

Response to Intervention is a framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs.

We believe that...

- ALL children can learn and achieve high standards as a result of effective teaching.
- All children must have access to a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and research-based instruction.
- Intervening at the earliest indication of need is necessary for student success (Pre K–12).
- A comprehensive system of tiered interventions is essential for addressing the full range of student needs.
- Student results improve when ongoing academic and behavioral performance data inform instructional decisions.
- Collaboration among educators, families and community members is the foundation for effective problem-solving and instructional decision-making.
- On-going and meaningful involvement of families increases student success.
- All members of the school community must continue to gain knowledge and develop expertise in order to build capacity and sustainability of RtI.
- Effective leadership at all levels is crucial for the implementation of RtI.

Response to Intervention Philosophy

Context

Response-to-Intervention (RtI) is a schoolwide model that allows for the use of resources, such as curriculum, personnel, etc. for students in need of academic and/or behavioral support. RtI provides a seamless system of interventions and resources which allows students to make significant progress whether they are at-risk for failure or are gifted and talented students not meeting their full potential. Although Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 encourages utilizing the RtI process as an alternative approach for the identification of students for special education services, the intent of the process is much more significant than eligibility alone. More importantly, RtI use strategies such as assessing all students regularly and inform the instructional decisions teachers make, flexible use of building personnel with students, as well as encouraging staff and parents to work together to enhance all students' performance.

Philosophy

When school personnel establish supports and services for ALL at varying levels, students are more likely to experience success academically and behaviorally.

RtI defines a process whereby students access appropriate levels of support and intervention, given their academic and/or behavioral needs. Moreover, RtI is effective only through team problem-solving approach to identify student needs, target instruction, assess students to measure progress as a result of the instruction, as well as to monitor how well instruction is provided. The RtI process requires the involvement of the classroom teacher, parent(s), student (where appropriate), and building specialists (e.g., curriculum leaders, special education teachers, ELL teachers, Title I teachers, counselors, gifted and talented specialists, speech therapists, school psychologists, school social workers, building leaders). **The ultimate purpose of RtI is not to determine if a student qualifies for special education, but rather, to enhance the success of students with a variety of academic and/or behavior needs.**

Components:

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) recognizes six areas significant to RtI implementation: 1) Leadership, 2) Curriculum and Instruction, 3) School Climate and Culture, 4) Problem-Solving Process, 5) Assessment, and 6) Family and Community Involvement.

Six Components of Response to Intervention

1). Leadership

Leadership at the state, district, and building level is crucial to the fidelity of RtI implementation. RtI is a significant change that affects the entire educational system. Initially district level administrators must understand and embrace the essential components and supports needed to effectively implement RtI. Administrators must prioritize resource allocation to support the effort, as well as offer professional development to school staffs on the philosophical underpinnings of RtI. Staff development on the RtI philosophy will help establish and promote consistency among districts and schools that is imperative for successful implementation. Additionally, superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, special education administrators, etc. must guide the implementation of RtI by developing leadership roles and expectations for district and building administrators. Because of the broad impact of the RtI Model and its impact on the entire educational system, significant systemic changes will need to occur to execute implementation with fidelity. These changes must be championed and monitored by leaders at all levels.

2). Curriculum and Instruction

The RtI Model is a three-tiered system designed to meet the needs of ALL students. Curriculum, based on the state standards, and quality instruction are essential for student success.

THE THREE TIERS ARE:

Tier I instruction includes high quality, research-based curricula and instructional strategies that support the district's curriculum guidelines. Tier I provides core instruction for all students. Flexible grouping that targets specific skills are included so that the instructional goals of all students can be met.

Tier II offers supplemental instruction in addition to the standards-based curriculum received in Tier I. The curriculum and instruction at Tier II is designed to meet the needs of students not progressing as expected in Tier I.

Tier III instruction includes more explicit instruction that is focused on a specific skill need, whether that be an accelerated need or a remedial need.

3). School Climate and Culture

The core principles of a multi-tiered RtI model support and embrace positive school climate within all school settings. Positive school climate depends on four essential elements:

1. creating a caring school community
2. teaching appropriate behavior and social problem-solving skills
3. implementing positive behavior support (PBS) and
4. providing rigorous academic instruction

Essentially, a positive school climate provides the foundation on which instruction will occur and all students will be engaged in learning. A positive school climate is observed when key elements are solidly in place. These include:

- Defining and consistently teaching expectations of behavior for students, parents and educators;
- Students and adults are acknowledged and recognized consistently for appropriate behaviors;
- Behavioral and instructional errors are monitored, corrected, or re-taught;
- Teachers are engaged in a collaborative team problem-solving process using data to design instruction and behavior intervention plans;
- Families are included in a culturally-sensitive, solution-focused approach to support student learning.

