



National Center
on Response to
Intervention

Planning and First Steps for RTI

1. Question: Where can I see RTI in process in Eastern Pennsylvania?

There are several schools across Pennsylvania that are currently implementing RTI. I would suggest contacting Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to get contact information for model schools in your area.

2. Question: Are there specific recommendations for small schools where there are principal teachers and maybe one or two more teachers?

I believe that all of the suggestions that we made during the webinar are applicable to a smaller school. With smaller number of staff you should also have fewer students to serve. When there are fewer staff to implement interventions I think that scheduling interventions by grade rather than by classroom will be much more efficient. Also, while it is ideal, interventions do not have to be offered daily. This would allow for more students to be served.

3. Question: What if your principal isn't ready or supportive of RTI?

Support from the principal and district level administration are crucial to the success of an RTI model. From planning to scheduling, to professional development and meeting time, if you don't have a principal that is willing to make changes and adjustments to the current systems, it will not work. What I would suggest is to work to educate everyone in your building (including the principal) about the benefits of RTI. Hopefully, the situation will change in some way to allow for implementation in the near future.

4. Question: How do you begin to implement progress monitoring in math?

We monitor fact fluency and use Fuchs probes.

5. Question: What questions did the staff development survey include and how was that information utilized?

Generally, we asked teachers to identify areas related to RTI that they felt they needed more training and support. We listed specific topics and asked them to tell us how comfortable they were with each or if they needed more training/information. These topics included:

*Differentiated instruction
Progress monitoring
Data-based decision making
Specific interventions
Universal screening*

6. Question: (Deborah) what specific resources did you use for personal training?

Over the years, I intentionally signed up for data analysis conferences, etc. and heard Victoria Bernhardt speak about data driven decision making. When I attend national conferences, I



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always go to sessions on data. I read Marzano's research continually and would not return to the days of making decisions without data. I worked with my data team for three summers and attended three full weeks of literacy training – Anita Archer and Kevin Feldman are excellent resources.

7. Question: Did the school district develop an action plan in advance of the schools developing their own plan for implementation?

Yes, the district had an action plan for implementation of RTI into all elementary schools in the district. This was designed as part of the planning process in conjunction with the implementation of MP3. The research team worked closely with district level administration to make sure that our model was consistent with what was to be implemented across the district. The three MP3 schools were some of the first schools in the district to implement. Other schools followed.

8. Question: Is there added compensation for your teachers by your district?

No, there was no added compensation for the teachers related to the everyday RTI activities.

9. Question: What did the intervention strategy trainings look like? (the PD you provided teachers) What were some examples of interventions you were training staff on?

Training consisted of multiple components. Typically, it began with a combination of didactic training and role play/practice of how to implement the intervention. This was done either in large groups at in-service or small groups as needed. Following initial training, teachers were given the opportunity to review materials, and questions were answered, points clarified, etc. in small group or one to one sessions with project staff. Staff also modeled implementation with students if teachers wished. Finally, integrity data were collected periodically to ensure that teachers continued to implement the interventions as intended.

10. Question: Please identify other data measures used such as DIBELS.

Universal screening was conducted using DIBELS. In addition, Maze passages from AIMSweb were utilized for grades 1–5. PSSA and 4Sight scores were used for grades 3–5. Teacher input and class performance were also taken into consideration by the team.

11. Question: Do you have any suggestions for implementation at the high school level?

The National Response to Intervention Center and National High School Center have hosted a webinar on this topic. This webinar can be viewed by going to http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1402

12. Question: What is the minimum size of teams? Our district only has approximately 9 teachers for K–8 plus special education teacher/director (myself).

I have found that smaller teams work better. There is no minimum size, as long as there is not too much work for any one person.

13. Question: If the data team is like a problem solving team, what is the child study team like?

Our child study team coordinates new student issues, children and youth referrals, behavior issues, TSS services, and medical related needs.

14. Question: How long is your school day? We have a 6 hour and 20 minute day - 120 minutes for the Language Arts (LA) blocks and 75 minutes for Math. Take out specials, lunch, recess, and bookkeeping time, and you lose another 2 hours. Any ideas about Social Studies, Science, and Interventions?

The school day in Central Dauphin School District (CDS) was approximately 6 ½ hours - 90 minutes for LA, 30 -60 minutes for interventions, 60 minutes for math. With lunch, specials, etc. time was very tight. Over the last few years the teachers have really been working on ways to incorporate social studies, science, etc. into core reading and math instruction. This was a shift in instruction and has taken some time, but is working well.

15. Question: What is the difference between your reading specialist and intervention specialist? How do their job descriptions differ?

