Park Hill School District's Response to Intervention

Process Manual

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Introduction

Definitions of Tiers and Response to Intervention

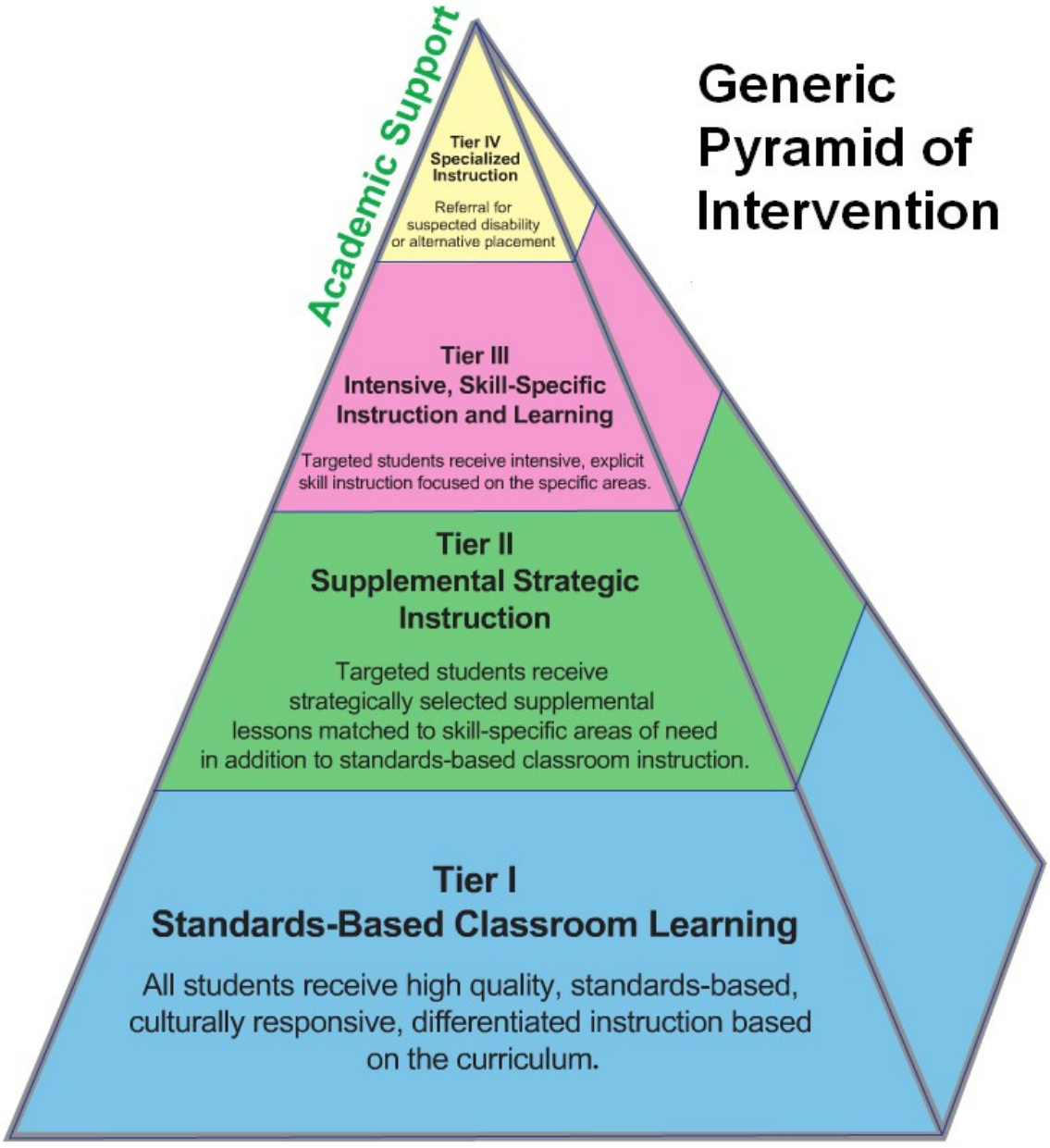
This manual provides guidelines for initiating and implementing the Response to Intervention (RtI) program within each school in the Park Hill School District. The district views the RtI initiative as an opportunity for general- and special-education services to collaborate in the provision of early intervention strategies and quality instruction to those children who have been so identified. PHSD is committed to providing support to schools in order to help all students master the academic and behavioral skills necessary for educational success.

