progress has been made but the goal has not yet been attained (Intermediate Phase)	**3** This goal has been accomplished (Advanced Phase)
My middle or high school's **RTI Team** has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Inventoried intervention resources available in the building or district for use by the RTI Team. The inventory should include: ♦ Formal programs or services available to at-risk students, ♦ Specific personnel with specialized training in academic or behavioral interventions (who can serve as consultants or coaches to teachers) ♦ Curriculum materials – including computer-assisted instructional or remedial programs—that can be included in student intervention plans when appropriate. Once inventoried, intervention resources should be organized into a list by presenting student concerns, with information about how each resource can be accessed by the RTI Team.				
Mapped adolescent and family services offered by local human-services agencies. Through the RTI Team or other vehicle, the school has: ♦ Surveyed the range of relevant agency services or programs offered in the community that target adolescents or families. ♦ Identified referral procedures and key contacts in local agencies to access their programs or services. ♦ Developed the capability (with agency and family/student agreement) to invite agency representatives to join the RTI Team in 'wrap-around' intervention-planning meetings.				

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My middle or high school's **RTI Team** has:	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Developed a process to train students to be self-advocating, self-managing learners. The school recognizes that students have important responsibilities in middle and high school interventions. To accomplish this goal, the school: ♦ Provides training to students in how to analyze their learning needs and advocate for those needs. ♦ Creates the expectation that students will be invited to RTI Team meetings when appropriate. ♦ Develops a student 'intervention contract' listing those elements of the intervention plan that require student participation--to ensure understanding and motivation for compliance.				
The capacity to monitor student progress during interventions. The RTI Team has the capacity using reliable, valid measures to track student progress in response to intervention plans and can make data-based decisions within several weeks whether those plans are effective.				

Paired Reading

Description: The student reads aloud in tandem with an accomplished reader. At a student signal, the helping reader stops reading, while the student continues on. When the student commits a reading error, the helping reader resumes reading in tandem.

Materials:

- Reading book

Preparation:

- The teacher, parent, adult tutor, or peer tutor working with the student should be trained in advance to use the paired-reading approach.

Intervention Script:

1. Sit with the student in a quiet location without too many distractions. Position the book selected for the reading session so that both you and the student can easily follow the text.

2. Say to the student, *"Now we are going to read aloud together for a little while. Whenever you want to read alone, just tap the back of my hand like this* [demonstrate] *and I will stop reading. If you come to a word you don't know, I will tell you the word and begin reading with you again."*

3. Begin reading aloud with the student. If the student misreads a word, point to the word and pronounce it. Then have the student repeat the word. When the student reads the word correctly, resume reading through the passage.

4. When the child delivers the appropriate signal (a hand tap), stop reading aloud and instead follow along silently as the student continues with oral reading. Be sure occasionally to praise the student in specific terms for good reading (e.g., "That was a hard word. You did a nice job sounding it out!").

5. If, while reading alone, the child either commits a reading error or hesitates for longer than 5 seconds, point to the error-word and pronounce it. Then tell the student to say the word. When the student pronounces the error-word correctly, begin reading aloud again in unison with the student.

6. Continue reading aloud with the student until he or she again signals to read alone.

Tips:

Paired reading is a highly structured but simple strategy that can easily be taught to others—including to school-age children and youth. If you have a pool of responsible older

students available you may want to create a cross-age peer tutoring program that uses paired reading as its central intervention. Or train parents to use this simple reading strategy when they read with their children at home.

References:

Topping, K. (1987). Paired reading: A powerful technique for parent use. *Reading Teacher, 40,* 608-614.

Reading Comprehension: Question-Generation

Description: Students are taught to boost their comprehension of expository passages by (1) locating the main idea or key ideas in the passage and (2) generating questions based on that information.

Reserve at least a full instructional session to introduce this comprehension strategy. (For effective-teaching tips, consult the guidelines presented in "*Introducing Academic Strategies to Students: A Direct-Instruction Approach*").

Materials:

- Overhead transparencies of practice reading passages, transparency markers
- Student copies of practice reading passages (optional) or reading/text books

Preparation:

- Prepare overheads of sample passages.

Intervention Script:

1. Introduce this strategy to the class:

   A. Locating Explicit Main Idea: Tell students that some passages have summary sentences that state the main idea or "gist" of the paragraph or passage. Using examples of passages with explicit main ideas, train students to identify and underline main-idea sentences.

   B. Finding Key Facts. In some passages, the main idea is implied rather than explicitly stated. Readers must first identify the key facts or ideas of the passage before they can summarize the passage's main idea.

      Using examples of passages with implied main ideas, locate and circle key facts or ideas. Describe to students how you distinguished this central information from less important details. Have students practice this skill on additional practice passages.