4). Problem-Solving Process

The purpose of the problem-solving process is to assist the classroom teacher and parents in designing and selecting strategies for improving student academic and/or behavioral performance. The purpose of the problem-solving process is to develop academic and behavior intervention strategies that have a high probability of success. It provides a structure for addressing the academic and/or behavioral concerns identified by teachers or parents. A problem-solving process requires full collaboration among a team of professionals along with parents to identify a specific, measurable outcome and to design research-based interventions to address the concerns. The system must integrate the use of data, both to guide the development of effective

interventions and to provide frequent monitoring of progress. The process includes ensuring interventions are implemented with fidelity. Family engagement in the process is vital to ensure all information that might impact success is considered.

5) Assessment

A major feature of the RTI Model is its use of data to drive the decision-making process—at the individual student, classroom, and school levels. To support RTI's fluid approach, reliable and ongoing information must be available to:

- Identify academic and behavioral needs of individual students,
- Inform the problem-solving process,
- Design and modify instruction to meet student needs,
- Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction at different levels, of the system (e.g., classroom, school, district)

An effective assessment plan has four main objectives:

- 1) To identify students at the beginning of the year who are at-risk or who are experiencing difficulties and who may need extra instruction or intensive interventions if they are to progress toward grade-level standards by the end of the year, as well as students who have reached benchmarks and who need to be challenged.
- 2) To monitor students' progress during the year to determine whether at-risk students are making adequate progress in critical skills and to identify any students who may be falling behind or need to be challenged.
- 3) To inform instructional planning in order to meet the most critical needs of individual students.
- 4) To evaluate whether the instruction or intervention provided is powerful enough to help all students achieve grade-level standards by the end of each year.

The four objectives outlined above can be achieved through four types of assessments during the school year: 1) screening, 2) progress monitoring, 3) diagnostic, and 4) outcome. They correspond roughly to the four objectives above, but all can contribute in helping plan effective instruction and interventions.

Screening Assessments

Screening assessments are quick and efficient measures of overall ability and critical skills known to be strong indicators that predict student performance. Administered to all students as an initial baseline, these assessments help to identify students who do not meet or who exceed grade level expectations.

Progress Monitoring Assessments

Progress monitoring assessments are also brief, but are given periodically to determine whether students are making adequate progress. Progress monitoring assessment data should be collected, evaluated, and used on an ongoing basis for the following purposes:

- Determine rate of a student's progress,
- Provide information on the effectiveness of instruction and to modify the intervention if necessary,
- Identify the need for additional information,
- Analyze and interpret gaps between benchmarks and achievement.

Diagnostic Assessments

While relatively lengthy, diagnostic assessments provide an in-depth, reliable assessment of targeted skills. Their major purpose is to provide information for planning more effective instruction and interventions. Diagnostic assessments should be given when there is a clear expectation that they will offer new or more reliable information about a student's academic or behavioral needs that can be used to help plan more powerful instruction or interventions.

Outcome Assessments

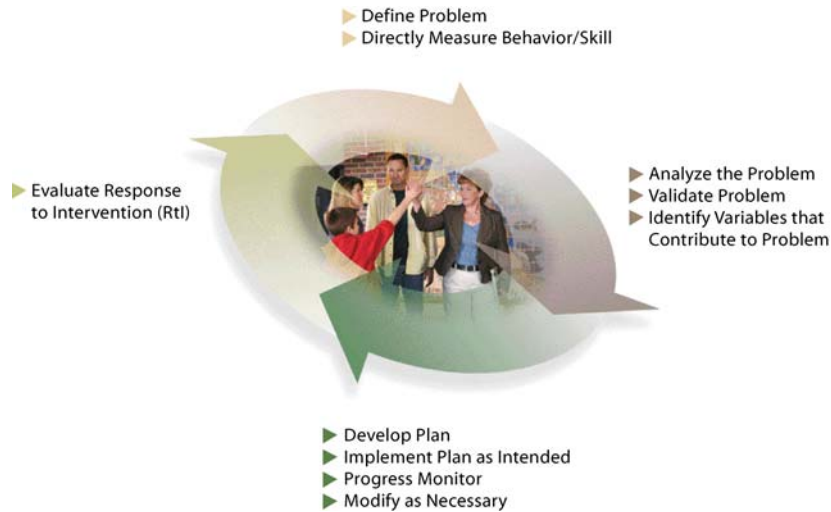
Given at the end of the school year, outcome tests are frequently group-administered tests of important outcomes (e.g., CSAP). Outcome assessments are often used for school, district and or state reporting purposes. These tests are important because they give school leaders and teachers feedback about the overall effectiveness of their instructional program.