It is recognized that consistency in the philosophical approach and implementation of a universal curriculum are paramount to the success of this initiative. PHSD strives to provide a systematic framework for individual schools to follow. This manual is an attempt to focus the efforts of all schools into a process which best supports students in all tiers of the RtI pyramid of success. Therefore, it is important for each school to review this manual to include the necessary components of RtI, especially the use of scientifically based interventions and data-based decision making. Within the contents of this manual, educators can find guidelines and samples for assessment and intervention processes, forms, data collection methods, and tier models of interventions.

RtI is a rapidly evolving system of strategies; consequently, there will be questions left unanswered by this manual. For support related to RtI, questions can be directed to Director of Special Services, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Secondary Education and Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services.

The RtI team credits the Bourbonnais School District and the Georgia State Department of Education for technical assistance and information during the development of this manual.

Response to Intervention
The Park Hill Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions



What Is Response to Intervention?

Definition of RtI

Response to Intervention (RtI) is the practice of providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need; of monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals; and of applying student-outcome data to important educational decisions. RtI should be applied to decisions in general, remedial and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction/intervention, guided by student outcome data. (NASDSE, 2008).

What Is It?

RtI is based in the general education classroom, where teachers routinely implement a strong and rigorous standards-based learning environment. RtI is at the core of school improvement to ensure we reach ALL students, especially those whose academic skills or behaviors are below expectations. RtI holds at its core the expectation that the educational needs of EVERY student are the work and responsibility of EVERY staff member. Furthermore, the RtI process is the framework to address those needs. Students requiring interventions to meet individual learning expectations WILL receive support through a systematic and purposeful process.

The Importance of Student-Outcome Data

Student outcome data are crucial to:

- make accurate decisions about the effectiveness of general and remedial education instruction/interventions;
- undertake early identification/intervention with academic and behavioral problems;
- prevent unnecessary and excessive identification of students with disabilities;
- form decisions concerning eligibility for special programs, including special education;
- determine individual education programs and deliver and evaluate special education services. (NASDSE, 2008)

The PHSD RtI process includes the following key components:

- A four-tier delivery model, designed to provide support matched to student need through the implementation of standards-based classrooms.

- High quality, evidence-based instruction as the core of classroom pedagogy which is tightly aligned to the approved curriculum of the Park Hill School District.
- Evidence-based interventions of increasing levels of intensity, centered on progress monitoring.
- A variety of ongoing assessment data, used to determine which students are not meeting academic or behavioral success.
- Data Teams in each school that serve as the driving force for instructional decision-making in the building.
- Purposeful allocation of instructional resources, based on student assessment data.

Why Do It?

RtI is an evidence-based approach to early intervention for students struggling with learning or behavior, in general and special education settings. Its core principles are that at Tier 1, evidence-based instruction is provided with fidelity, student progress is monitored frequently, students responsiveness to intervention is evaluated, and instruction is adapted as needed (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2005; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003). Both federal legislation and state initiatives have endorsed the effectiveness of RtI.

What Does RtI Emphasize?

RtI emphasizes:

- Integration of program areas
- Application of a problem-solving approach
- Use of evidence-based instruction with progress monitoring data because they have consistently improved educational outcomes in achievement, behavior, and graduation rates.

The Park Hill School District does not believe in a wait to fail approach. PHSD uses a combination of Response to Intervention and the IQ-achievement discrepancy model in an attempt to assist students and staff:

- Provision of information directly relevant to the design, delivery, and monitoring of student progress via more appropriate instruction (Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2007).
- Focusing more on the instructional needs of students—meeting students where they are—with the goal of basing instructional decisions on how students are

progressing. NCLB's focus on evidence-based practice, data-driven decision-making, and multi-tiered intervention reflects the fundamental elements of RtI.

What Does This Mean for Special Education?