   C. Writing a "Gist" Sentence. Show students a passage with an implied main idea. Circle all key ideas or facts. Demonstrate how to write a "gist" sentence (one that is built from the identified key ideas and summarizes the paragraph's main idea). Emphasize that the reader may have link information from different sections of the passage to build a gist sentence. Have students practice this skill on additional practice passages.

   D. Generating Questions. Tell students that careful readers often construct questions about what they are reading to help them learn. Put up a list of 'signal words' that can be used as question-starters: e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how. Using sample passages, show students how to convert

explicit main-idea sentences or reader-created "gist" sentences into questions. Point out that these questions can be a good study tool because they are linked to answers that the student has already located in the passage.

2. Give students selected practice passages and instruct them to apply the full question-generation strategy. Provide feedback and encouragement as needed.

Tips:

Use "Gist" Sentences to Organize Student Research Notes. When students are writing research papers, they often find it challenging to synthesize their scattered research notes into an orderly outline with sequentially presented main ideas. Students who have mastered the skill of assembling key ideas into "gist" sentences can identify their most important research notes, copy these notes individually onto index cards, and group cards with related notes. The student can then write a single "gist" sentence for each pile of note cards and use these sentences as the starting point for a paper outline.

Collect Exemplary Examples of Student-Generated Questions as Study Aids. If your class is using an assigned textbook, you may want to collect well-written student-generated questions and share them with other students. Or assign students different sections of an article or book chapter and require that they 'teach' the content by presenting their text-generated questions and sharing the correct answers.

Select Student Questions As Quiz or Test Items. You can build classroom interest (and competition!) in using this question-generation strategy by occasionally using one or more student text-questions as quiz or test items.

References:

Davey, B., & McBride, S. (1986). Effects of question-generation training on reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *78*, 256-262.

Rosenshine, B., Meister, C., & Chapman, S. (1996). Teaching students to generate questions: A review of the intervention studies. *Review of Educational Research*, *66*, 181-221.

Sentence Combining: Teaching Rules of Sentence Structure by Doing

Students with poor writing skills often write sentences that lack 'syntactic maturity' (Robinson & Howell, 2008). That is, these writers' sentences often follow a simple, stereotyped format. In public schools, grammar skills have traditionally been taught in isolation to give students the advanced writing knowledge required to master a diverse range of sentence structures. However, isolated grammar instruction appears to have little or no positive impact in helping poor writers become better writers (Graham & Perin, 2007). A promising alternative is to use sentence combining (Graham & Perin, 2007; Strong, 1986). In this approach, students are presented with kernel sentences and given explicit instruction in how to weld these kernel sentences into more diverse sentence types either by using connecting words to combine multiple sentences into one or by isolating key information from an otherwise superfluous sentence and embedding that important information into the base sentence.

In a simple demonstration of sentence combining, a student may generate these two sentences in her composition on the American Revolution: *The American army had few supplies in the winter of 1776. The American army had few trained military leaders.*

The instructor might meet with the student and have the student recopy the two sentences in this format:

> The American army had few supplies in the winter of 1776.
> The American army had few trained military leaders. (and)

The student would be encouraged to combine the two shorter sentences into a more comprehensive sentence by using the connecting word (coordinating conjunction) '*and'* to combine objects: *The American army had few supplies and few trained military leaders in the winter of 1776.*

Formatting Sentence Combining Examples

These simple formatting conventions are used in sentence-combining exercises (Saddler, 2005; Strong, 1986):

- In each example, the base clause (sentence) appears first. Any sentence(s) to be combined or embedded with the base clause appear below that base clause.

  Example: **Base clause:** The dog ran after the bus.
  Sentence to be embedded: The dog is <u>yellow</u>.
  Student-Generated Solution: *The yellow dog ran after the bus.*

- 'Connecting words' to be used as a sentence-combining tool appear in parentheses at the end of a sentence that is to be combined with the base clause.

  Example: **Base clause:** The car stalled.
  Sentence to be combined: The car ran out of gas. (because)
  Student-Generated Solution: *The car stalled because it ran out of gas.*

- The element(s) of any sentence to be embedded in the base clause are underlined.