6). Family and Community Engagement

When families, schools, and communities work together, students are more successful in school and schools improve. Effective partnerships include parents, families, students, community members and educators. Indicators of an effective partnership include 1) sharing information, 2) problem-solving, and 3) celebrating student successes. Central to effective partnership is the recognition of shared

Problem-Solving Process

Each school has a problem-solving process which includes a problem-solving team. The problem-solving team schedules initial and review meetings for students needing support. Descriptions of the meetings are below. Furthermore, progress monitoring is a significant part of the problem-solving process. Problem-solving teams will use graphs to demonstrate a student's response to developed interventions. *Example graphs are below.*



Initial Problem-Solving Meeting

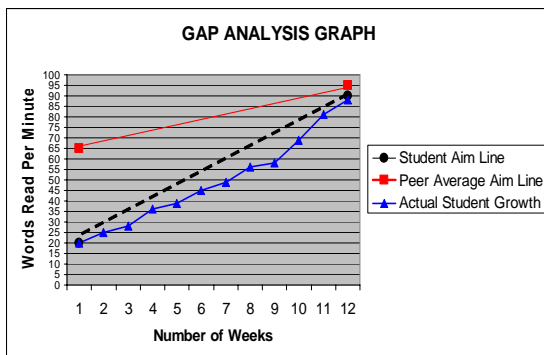
- Consists of members including teacher, parents, specialists, and consultants
- Approximately 30 minutes to develop an intervention plan
- Consultant meets with the teacher and the parent in some cases to define the problem prior to the initial meeting
- Parents participate in developing an intervention plan as a member of the problem-solving team
- Parents are encouraged to attend or participate by phone if necessary

For further information regarding RtI, please contact your school principal.

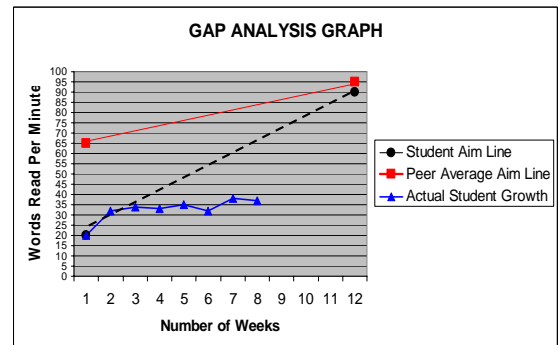
Review Problem-Solving Meeting

- Consists of members including teacher, parents, specialists, and consultants
- Approximately 15 minutes to review intervention plan
- Student receives intervention between meetings
- Student is progress monitored between meetings to determine progress
- Consultant meets with teacher, interventionists, progress monitor between meetings to ensure intervention is delivered as designed
- Parents are encouraged to attend or participate by phone if necessary

Progress Monitoring Graphs



Sufficient Progress



Insufficient Progress

Frequently Asked Questions

How do students move between Tiers?

Moving between tiers is a fluid process and there will likely be some fluctuation for many students whether they exhibit academic and/or behavioral concerns. Essentially, students move between tiers based on the gap demonstrated through progress monitoring as well as with the intensity level of the intervention.

Is a student ever involved in more than one intervention at a time?

Students should typically participate in one intervention at a time for individual skill deficits. For example, if a student has a deficit in reading, a single problem should be determined and a single intervention should be developed to address the identified problem. However, in some situations a student may be participating in a standard protocol intervention such as a flexible reading group to address reading skills in general, but may also be in a more intense (Tier III) intervention to address the specific skill deficit. Additionally, a student may participate in more than one intervention if there are a variety of skill deficits in different academic or behavior areas. For example, a student may be receiving a behavior intervention and a reading intervention at the same time or a reading intervention and a math intervention at the same time.

How long is the problem-solving process?

The length of time a student participates in the problem-solving process depends on the significance of the gap between the student and peers as well as the skill deficits a student has. For example, if a student in 8th grade needs an intervention in math calculations to gain the skills necessary to succeed with Algebra, there may be a need for several specific skill interventions to close the gap with peers. Data may demonstrate that the gap is closing, but the length of time to close the gap may be lengthy. On the other hand, a student who is in 1st grade and needs an intervention addressing short vowels may need a limited Tier II or III intervention and once the skill is gained the gap is closed with peers and the student can participate in the core curriculum. This student's length of participation may be shorter.

