**What is RTI? The Essential Components Questions and Answers**

**Question**: How do you get school administrators to understand that implementation of RTI cannot be accomplished overnight?

**Answer**: Implementation science is an emerging research field that has been a mystery to many of us. Dean Fixen and Karen Blase from the National Implementation Research Network (http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~nirn/default.cfm) published several resources that may be useful for your administrators. One of the things that should be highlighted from their findings was that full implementation typically takes between 2-5 years.

**Question**: For children who have received interventions last year but there is no data available, how long must they continue in interventions this year before we can determine level of progress?

**Answer**: 6-9 data points are typically recommended before one can confidently make decisions. How often you progress monitoring – one a week versus once every other week – will determine how long you might wait. In some cases, the data clearly indicate that students are not responding (e.g., 4 data points below the line). In these cases, you may be able to make a decision more quickly.

**Question**: I have been told that schools will have to provide RTI for reading and math in the future to comply with special education requirements, how do we determine which programs are available or best?


**Question**: My question centers around the pull out time that is necessary to re-teach and that absence from, at times, a very powerful and persuasive teacher.

**Answer**: Pull out time is not necessarily a requirement of an RTI framework. I would consider adapting the schedule to ensure students are not pulled from high quality core instruction and teachers.
**Question:** How, specifically, does RTI compare the efficiency or efficacy of different forms of instruction. Are there tools that you provide teachers in order to make this happen?

**Answer:** Comprehensive data analysis in an RTI framework includes looking at the efficiency and efficacy of interventions used in the 3 levels of instruction. Schools can use growth rates, calculated from progress monitoring data to determine which interventions are more effective for students in your population. If you do not have this data available yet, The National Center on RTI publishes an Instructional Tools Chart to assist educators and families in choosing intervention tools. View the Instructional Tools Chart: and its Users Guide: (http://www.rti4success.org/chart/instructionTools/users_guide.pdf). Also see the U.S. Department of Education's website, the What Works Clearinghouse, (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/), for reviewed education products.

**Question:** What are some sound RTI models for Title I K-12 schools?

**Answer:** The Center does not recommend any specific model for RTI, particularly since school needs and resources vary. RTI is an overarching framework and not a published ‘program.’ The model should be developed based on the needs, resources, and student population of the school. Thus, the first step in model development is to identify these factors (e.g., needs, focus area, resources, student population). Once determined, schools can use existing resources, such as the NCRTI tool charts (http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=71), to begin designing your RTI model. In general, RTI models have a process for identifying students at risk for poor learning outcomes (screening), providing increasing intensive interventions (multi-level prevention system), monitoring student responsiveness to those intervention (progress monitoring), and systematic and explicit procedures for making data based decisions. See the Essential Components of RTI at (http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiessentialcomponents_051310.pdf) for more information. Regardless of the model, ongoing evaluation of the essential components and the entire RTI system should guide the continuous improvement of the model.

**Question:** How does RTI and PBIS align?

**Answer:** RTI and PBIS are related innovations that rely on a three-level prevention framework, with increasing intense levels of support for all students. Conceptually, both RTI and PBS depend on the same essential components: screening, progress monitoring, multi-level instructional support system and data based decision making. The focus on RTI is primarily academic while PBIS
focuses primarily on behavior for the purpose of improving academic outcomes. The biggest difference is how the actual implementation (e.g., tools, interventions) looks in the school. The RTI framework provides an overarching approach for delivering instructional interventions of increasing intensity in both academics and behavior. Schools should design their RTI and PBIS frameworks in an integrated way to support students’ academic and behavioral development. For more information on PBIS, see http://www.pbis.org and watch the RTI and School-wide Positive Behavior Support webinar presented by Dr. Rob Horner from the University of Oregon at http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1447.

Question: If “The National Center on Response to Intervention defines progress monitoring as repeated measurement of academic performance to inform instruction of individual students in general and special education in grades K-8.” Where can I get grades 9-12?

Answer: The center was originally funded as a K-8 center because there was no research in grades 9-12. There is now a growing body of research on secondary-level RTI implementation and tools. Before selecting tools, high schools need to identify the desired outcome, or focus, of the RTI model. The focus will help schools determine appropriate progress monitoring tools. For example, if your focus is to prevent dropout and increase graduation rates, you will likely select screening and progress monitoring tools related to the interventions targeting in these areas. You may choose to monitor attendance, grades, work completion, or academic performance. See the work of the National High School center for more information on Early Warning Signs for Dropout (http://www.betterhighschools.org/topics/dropoutwarningsigns.asp). If your desired outcome is increased performance on state tests, then your tools are likely to measure academic content or related skills. There is no one model for high school RTI implementation. In response to the high school practitioners’ need for information and guidance, “Tiered Interventions in High Schools” (http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/hstii_lessons_learned.pdf) — the initial work of the High School Tiered Interventions Initiative (HSTII), a collaborative project of three federally funded technical assistance centers—summarizes what we have learned thus far and how those lessons learned can advance the ongoing discussion about effective RTI implementation in high schools. Watch HSTII’s webinar, “An Introduction to High School Response to Intervention.”