  Example: **Base clause:** The economic forecast resulted in strong stock market gains.
  Sentence to be embedded: The economic forecast was upbeat.
  Student-Generated Solution: *The upbeat economic forecast resulted in strong stock market gains.*

Using Sentence Combining in Instruction

Teachers who use sentence combining in their writing instruction should follow a direct-instruction approach (Saddler, 2005). The instructor fosters a learning atmosphere that encourages students to take risks when participating in sentence-combining activities. When first introducing sentence-combining to the class, the instructor explains that using varied sentence structures helps writers to better convey meaning. The instructor tells students that there are often multiple correct ways to combine sentences. The instructor completes several sentence-combining examples in front of the group, using a think-aloud approach to show his or her thinking process in successfully combining sentences. Students should then complete sentence-combining examples in pairs or groups, with the instructor circulating through the class to check for student understanding. Eventually, students work independently on sentence combining tasks to demonstrate mastery. They may then be asked to look in their own writing for examples in which they could combine sentences to improve

A listing of types and examples of sentence-combining appears below in Table 1. When creating lessons on sentence combining, instructors should review the potential types of sentence-combining in Table 1 and decide the order in which those types might be presented to their class.

Table 1: Sentence-combining types and examples (Saddler, 2005; Strong, 1986)

Type of Sentence	Sentence Combining Example
Multiple (Compound) Sentence Subjects or Objects: Two or more subjects can be combined with a conjunction (e.g., *or*, *and*). Two or more direct or indirect objects can be combined with a conjunction (e.g., *or*, *and*).	• Skyscrapers in the city were damaged in the hurricane. Bridges in the city were damaged in the hurricane. *Skyscrapers and bridges in the city were damaged in the hurricane.* • When they travel, migratory birds need safe habitat. When they travel, migratory birds need regular supplies of food. *When they travel, migratory birds need safe habitat and regular supplies of food.*
Adjectives & Adverbs: When a sentence simply contains an adjective or adverb that modifies the noun or verb of another sentence, the adjective or adverb from the first sentence can be embedded in the related sentence.	• Dry regions are at risk for chronic water shortages. Overpopulated regions are at risk for chronic water shortages. *Dry and overpopulated regions are at risk for chronic water shortages.* • Health care costs have risen nationwide. Those health care costs have risen quickly. *Health care costs have risen quickly nationwide.*

Connecting Words: One or more sentences are combined with connecting words. Coordinating conjunctions (e.g., *and, but*) link sentences on an equal basis. Subordinating conjunctions (e.g., *after, until, unless, before, while, because*) link sentences with one of the sentences subordinate or dependent on the other.	• The house was falling apart. No one seemed to care. (but) *The house was falling apart, but no one seemed to care.* • The glaciers began to melt. The earth's average temperature increased. (because) *The glaciers began to melt because the earth's average temperature increased.*
Relative Clauses: Sentence contains an embedded, subordinate clause that modifies a noun.	• The artist was the most popular in the city. The artist painted watercolors of sunsets. (who) *The artist who painted watercolors of sunsets was the most popular in the city.*
Appositives: Sentence contains two noun phrases that refer to the same object. When two sentences refer to the same noun, one sentence be reduced to an appositive and embedded in the other sentence.	• The explorer paddled the kayak across the raging river. The explorer was <u>an expert in handling boats</u>. *The explorer, an expert in handling boats, paddled the kayak across the raging river.*
Possessive Nouns: A sentence that describes possession or ownership can be reduced to a possessive noun and embedded in another sentence.	• Some historians view the Louisiana Purchase as the most important expansion of United States territory. The Louisiana Purchase was <u>President Jefferson's</u> achievement. *Some historians view President Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase as the most important expansion of United States territory.*

References

Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC Alliance for Excellent Education.

Robinson, L. K., & Howell, K. W. (2008). Best practices in curriculum-based evaluation & written expression. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), Best practices in school psychology V (pp. 439-452). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Saddler, B. (2005). Sentence combining: A sentence-level writing intervention. *The Reading Teacher, 58,* 468-471.

Strong, W. (1986). *Creative approaches to sentence combining.* Urbana, OL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skill & National Council of Teachers of English.

'Academic Enabler' Observational Checklists: Measuring Students' Ability to Manage Their Own Learning

Student academic success requires more than content knowledge or mastery of a collection of cognitive strategies. Academic accomplishment depends also on a set of ancillary skills and attributes called 'academic enablers' (DiPerna, 2006). Examples of academic enablers include:

- Study skills
- Homework completion
- Cooperative learning skills
- Organization
- Independent seatwork

Because academic enablers are often described as broad skill sets, however, they can be challenging to define in clear, specific, measureable terms. A useful method for defining a global academic enabling skill is to break it down into a checklist of component sub-skills--a process known as 'discrete categorization' (Kazdin, 1989). An observer can then use the checklist to note whether a student successfully displays each of the sub-skills.

Observational checklists that define academic enabling skills have several uses in Response to Intervention:

- Classroom teachers can use these skills checklists as convenient tools to assess whether a student possesses the minimum 'starter set' of academic enabling skills needed for classroom success.