The Reading Specialist has Reading Specialist certification and can serve as a coach for the staff. The Intervention Specialist may be an experienced regular education teacher. Both are trained to deliver interventions and strategies for RTI and also work all day with at-risk students. Both are integral members of the Data Team and leaders for grade level meetings.

16. Question: Are the intervention blocks daily or weekly?

Daily

17. Question: Do you have homerooms mixed together for the interventions? Or is the intervention done during class time?

Homerooms are mixed. Intervention time occurs at the same time for all students in a grade. The teacher of that intervention may be the homeroom teacher for some of the students in the group but not others. Students are grouped across the grade, based on needs and skill deficits, not by classroom.

18. Question: Where can I find an example of RTI implementation at the secondary level?

The National Response to Intervention Center and National High School Center have hosted a webinar on this topic. This webinar can be viewed by going to http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1402

19. Question: Please clarify that every student in your school has an intervention or is it just the students identified in tier 2 or tier 3?

Every student in the school gets "intervention." Students at Tier 1 are given instruction to enhance the core and help them to continue to progress at grade level. Tier 2 and 3 students are provided specific skill Instruction and/or intensive intervention.

20. Question: Regarding school-wide screenings, are there any universal screeners? I understand that DIBELS is an excellent resource for reading screenings, but do you know of any other screenings that are more

comprehensive? How is Dauphin School District implementing universal screenings?

CDSD uses DIBELS for universal screening. This is a proven measure that is effective for screening students for reading difficulties. Screenings are conducted three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring), and data collected during screening are used to group students into tiers/skill groups.

21. Question: Please address the "tiered" groups that you reference throughout your presentation. What is "tiered"?

RTI is a model that, among other things, provides tiered intervention to meet students' needs. Tiered intervention means that intervention is provided based on a student's needs, with increasing intensity of the interventions as you move up the tiers. Tier 1 refers to core instruction. This is what all students receive. So, students who are currently at grade level and do not need additional intervention are said to be at Tier 1. For some students, this is not enough. They fall behind despite good core reading instruction. These students are said to be at Tier 2 and will receive skill instruction at their level, based on their needs. Finally, students who are significantly below where they need to be and who need intensive intervention are served at Tier 3.

22. Question: How did the students, especially the Kindergarten and first grade students, do with all the transferring among teachers? How did you keep the 30 minutes for intervention from being eaten up by 10 minutes of transferring?

We model how to line up, walk across the hall, etc., and once the students know where to go, they are amazing and move quickly. We get better at lining up and moving quickly every year, and do not waste ten minutes. We do cluster Intervention rooms, and the students do not have too far to walk, usually.

23. Question: How long was the time for transition during skill group, and did time spent getting kids settled decrease instruction time?

We spent some time in the first few days before implementation for the students to practice transitions. We also strategically placed skill groups to minimize how much movement had to occur. For example, the kindergarten groups occurred in their classroom and a classroom down the hall. Transitions as a whole only took a few minutes and teachers worked to have students in skill group on time.

24. Question: What type of results are you seeing since implementing the RTI model at Phillips?

Overall, the percentage of proficient students on state tests has gone from 55% to 64% to 66%, and we project that it will increase again this year; our goal is 75%. Most important, the achievement AND growth of students combined as value-added assessment shows that we are functioning in the Excelling quadrant.

25. Question: Did all students in the school participate?

Yes, every student was a part of RTI.

26. Question: What are the roles of each team? Does your staff do its own trainings? How many years are you into your process? Do you have any behavior models or resources that can be shared?

This is our 4th year and we are doing RTI in Reading. I highly recommend Responsive Classroom to address whole school behavior and motivating kids to want to learn and work together. We do training if we have not been trained, or we invite others from state training sites. The Data Team coordinates and oversees data globally; the Grade Level Teams analyze and discuss grade level and student data; the POC Team handles communication and concerns for each grade level; the Staff Development Team discusses and plans staff development needs for the entire year; the Child Study Team coordinates numerous student issues. I set agendas and work with all teams. Also, shared leadership is necessary.

27. Question: We (the school I work for) seem to have a pretty good handle on Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, but are having some difficulty with interventions at the Tier 3 level. Also, I am having trouble grasping progress monitoring. I'd like to have a better idea of what kind of assessments can be used to monitor students' growth. Because many factors influence reading, can we document Reading as one area to monitor? It seems like series assessments would give you data to show growth, but are pretty general.

DIBELS and AIMSweb both have good progress monitoring probes that you can use to monitor student progress. Look at your universal screening measures to see if there are PM tools available.

28. Question: Is there a sample plan for an elementary school schedule, etc ?

We are currently working on a book that will detail all of that information.