Question: You mention the tools charts, and I have perused them. However, I have to admit that they only link me to options to buy resources/assessments, without showing me what each is, which feels inaccessible. Is there a way that you can help these be more accessible? Or, is it simply a matter of buy one, try one, buy one, try one?

Answer: The Center provides links to the publishers’ sites which often have example probes. I do not recommend buying anything unless you have been
allowed to try it out. Identify 2-3 tools that appear to meet your needs then talk directly with the publishers. Have them demonstrate the product, answer all of your questions, and, then, ask if you can try it out for a bit. I recommend not only reviewing the tool but review any supporting data system as well.

**Question:** What progress monitoring tools are recommended for math?


**Question:** How can RTI be used with ELL?

**Answer:** The definition that the center uses for RTI focuses on being both evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive (Essential Components, page 1). See the Essential Components of RTI at ([http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiesentialcomponents_051310.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rtiesentialcomponents_051310.pdf)) for more information. Sylvia Linan-Thompson of the University of Texas at Austin conducted a presentation that highlighted the success that English language learners (ELLs) had in the context of a 3-tiered literacy intervention system. You can check out the presentation here ([http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rti_cec_06.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/rti_cec_06.pdf)). It is important to remember that ELLs are a heterogeneous group made up of students who speak different languages and have different cultures and backgrounds. In selecting assessments (Screening and Progress Monitoring) and curriculums and interventions at all levels within the prevention framework, it is essential to determine if they are appropriate, valid and reliable for your context and your students. To learn more about ELL and RTI you can view the webinar RTI for English Language Learners presented by Dr. Julie Esparza Brown, Dr. Amanda Sanford, and Erin Lolich at ([http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1473](http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1473))
and the follow-up webinar English Language Learners (ELLs) and RTI Webinar 
Follow Up presented by Dr. Janette Klingner at 

**Question**: I have a question about implementation. Above, you mention "gather a 
team" and "determine need". If RTI is school-wide and even district-wide, how broad of 
a team do you mean? Could you give me an example of a logical team, and how they 
might go about a 6-step process?

**Answer**: The core group of teachers/staff who facilitate RTI implementation often 
include: Administrator(s), Grade level reps, Specialists, School psychologist, 
Special education teacher(s). See the NCRTI's webinar on "Planning and First 
Steps for RTI" for information about how to plan before implementation. 

**Question**: Regarding having "established routines and procedures for making decisions 
about the efficacy of core instruction, and it’s probably best to put those in writing, so as 
you have staff turn-over, or are training new teachers they can refer back to these 
established routines and procedures." Do you have examples of any of these 
established routines and procedures in writing?

**Answer**: The Center is currently developing resources to provide guidance in this 
area. Examples of procedures and routines might be that school wide data 
reviews occur within one week of screening. At that meeting, the school team 
reviews data and sets goals that are then disseminated to the grade levels teams 
within 3 days. Or, your decision rules may be related PM data decisions, such as 
when you refer a child for special education, when you end an intervention, or 
when an intervention is needed. Decision rules should be based on research and 
should be implemented consistently across teachers and schools in a district.

**Question**: So data decision rules is just like having protocol/procedures/timelines to 
follow, so as to be consistent and efficient?

**Answer**: Correct. You should be developing a standard protocol for decision 
making. It will help with implementation integrity.

**Question**: Where should we start if we want to implement RTI? What are the steps to 
implement RTI?

**Answer**: There are two great resources for getting started with RTI. The RTI 
Action Network provides a fours step process for implementing RTI as well as 
resources to move forward. Their website, http://www.rtinetwork.org/getstarted, 
watches teams through a four step process: 1) Build Support, 2) Develop a Plan, 3) 
Implement your Plan, 4) Evaluate and Refine Implementation. NASDSE also 
developed a series of RTI Implementation Blueprints for district teams
(http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/DISTRICT.pdf) and school teams
(http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/DISTRICT.pdf). These blue prints walk teams 
through three steps for implementation: 1) Consensus Building, 2) Infrastructure 
Building and 3) Implementation. There is general consensus among researchers 
that effective implementation begins with Stage 1: Exploration and Adoption 
(AKA Build Support or Consensus Building) – where schools/districts determine 
there is a need and that need can address by implementing RTI. School and 
district staff should understand what RTI is and why RTI is important for their 
population. Effective implementation continues with Stage 2: Planning for 
Implementation. Jumping right in to implementing RTI without building 
infrastructure – reallocating funds, acquiring resources and material, training 
staff, identifying and addressing barriers, e.g. – can lead to frustration among 
staff and ineffective, and sometimes costly, implementation. Prior to 
implementing the essential components are RTI, schools/districts need to 
carefully plan. Although it does not guarantee things will run smoothly, it 
increases the likelihood that students will receive services in a more timely and 
effective manner. In the initial implementation, careful attention should be paid to 
addressing potential barriers and frustrations among staff.