RtI addresses ESSA and IDEA 2004 mandates, concerns about traditional special education identification procedures, the disproportionate representation of minorities in special education, the integration of general and special education, and the delivery of evidence-based programs to students. RtI may help to reduce the disproportionate representation of minorities in Special Education. Disproportionality is a serious concern in the state, and Missouri is under consent decrees requiring the elimination of this disproportionality. In one study, it was shown that RtI reduced disproportionality for African-American students (Marsten, Muyskens, Lau, & Cantor, 2003). Furthermore, studies have shown that RtI produced a significant increase in the rate of response of minority students to early intervention instruction (VanDerHeyden & Witt, 2005).

RtI has been discussed in the literature as an alternative method to the traditional IQ-achievement discrepancy model for identifying and intervening with students' learning problems or disabilities. PHSD blends both the discrepancy model alongside of the RtI model in an attempt to complement the strengths of both.

The "wait to fail approach" has been tried without success in many school districts. Delaying the identification of Students with Learning Disabilities (SLD) until a child falls below a predicted level of performance can result in at least two years of academic failure (Donovan & Cross, 2002). IDEA 2004 promotes instructional practice and decision-making designed to ensure that inadequate instruction or cultural bias does not lead to the academic or behavioral misidentification of minority students in Special Education.

What Does This Mean for 504?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a "free and appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student who is within the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under 504 could consist of education in the regular education classrooms, education in the regular education classes with supplementary services, and/or special education and related services. A "qualified student" is:

- Of an age at which students without disabilities are provided elementary or secondary educational education services.
- Of an age at which it is mandatory under state law to provide elementary and secondary educational services to students with disabilities
- A student to whom a state is required to provide a free and appropriate education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Under Section 504, FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Have a record of such impairment.
- Be regarded as having such impairment.

Essential Elements of a Comprehensive RtI Plan

RtI integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-tiered prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes; monitor student progress; provide evidence-based interventions, and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness; and identify students with learning disabilities.

Assessment Areas

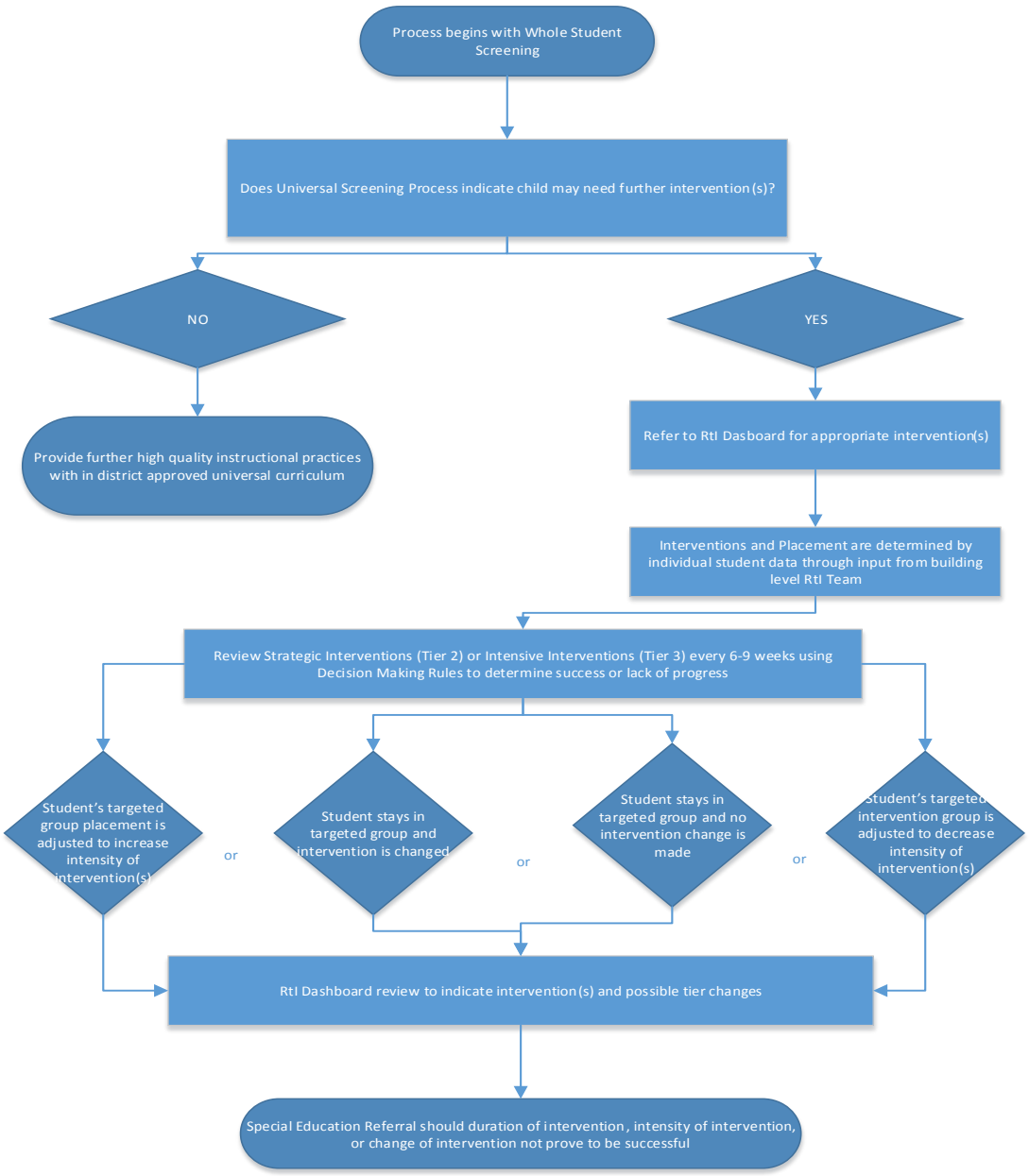
In the table that follows, a sample is provided to give an overview of potential areas of assessment that a school team may use to monitor student academic or behavioral areas of concern.

