How Can We Ensure Response to Intervention Works?
Lessons Learned From Research and Recommendations for Practice

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Welcome!

- Presenter introductions
- Audience introductions
Objectives: Presenters Will…

- Provide a brief overview of response to intervention (RTI).
- Share two “lessons learned” about the effective implementation of RTI, drawing from research and American Institutes for Research’s (AIR’s) work with states, districts, and schools.
  - Center for Response to Intervention (CRTI)
  - National Center for Intensive Intervention (NCII)
- Offer recommendations and resources that educators can use to support effective implementation of RTI.
Outcomes: Participants Will…

- Understand key RTI research findings and consider why seemingly small decisions related to fidelity of implementation can have a powerful impact on student outcomes.
- Reflect upon lessons learned related to RTI implementation and how these lessons can be applied to participants’ settings.
RTI: Overview
RTI: What It Is

- A framework that provides all students with access to high-quality instruction grounded in research
- A tiered system of support that provides early intervening services
- An effective way to identify students who struggle academically
- A process to use current student performance data to make instructional decisions

Source: National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010
RTI: Impact on Students

- Teachers’ use of screening, progress monitoring, and tiers of instruction improves:
  - Reading performance among all students
  - Learning and achievement among specific student populations, including students from low-income families, English language learners, and students with disabilities

Sources: Al Otaiba & Fuchs, 2006; Gersten et al., 2009; Gil & Woodruff, 2011; Rolfhus, Clarke, Decker, & Dimino, 2012
RTI: Prevalence

- Sixty-one percent of elementary schools, 45% of middle schools, and 29% of high schools are reporting use of the framework.
- All states and the District of Columbia are now supporting, at some level, implementation of a tiered academic and behavior framework.
- Ninety-two percent of states report the use of an integrated academic and behavior model as a state priority.

Sources: Bailey, 2017; Bradley et al., 2011
Many schools and districts struggle to effectively implement the framework.

- Implementation missteps

Source: Balu et al., 2015; Jackson & Pierce, 2017
Tiers 2 and 3 reading intervention supplant (i.e., replace) Tier 1 instruction.
  • Students with the greatest need receive less reading instruction than their grade-level peers.

Students right above and below screening benchmarks are often served in Tier 2.
  • Students who may not need Tier 2 are provided with additional instruction.

Staff can struggle to implement Tier 3 as data-based individualized instruction.

Sources: Balu et al., 2015; Jackson & Pierce, 2017; NCII
Faulty Conclusion

- RTI “doesn’t work.”
  - *RTI Practice Falls Short of Promise*

Source: Sparks, 2015
Fidelity can be the fundamental reason why programs either fail or succeed.

- The degree to which RTI is implemented with fidelity directly influences whether or not students will show improved outcomes.

Sources: Arden, Gandhi, Zumeta Edmonds, & Danielson, 2017; Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005; Fuchs & Fuchs, in press; Pierce & Jackson, 2017
Lessons Learned
Fidelity of Implementation: Lessons Learned

- Lesson 1: We cannot expect RTI to lead to improved student outcomes if the school lacks fidelity to the overall framework or....

- Lesson 2: if the school does not ensure that each component of RTI is used with fidelity.

Source: Jackson & Pierce, 2017
Lesson 1: Fidelity to the Overall Framework

Sources: National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010; Jackson & Pierce, 2017
The Importance of Lesson 1

- **Without Tier 1 for all students:**
  - Students may not be consistently exposed to an adequate amount of instruction associated with improved student outcomes.

- **Without data-based decision-making procedures:**
  - Schools may not regularly analyze data, the quality or appropriateness of instruction, or overall school growth.

*Sources: Gersten et al., 2009; Jackson & Pierce, 2017*
The Importance of Lesson 1

- **Without progress monitoring:**
  - Schools may have difficulty making critical decisions about tier movement.
  - Movement between tiers will depend upon relatively few points of data from a single source (i.e., a screening measure).
    - As a result, decision making may become infrequent and potentially unaligned with the needs of struggling learners.