- Teachers or tutors can share examples of academic-enabler skills checklists with students, training them in each of the sub-skills and encouraging them to use the checklists independently to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

- Teachers or other observers can use the academic enabler checklists periodically to monitor student progress during interventions--assessing formatively whether the student is using more of the sub-skills.

A collection of the most common global 'academic enabler' skills in ready-made checklist format appear below.

Study Skills. The student:			
❑ takes complete, organized class notes in legible form and maintains them in one accessible note book	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ reviews class notes frequently (e.g., after each class) to ensure understanding	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ When reviewing notes, uses highlighters, margin notes, or other strategies to note questions or areas of confusion for later review with teacher or tutor	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ follows an efficient strategy to study for tests and quizzes	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ allocates enough time to study for tests and quizzes	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ is willing to seek help from the teacher to answer questions or clear up areas of confusion	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____			
Comments: _____ _____			

Organization Skills. The student:			
❑ arrives to class on time.	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ maintains organization of locker to allow student to efficiently store and retrieve needed books, assignments, work materials, and personal belongings	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ maintains organization of backpack or book bag to allow student to efficiently store and retrieve needed books, assignments, work materials, and personal belongings	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ brings to class the necessary work materials expected for the course (e.g., pen, paper, calculator, etc.)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ is efficient in switching work materials when transitioning from one in-class learning activity to another	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
Comments: _____ _____			

Homework Completion. The student:			
❑ writes down homework assignments accurately and completely	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ makes use of available time in school (e.g., study halls, homeroom) to work on homework	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ has an organized, non-distracting workspace available at home to do homework	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ creates a work plan before starting homework (e.g., sequencing the order in which assignments are to be completed; selecting the most challenging assignment to start first when energy and concentration are highest)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ when completing homework, uses highlighters, margin notes, or other strategies to note questions or areas of confusion for later review with teacher or tutor	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ turns in homework on time	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
Comments: _____ _____			

Cooperative Learning Skills. The student:			
❑ participates in class discussion	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ gets along with others during group/pair activities	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ participates fully in group/pair activities	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ does his or her 'fair share' of work during group/pair activities	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ is willing to take a leadership position during group/pair activities	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
Comments: _____ _____			

Independent Seat Work. The student:			
❑ has necessary work materials for the assignment	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ is on-task during the assignment at a level typical for students in the class	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ refrains from distracting behaviors (e.g., talking with peers without permission, pen tapping, vocalizations such as loud sighs or mumbling, etc.)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ recognizes when he or she needs teacher assistance and is willing to that assistance	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ requests teacher assistance in an appropriate manner	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ requests assistance from the teacher only when really needed	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ if finished with the independent assignment before time expires, uses remaining time to check work or engage in other academic activity allowed by teacher	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ takes care in completing work—as evidenced by the quality of the finished assignment	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ is reliable in turning in assignments done in class.	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
Comments: _____ _____			

Motivation. The student:			
❑ has a positive sense of 'self-efficacy' about the academic content area (self-efficacy can be defined as the confidence that one can be successful in the academic discipline or subject matter if one puts forth reasonable effort)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ displays some apparent *intrinsic* motivation to engage in course work (e.g., is motivated by topics and subject matter discussed or covered in the course; finds the act of working on course assignments to be reinforcing in its own right)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ displays apparent *extrinsic* motivation to engage in course work (e.g., is motivated by grades, praise, public recognition of achievement, access to privileges such as sports eligibility, or other rewarding outcomes)	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
❑ Other: _____	Poor Fair 1 2	Good 3	NA –
Comments: _____ _____			

Teacher-Defined Academic Enabling Skill:

Skill Name: _____

Essential Subskills: The student::

❑ _____ _____ _____	Poor Fair Good NA 1 2 3 –
❑ _____ _____ _____	Poor Fair Good NA 1 2 3 –
❑ _____ _____ _____	Poor Fair Good NA 1 2 3 –
❑ _____ _____ _____	Poor Fair Good NA 1 2 3
❑ _____ _____ _____	Poor Fair Good NA 1 2 3

Comments:

_____

_____

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Behavior Intervention Checklist: Foundation Tier 1 Behavior Management Strategies

Directions: The checklist below contains evidence-based strategies for managing classrooms and for increasing compliance with individual students. When observing a class, use the checklist to verify that effective strategies were in use.

- If specific strategies were observed, check 'Y' in the 'Observed?' column.
- Write any important observation comments in the 'Notes' column.
- If a particular management strategy is missing and appears to be critical to student success, check the 'Critical Item?' column for that strategy.