What documentation is used with the RtI Model?

Graphs and charts are a basic component of RtI documentation. Furthermore, schools should document the assessment and intervention strategies and outcomes using data collection systems. The strategies that are utilized and charted data should produce documentation of a student's progress or lack of progress (e.g., graphs, charts).

Is RtI just a way to avoid providing special education services?

No. RtI is a way to integrate the mandates of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and IDEA so that all students receive high quality, effective instruction in the general education setting and beyond. Also, RtI is a framework of instruction for students who do receive special education services. The intent is to generate a seamless system of support that is available to all students at the first sign of need.

Can RtI be used for students who are Gifted and Talented and/or underachieving?

Absolutely, not only can RtI be used, but should be used for students identified as Gifted and Talented or underachieving. Students who are Gifted and Talented and are underachieving based on screening measures and progress-monitoring tools should be provided strength-based intervention to increase the potential for sufficient progress. Because the RtI Model is a systemwide model, all students who are making insufficient progress should be provided more intensive interventions based on their individual needs. Gifted students need strength-based tiered interventions based on programming needs. Gifted students with learning difficulties will also need interventions for skill deficits.

Does the RtI Model have to be used to determine eligibility for students who are identified as having a Specific Learning Disability?

To align with federal laws, CDE revised the Exceptional Children's Education Act to utilize a problem-solving process to determine eligibility for a Specific Learning Disability. The expectation is that the majority of data are collected through the process; however, other data may need to be collected for a full and individual evaluation to qualify as having a Specific Learning Disability.

How/what do we communicate to parents?

Regardless of whether the parent initiated a concern or the teacher initiated a concern, parent involvement is critical and should be facilitated throughout the process, beginning with the problem identification phase. Parents should always be invited to the problem-solving meetings, and if parents are unable to attend the meeting the progress monitoring information should be provided to the parents each time the data are analyzed. Parents should be involved in all the decisions regarding modifications to interventions.

If a parent requests an immediate evaluation within the sixty day time frame during or prior to the problem-solving process, is the school obligated to default to the discrepancy model?

If a parent requests an immediate evaluation, schools should explain the problem-solving process and the services the student will receive during the documentation period. Schools may not talk parents out of requesting an evaluation; however, it is expected that parents will be informed of what the current evaluation practices are. If parents request a traditional assessment, schools will not be expected to administer an IQ and Achievement assessment. Determination of a Specific Learning Disability will be dependent on information collected through a problem-solving process.

How will the Special Education teacher plan interventions for a student after he or she has been found eligible for services through the RtI process?

Because the student has been participating in the problem-solving process and has had an individualized RtI plan, many of the services, goals, accommodations and modifications will be documented. Essentially, the problem-solving team will provide the current intervention plan to the special education team when a student becomes eligible for Special Education services.

What happens to a student's RtI plan if the student transfers to a new school or district?

When a student transfers to a new school, the school that developed the RtI plan will send the plan with the student's records to the new school of attendance. Although, the new school is not required to provide the interventions of the RtI plan, the school that developed the plan will make every effort to ensure that the student continues to receive the supports needed to be successful in the educational setting.

Glossary of Terms

Behavior Intervention Plan

A behavior plan is based on a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). It is developed and implemented by a collaborative team, which includes the student and parent. The plan includes positive behavior supports (PBS), identified skills for school success, and specific strategies for behavioral instruction.

Data-driven Decision-making

The process of planning for student success (both academic and behavioral) through the use of ongoing progress monitoring and analysis of its data

Duration

For the purposes of documenting response to intervention, duration refers to the length (number of minutes) of a session multiplied by the number of sessions per school year. "Sufficient duration" is dependent on a number of factors including the program or strategy being used, the age of the student, and the severity of the deficit involved. Some programs offer guidelines or recommendations for duration. Reading Recovery, for example, limits the number of 20-30 minute sessions in which a student can participate to 100, believing that a student who does not make adequate gains after this amount of time would likely benefit from an alternative intervention.

Evidence-based Instruction/Interventions

See research-based instruction/intervention/practice

Fidelity

Fidelity refers to the accuracy, loyalty and attentiveness with which an intended research design for instruction and/or intervention is implemented. To ensure standardization, intervention specialists must generally follow a prescribed protocol in order to attend to a program's or strategy's fidelity.