*Sources: Gersten et al., 2009; Jackson & Pierce, 2017*
Implementation Recommendations and Discussion

- **Recommendation**: Use the CRTI Fidelity Rubric to ensure that all essential components are in place.
  - Develop a plan to add “missing” essential components.
  - Gain leadership commitment for this plan.

*Sources:* Jackson & Pierce, 2017; Pierce & Jackson, 2017
NCRTI: Fidelity Rubric

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Fidelity Rubric is for use by individuals who are responsible for monitoring school-level fidelity of RTI implementation. The rubric is aligned with the essential components of RTI and the infrastructure that is necessary for successful implementation. It is accompanied by a worksheet with guiding questions and score points for use in an interview with a school's RTI leadership team.

### Assessments—Screening, progress monitoring, and other supporting assessments are used to inform data-based decision making.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In sufficient evidence that the screening tools are reliable, correlations between the instruments and valued outcomes are strong, and predictions of risk status are accurate.</td>
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<td>3</td>
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### Screening—The RTI framework accurately identifies students at risk of poor learning outcomes or challenging behaviors.

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### Universal Screening

- Screening data are not used or are used alone to verify decisions about whether a student is or is not at risk.
- Screening data are used in concert with at least one other data source (e.g., classroom performance, curriculum-based assessment, performance on state assessments, diagnostic assessment).

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Source: National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010
Lesson 2: Drilling Down Within Each Essential Component

Sources: Jackson & Pierce, 2017; National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010
Lesson 2: Fidelity Within Each Essential Component Matters

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

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Center on Response to Intervention
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RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric—1
2004_2014
Lesson 2: Fidelity Within Each Essential Component Matters

- Critically examine fidelity *within* each of the essential components.

- **Fidelity within Tier 1**
  - For example, all students in elementary school should receive at least 90 minutes of daily high-quality reading instruction.

- **Fidelity at Tiers 2 and 3**
  - Students should receive at least 30 additional minutes of daily intervention.
  - Intervention should supplement, not supplant, core instruction.

*Source: Jackson & Pierce, 2017*
Fidelity at Tiers 2 and 3 is not just adherence.

- Ensure that staff are highly trained.
- Make instructional decisions based on student data (progress monitoring).
- Use appropriate dosage and frequency.
- Use data to make decisions about tier placement and movement.
  - Use established cut points.
  - Choose the “right” students.
  - Match intervention to student need.
  - Develop a team process.

Sources: Jackson & Pierce, 2017; Pierce & Jackson, 2017
Implementation Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: Use the CRTI Fidelity Rubric to ensure that all essential components are in place.
- Recommendation 2: Use screening and additional data to determine tier placement.
- Recommendation 3: Create clear criteria for allocating resources while ensuring that Tier 1 is effective.
- Recommendation 4: Use student data to ensure that Tiers 2 and 3 are effective.

Sources: Jackson & Pierce, 2017; Pierce & Jackson, 2017
Discussion
Reflection and Discussion

- Review the Fidelity Rubric and think about how your school implements RTI (Lesson 1).
- With someone near you, discuss which essential components are in place at your school.
  - If **all** components are in place: Share how your school was able to put each of the components into place.
  - If not all components are in place: What are some barriers to implementing all of the components? What are some possible solutions or next steps your school could take?
Reflection and Discussion

- Pick one or two essential components from the Fidelity Rubric. Think about the degree to which your school implements all aspects of that essential component (Lesson 2).

- Discuss:
  - What aspects of that essential component are in place?
  - What needs to be put into place?
  - What are some barriers to implementing all aspects of that essential component? What are some possible solutions or next steps your school could take to fully implement that component?
Resources

- The Center on Response to Intervention at AIR
    - Includes webinars, training materials, a screening tools chart, fidelity resources, etc.

- The National Center on Intensive Intervention at AIR
  - [http://www.intensiveintervention.org/](http://www.intensiveintervention.org/)
    - Includes a tools chart for progress monitoring
    - Includes Tier 3 resources, training materials, etc.
Questions?
References


References


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