Whole-Group Management Strategies			
The strategies that teacher use proactively to manage the classroom can head off many behavior problems before they occur.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	**Post Positive Class Rules.** The classroom has a set of 3-8 rules or behavioral expectations posted. When possible, those rules are stated in positive terms as 'goal' behaviors (e.g. 'Students participate in learning activities without distracting others from learning') (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)..		☐
__Y __N	**Train Students in Basic Class Routines.** The teacher has clearly established routines to deal with common classroom activities (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). These routines include but are not limited to: ☐ Engaging students in meaningful academic activities at the start of class (e.g., using bell-ringer activities) ☐ Assigning and collecting homework and classwork ☐ Transitioning students efficiently between activities ☐ Independent seatwork and cooperative learning groups ☐ Students leaving and reentering the classroom ☐ Dismissing students at the end of the period		☐
__Y __N	**Scan the Class Frequently and Proactively Intervene When Needed.** The teacher 'scans' the classroom frequently—during whole-group instruction, cooperative learning activities, and independent seatwork. The teacher strategically and proactively recognizes positive behaviors while redirecting students who are off-task (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). .		☐
__Y __N	**Use Brief Group Prompts.** The teacher gives brief reminders of expected behaviors at the 'point of performance'—the time when students will most benefit from them (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). To prevent student call-outs, for example, a teacher may use a structured prompt such as: "When I ask this question, I will give the class 10 seconds to think of your best answer. Then I will call on one student."		☐

Instructional Delivery			
Teachers who accommodate, engage all learners in meaningful academic activities can prevent behavior problems.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	**Avoid Instructional 'Dead Time'.** The teacher presents an organized lesson, with instruction moving briskly. There are no significant periods of 'dead time' (e.g., during roll-taking or transitioning between activities) when student misbehavior can start (Carnine, 1976; Gettinger & Ball, 2008).		☐
__Y __N	**Incorporate Effective Instructional Elements into All Lessons.** The teacher's lesson and instructional activities include these elements (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008): ☐ *Instructional match.* Students are placed in work that provides them with an appropriate level of challenge (not too easy and not too difficult). ☐ *Explicit instruction.* The teacher delivers instruction using modeling, demonstration, supervised student practice, etc. ☐ *Active student engagement.* There are sufficient opportunities during the lesson for students to be actively engaged and 'show what they know'. ☐ *Timely performance feedback.* Students receive feedback about their performance on independent seatwork, as well as whole-group and small-group activities.		☐
__Y __N	**Give Clear Directions.** When delivering directions to the class, the teacher uses strategies that increase the likelihood that all students hear and clearly understand them (Ford, Olmi, Edwards, & Tingstrom, 2001). For large groups, such strategies might include using a general alerting cue (e.g., 'Eyes and ears on me') and ensuring general group focus before giving directions. Multi-step directions are posted for later student review. For individual students, the teacher may make eye contact with the student before giving directions and ask the student to repeat those directions before starting the assignment.		☐

Strategies for Working With Individual Students			
While teachers can never predict what behaviors students might bring into their classrooms, these instructors will usually achieve the best outcomes by remaining calm, following pre-planned intervention strategies for misbehavior, and acting with consistency and fairness when intervening with or disciplining students.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	**Prepare a Range of Appropriate Classroom Consequences for Misbehavior.** The teacher has a continuum of classroom-based consequences for misbehavior (e.g., redirect the student; have a brief private conference with the student; remove classroom privileges; send the student to another classroom for a brief timeout) that are used before the teacher considers administrative removal of the student from the classroom (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)..		☐

__Y __N	**Select Behavior Management Strategies Based on Student Need.** The teacher is able flexibly to select different behavior management strategies for use with different students, demonstrating their understanding that one type of intervention strategy cannot be expected to work with all students. (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003)		☐
__Y __N	**Employ Proximity Control**. The teacher circulates through the classroom periodically, using physical proximity to increase student attention to task and general compliance (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004).		☐
__Y __N	**Ask Open-Ended Questions.** The teacher asks neutral, open-ended questions to collect more information before responding to a student who is upset or appears confrontational (Lanceley, 1999). The teacher can pose 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', and 'how' questions to more fully understand the problem situation and identify possible solutions (e.g., "What do you think made you angry when you were talking with Billy?"). Teachers should avoid asking 'why" questions because they can imply that the teacher is blaming the student.		☐
__Y __N	**Use Proactive 'Soft Reprimands'**. The teacher gives a brief, gentle signal to direct back to task any students who is just beginning to show signs of misbehavior or non-compliance (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). These 'soft' reprimands can be verbal (a quiet word to the student) or non-verbal (a significant look). If a soft reprimand is not sufficient to curb the student's behaviors, the teacher may pull the student aside for a private problem-solving conversation or implement appropriate disciplinary consequences.		☐
__Y __N	**Keep Responses Calm and Brief.** The teacher responds to provocative or confrontational students in a 'neutral', business-like, calm voice and keeps responses brief (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002; Walker & Walker, 1991). The teacher avoids getting 'hooked' into a discussion or argument with that student. Instead the teacher repeats the request calmly and—if necessary-- imposes a pre-determined consequence for noncompliance.		☐
__Y __N	**Emphasize the Positive in Teacher Requests.** Whenever possible, the teacher states requests to individual students in positive terms (e.g., "I will be over to help you on the assignment just as soon as you return to your seat") rather than with a negative spin (e.g., "I won't help you with your assignment until you return to your seat."). When an instructor's request has a positive 'spin', that teacher is less likely to trigger a power struggle and more likely to gain student compliance (Braithwaite, 2001).		☐