29. Question: As a school psychologist, for years now I've been hearing all about RTI in terms the Tier model, "easy" data tracking systems, and resources for "quick, research-based" classroom interventions. What is typically missing is guidance and structure for evaluation teams in terms of the Tier III exit through the initial IEP stage of the eligibility process.

For example:

What are characteristic Tier III exit profiles suggesting direct IEP eligibility via RTI without need for individualized, standardized testing?

What are characteristic Tier III exit profiles indicative of need for further investigation through individualized, standardized testing?

What are characteristic Tier system profiles of continued need for remediation without the expectation for a subsequent special education referral?

These are excellent questions that, to my knowledge, have yet to be answered. We have begun to analyze our data from the past few years in hopes of answering some of those questions.

30. Question: My district is just beginning to address the idea of RTI. I work in a high school and need to know how a small high school would begin to adopt the principles of RTI.

The National Response to Intervention Center and National High School Center have a several webinar on this topic. This webinar can be viewed by going to http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1402

31. Question: There are some school districts that are implementing Rtl by having regular education students pulled out of their regular education classroom and instructed alongside special education students who are

receiving their IEP minutes in their special education classroom. I am aware that special education teachers who "push in" to a regular education classroom in order to provide instruction to their special education students can have incidental contact with regular education students and that special education students can instruct regular education students in another setting, as long as those minutes are not billable minutes (other than that which is permitted through Part B.) However, it is my understanding that special education students and regular education students (those without IEPs regardless of their RtI status) were not to be co-mingled in the special education classroom. Have the IDEA rules and regulations changed because of RtI?

I am not aware of any rules that say that special education and general education students cannot be "comingled," only that instruction needs to be provided as outlined in the IEP. With the start of RTI and inclusion in the school, some students' IEPs needed to be re-written to reflect the change in service delivery.

32. Question: Can RTI be used for students on the other end of the scale, i.e., those students who need a challenge to maintain their 3, 4, or 5 on the FCAT or is it just for the 1's and 2's?

Good instruction at a student's level that addresses his or her needs (RTI) is applicable to all students. As discussed in the webinar, we provided additional instructional time for ALL students in the school, not just those that were struggling. I think that those students who are on target often get forgotten because there is such a need to provide support for the students who are struggling, but with careful planning and good scheduling you can accommodate all students.

33. Question: 1. What makes an intervention scientifically based? Is there a way to find out if something is?

Simply, an intervention is scientifically based if there is research to support its effectiveness. There are several websites that can provide information on evidence-based interventions, including What Works Clearinghouse.

2. We have a pretty good handle on interventions for reading; what is out there and available for math?

Not my area but I would start with What Works Clearinghouse.

3. What happens when a student is being serviced at Tier III and does not need to be tested for special education? How long can a student work at Tier III?

In CDS, students who did not respond to Tier 3 intervention after 12 weeks were reviewed to see if eval was appropriate. Students who did respond remained in Tier 3 until they met goals that allowed them to move through the tiers (Tier 2 to 1). This may be different depending on the state/district you are in. You must look at your regs.

4. Does Tier II have to be small groups of 3-5? What if there is a whole class intervention with special attention to the Tier II students?

Our Tier 2 groups were as large as 15. There is no set number of students per group, keeping in mind that instruction needs to be focused and meet the needs of the students.

34. Question: 1. Where could I see RTI being implemented in my area and/or get a guest speaker for a local parent/university group?

Check with your State Department of Education for resources in your area.

2. How do you establish a baseline for testing any given skill, such as correct grammar usage in essay writing, math calculation, etc.?

I have a high school student and the state or school wide tests are few and far between. What do you look for standards of achievement/goals?

Progress monitoring would provide you with information to evaluate your instruction and student progress. This is conducted frequently, allowing you to make adjustments to programming as needed.

35. Question: There appears to be some confusion of what is a research (evidence)-based intervention. Are we specifically referring to treatments based on large n research studies? OR, would the term also include interventions (with no large n evidence) based on a functional assessment of academics/behavior considering an individual student in her/his classroom environment using single subject design with graphs?

In general when referring to reading instruction we are looking at large scale studies that have demonstrated efficacy and effectiveness for an intervention. For behavior, there are many interventions that have met criteria for evidence-based intervention using single subject designs. Some reading interventions have also been evaluated in this way with positive results.

National Center on Response to Intervention

If you have comments and questions about this workgroup and its activities, please visit our website www.rti4success.org or contact The National Center on Response to Intervention at rticenter@air.org.

This report was produced under U.S. Department of Education Cooperative Agreement #H326E070004 with the American Institutes for Research. Grace Zamora Durán and Tina Diamond served as the project officers. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred.

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