Problem-Solving Team

Interdisciplinary teams composed of general and special education staff members who plan prescriptive interventions for students at risk for school failure or underachievement by completing targeted assessments, collecting and reviewing data, making data-driven decisions, partnering with parents, and participating in ongoing problem-solving.

Flexible Grouping

Prescriptive, focused, research-based interventions provided to students by any trained or skilled staff member, regardless of the student's special or general education categorization or the educator's special or general education job description.

Focused Assessment

Formal and informal assessment targeted to specifically plan program service delivery and/or appropriate interventions for student success.

Frequency

How often a behavior or an intervention occurs. Commonly used in Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA) and Response to Intervention (RTI) research in the context of the three most important factors in considering behaviors of concern: Frequency, Intensity, and Duration. Frequency of an intervention, as an element of its effectiveness, can be a focus of the fidelity of delivery.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

This term comes from what is called a "Functional Assessment" or "Functional Analysis" in the field of applied behavioral analysis. This is the process of determining the cause (or "function") of behavior before developing an intervention or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). The intervention/BIP is based on the hypothesized cause (function) of behavior.

Gap Analysis

Gap analysis is a tool for measuring the difference between the student's current level of performance and benchmark expectations.

Intensity

The adjustment of duration, length and teacher-to-student ratio to a student's academic or behavioral needs.

Intervention

The systematic and explicit instruction provided to accelerate growth in an area of identified need. Interventions are provided by both special and general educators, and are based on training, not titles. They are designed to improve performance relative to a specific, measurable goal. Interventions are based on valid information about current performance, realistic implementation, and include ongoing student progress monitoring.

Multi-Tiered Model

The multi-tiered intervention model provides different levels of intensity (universal (Tier I), targeted (Tier II), and intensive (Tier III)) based upon student response to intervention, with ongoing progress monitoring and focused assessment.

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)

A schoolwide, multi-tiered framework designed to develop positive learning behavior in all students. The focus of PBS is on prevention rather than the development of consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Prescriptive Intervention

A specified response, that focuses on academic or behavioral areas of concern, to meet the specific needs of a student.

Problem-Solving Process

The problem-solving process is an interdisciplinary, collaborative team process which is based on a multi-tiered model and includes data-driven decision making, parent-school partnerships, progress monitoring, focused assessment, flexible service delivery, and prescriptive, research-based interventions.

Problem-Solving Team

A collaborative team (which includes parents, general and special educators) that meets to evaluate student data and to plan and monitor prescribed interventions.

Progress Monitoring

Progress Monitoring is the ongoing process that involves collecting and analyzing data to determine student progress toward specific skills or general outcomes. Progress monitoring generates the useful data for making instructional decisions based on the review and analysis of student data. Monitoring student progress, through collection and analysis of data, is an effective way to determine if the instruction being delivered is meeting the needs of the student.

Research-based Instruction/Intervention/Practice

A *research-based* instructional practice or intervention is one found to be reliable, trustworthy, and valid based on evidence to suggest that when the program is used with a particular group of students, the students can be expected to make adequate gains in achievement. Ongoing documentation and analysis of student outcomes helps to define effective practice.

In the absence of evidence, the instruction/intervention must be considered “best practice” based on available research and professional literature.

Screening

Refers to a quick checklist, survey, or probe about a student's development or skills to see if further evaluation is needed.

Specific, Measurable Outcome

The statement of a single, specific desired result from an intervention. To be measurable, the outcome should be expressed in observable and quantifiable terms (i.e. Johnny will demonstrate mastery of grade-level basic math calculation skills as measured by a score of 85% or better on the end-of the unit test on numerical operations).

Tier I (Universal) Intervention

Tier I Interventions are those provided to all students in the classroom, regardless of individual needs (e.g. Bully proofing, Guided Reading, Every Day Math, 6-Traits Writing). These may be research-based, but are not necessarily prescriptive.

Tier II (Targeted) Intervention

Tier II Interventions are to be implemented when assessment indicates that a student is not making adequate gains from universal instruction alone. They are generally smaller group interventions designed to meet the specific needs of a student and his/her peers with similar needs (e.g. Social skills training, Multi-sensory reading, or Knowing Mathematics).

Tier III (Intensive) Intervention

Tier III Interventions are those which offer a student highly individualized, systematic and explicit instruction in an area of assessed need. Although the programs or strategies may be similar to those offered at Tier 2, the intervention is reclassified as “intensive” if it is individualized to meet the needs of a particular student and the duration and/or intensity of the intervention is increased to accelerate student response.