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Response to Intervention

The RTI Model: An Overview for Educators

Jim Wright
www.interventioncentral.org

www.interventioncentral.org

Response to Intervention

School Instructional Time: The Irreplaceable Resource

"In the average school system, there are 330 minutes in the instructional day, 1,650 minutes in the instructional week, and 56,700 minutes in the instructional year. Except in unusual circumstances, these are the only minutes we have to provide effective services for students. The number of years we have to apply these minutes is fixed. Therefore, each minute counts and schools cannot afford to support inefficient models of service delivery." p. 177

Source: Batsche, G. M., Castillo, J. M., Dixon, D. N., & Forde, S. (2008). Best practices in problem analysis. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), Best practices in school psychology V (pp. 177-193).

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Response to Intervention

RTI Assumption: Struggling Students Are 'Typical' Until Proven Otherwise…

RTI logic assumes that:

- A student who begins to struggle in general education is *typical*, and that
- It is general education's responsibility to find the instructional strategies that will unlock the student's learning potential

Only when the student shows through well-documented interventions that he or she has 'failed to respond to intervention' does RTI begin to investigate the possibility that the student may have a learning disability or other special education condition.

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Response to Intervention

Five Core Components of RTI Service Delivery

1. Student services are arranged in a multi-tier model
2. Data are collected to assess student baseline levels and to make decisions about student progress
3. Interventions are 'evidence-based'
4. The 'procedural integrity' of interventions is measured
5. RTI is implemented and developed at the school- and district-level to be scalable and sustainable over time

Source: Glover, T. A., & DiPerna, J. C. (2007). Service delivery for response to intervention: Core components and directions for future research. *School Psychology Review, 36*, 526-540.

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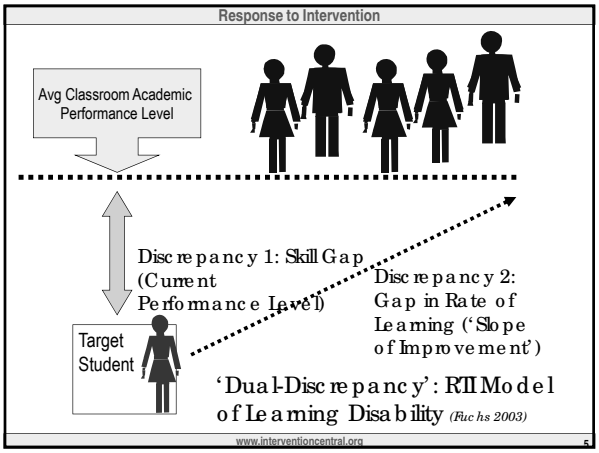
Response to Intervention



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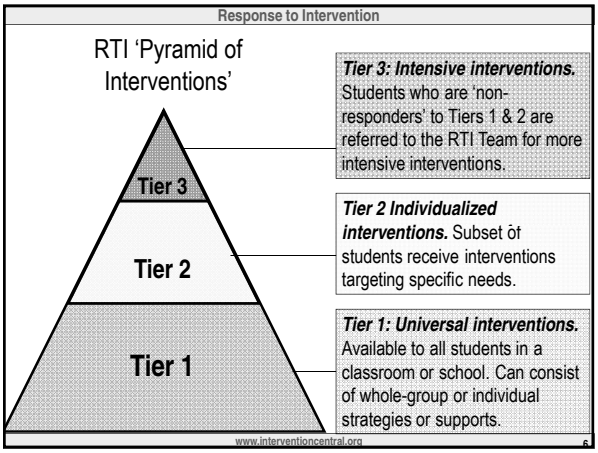
Response to Intervention



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Response to Intervention

Tier 1 Core Instruction

Tier I core instruction:

- Is universal—available to all students.
- Can be delivered within classrooms or throughout the school.
- Is an ongoing process of developing strong classroom instructional practices to reach the largest number of struggling learners.

All children have access to Tier 1 instruction/interventions. Teachers have the capability to use those strategies without requiring outside assistance.

Tier 1 instruction encompasses:

- The school's core curriculum.
- Al published or teacher-made materials used to deliver that curriculum.
- Teacher use of 'whole-group' teaching & management strategies.

Tier I instruction addresses this question: *Are strong classroom instructional strategies sufficient to help the student to achieve academic success?*

Response to Intervention

Tier I (Classroom) Intervention

Tier 1 intervention:

- Targets 'red flag' students who are not successful with core instruction alone.
- Uses 'evidence-based' strategies to address student academic or behavioral concerns.
- Must be feasible to implement given the resources available in the classroom.

Tier I intervention addresses the question: *Does the student make adequate progress when the instructor uses specific academic or behavioral strategies matched to the presenting concern?*

Response to Intervention

Classroom Intervention Planning Sheet

Teacher/Team: _____ Date: _____ Student: _____

Student Problem Definition #1: _____

Student Problem Definition #2: _____

[Optional] Person(s) assisting with intervention planning process: _____

Interventions: Essential Elements (Witt et al., 2004):
- Clear problem-definition(s)
- Baseline data
- Goal for improvement
- Progress-monitoring plan

Intervention Description	Intervention Delivery	Check-Up Date	Assessment Data
Describe each intervention that you plan to use to address the student's concern(s).	List key details about delivery of the intervention, such as:; (1) where & when the intervention will be used; (2) the adult-to-student ratio; (3) how frequently the intervention will take place; (4) the length of time each session of the intervention will last.	Select a date when the data will be reviewed to evaluate the intervention.	Note what classroom data will be used to establish baseline , set a goal for improvement, and track the student's progress during this intervention.
			Type(s) of Data to Be Used:
			Baseline / Goal by Check-Up
			Type(s) of Data to Be Used:
			Baseline / Goal by Check-Up
			Type(s) of Data to Be Used:
			Baseline / Goal by Check-Up

Witt, J. C., VanDerHeyden, A. M., & Gilbertson, D. (2004). Troubleshooting behavioral interventions: A systematic process for finding and eliminating problems. *School Psychology Review, 33*, 363-383.

Response to Intervention

Tier 2: Supplemental (Group-Based) Interventions (Standard Treatment Protocol)

Tier 2 interventions are typically delivered in small-group format. About 15% of students in the typical school will require Tier 2/supplemental intervention support. Group size for Tier 2 interventions is limited to 4-7 students.

Students placed in Tier 2 interventions should have a shared profile of intervention need.

Programs or practices used in Tier 2 interventions should be 'evidence-based'.

The progress of students in Tier 2 interventions are monitored at least 1-2 times per month.

Source: Burns, M. K., & Gibbons, K. A. (2008). *Implementing response-to-intervention in elementary and secondary schools.* Routledge: New York.

Response to Intervention

Group-Based Tier 2 Services: How Much Time Should Be Allocated?

Emerging guidelines drawn largely from reading research suggest that standard protocol interventions should consist of at least three to five 30-minute sessions per week, in a group size not to exceed 7 students. Standard protocol interventions should also supplement, rather than replace, core instruction taking place in the classroom.

Sources: Burns, Al Otaiba, S. & Torgesen, J. (2007). Effects from intensive standardized kindergarten and first-grade interventions for the prevention of reading difficulties. In S. R. Jimerson, M. K. Burns, & A. M. VanDerHeyden (Eds.), Response to intervention: The science and practice of assessment and intervention (pp. 212-222).

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Response to Intervention

Scheduling Elementary Tier 2 Interventions

Option 3: ***'Floating RTI':Gradewide Shared Schedule***. Each grade has a scheduled RTI time across classrooms. No two grades share the same RTI time. Advantages are that outside providers can move from grade to grade providing push-in or pull-out services and that students can be grouped by need across different teachers within the grade.

Anyplace Elementary School: RTI Daily Schedule

Grade K	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*9:00-9:30*
Grade 1	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*9:45-10:15*
Grade 2	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*10:30-11:00*
Grade 3	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*12:30-1:00*
Grade 4	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*1:15-1:45*
Grade 5	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Classroom 3	*2:00-2:30*

Source: Burns, M. K., & Gibbons, K. A. (2008). Implementing response-to-intervention in elementary and secondary schools: Procedures to assure scientific-based practices. New York: Routledge.

Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Interventions (Problem-Solving Model)

Tier 3 interventions are the most intensive offered in a school setting. About 5 % of a general-education student population may qualify for Tier 3 supports. Typically, the RTI Problem-Solving Team meets to develop intervention plans for Tier 3 students.

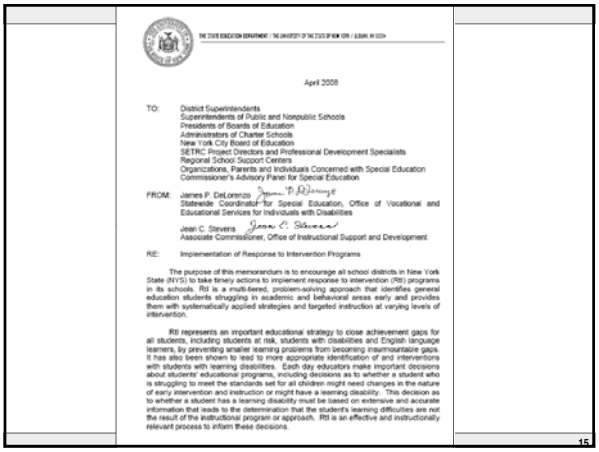
Students qualify for Tier 3 interventions because:

- they are found to have a large skill gap when compared to their class or grade peers; and/or
- They did not respond to interventions provided previously at Tiers 1 & 2.

Tier 3 interventions are provided daily for sessions of at least 30 minutes. The student-teacher ratio is flexible but should allow the student to receive intensive, individualized instruction. The academic or behavioral progress of students in Tier 3 interventions is monitored at least weekly.

Source: Burns, M. K., & Gibbons, K. A. (2008). *Implementing response-to-intervention in elementary and secondary schools.* Routledge: New York.

NYSED RTI Guidance Memo: April 2008



April 2008

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Presidents of Boards of Education
Administrators of Charter Schools
New York City Board of Education
SETRC Project Directors and Professional Development Specialists
Regional School Support Centers
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education
Commissioner's Advisory Panel for Special Education

FROM: James P. DeLorenzo
Statewide Coordinator for Special Education, Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

Jean C. Stevens
Associate Commissioner, Office of Instructional Support and Development

RE: Implementation of Response to Intervention Programs

The purpose of this memorandum is to encourage all school districts in New York State (NYS) to take timely actions to implement response to intervention (RtI) programs in its schools. RtI is a multi-tiered, problem-solving approach that identifies general education students struggling in academic and behavioral areas early and provides them with systematically applied strategies and targeted instruction at varying levels of intervention.

RtI represents an important educational strategy to close achievement gaps for all students, including students at risk, students with disabilities and English language learners, by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps. It has also been shown to lead to more appropriate identification of and interventions with students with learning disabilities. Each day educators make important decisions about students' educational programs, including decisions as to whether a student who is struggling to meet the standards set for all children might need changes in the nature of early intervention and instruction or might have a learning disability. This decision as to whether a student has a learning disability must be based on extensive and accurate information that leads to the determination that the student's learning difficulties are not the result of the instructional program or approach. RtI is an effective and instructionally relevant process to inform these decisions.

"The Regents policy framework for RtI:
Defines RtI to minimally include:

Appropriate instruction *delivered to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel. Appropriate instruction in reading means scientific research-based reading programs that include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies.*

Screenings *applied to all students in the class to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates."*

*"**Instruction** matched to student need with increasingly intensive levels of targeted intervention and instruction for students who do not make satisfactory progress in their levels of performance and/or in their rate of learning to meet age or grade level standards.*

Repeated assessments *of student achievement which should include curriculum based measures to determine if interventions are resulting in student progress toward age or grade level standards.*

The application of information *about the student's response to intervention to make educational decisions about changes in goals, instruction and/or services and the decision to make a referral for special education programs and/or services."*

*"**Written notification** to the parents when the student requires an intervention beyond that provided to all students in the general education classroom that provides information about the:*
-amount and nature of student performance data that will be collected and the general education services that will be provided;
-strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
-parents' right to request an evaluation for special education programs and/or services."

"The Regents policy framework for RtI:
Defines RtI to minimally include:
Requires each school district to establish a plan and policies for implementing school-wide approaches and prereferral interventions in order to remediate a student's performance prior to referral for special education, which may include the RtI process as part of a district's school-wide approach. The school district must select and define the specific structure and components of its RtI program, including, but not limited to the:
-criteria for determining the levels of intervention to be provided to students,
-types of interventions,
amount and nature of student performance data to be collected, and
-manner and frequency for progress monitoring."

Recommended RTI Websites

- New York State RTI Technical Assistance Center: www.nysrti.org
- National Center on RTI: www.rti4success.org