Screening	Diagnostic	Progress Monitoring
School-wide Broad Index Yearly/ 3X a year/ Monthly	Individual Student Specific academic domains Yearly	Class/ Small Group/ Student Specific academic skill or behavioral targets Bi-weekly/Weekly/more often

Identify At-Risk students	Identify specific student deficits	Regroup students
School focus Class/school instructional and curricular decisions 1st step for intervention planning	Student focus Selecting curricular and instructional methods Planning or specifying intervention	Student focus Intervention effectiveness (curriculum/instruction) Continue or revise placement

(Adapted from presentation by Dr. Daryl Mellard; University of Kansas Center of Research on Learning & NCRtI)

The Response to Intervention Process in the Park Hill School District



Universal Screening Process

Screenings are used to identify students who are at risk of poor learning outcomes. The screeners listed below are provided in the areas of reading, writing, math, and behaviors that promote learning. These are the approved screening instruments used in defining opportunities for improvement within the Park Hill School District:

Elementary

Screener	Assessment Window	Grade	Content
STAR Early Literacy	Fall, winter, spring	K-1	Early literacy and numeracy
STAR Reading	Fall, winter, spring	1-5	Reading
STAR Math	Fall, winter, spring	1-5	Math
Acuity	Aug/Sept, Nov, Jan	2-5	ELA, math, science
Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment	Fall, winter, spring	K-5	Reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension
MAP	Spring	3-5	ELA, math, science
Terra Nova	Spring	1-5	ELA, math, science, social studies
Classroom assessments	Ongoing	K-5	All Content Areas
Observational data	Ongoing		All Content Areas
On Demand Writing Rubric	Aligns with units	K-5	Writing
Attendance data	Ongoing	K-5	Attendance
Grades	Ongoing	K-5	All Content Areas

Discipline data	Ongoing	K-5	Behavior
Early Literacy checklist	Ongoing	K (or when applicable)	Foundational skills
Number and letter recognition	Ongoing	K (or when applicable)	Foundational skills
Sound recognition	Ongoing	K (or when applicable)	Foundational skills
Behavior data Recovery Room Office Disc. (ODR)	Ongoing	K-5	Behavior
Phonemic Awareness	Ongoing	K-1	Foundational skills
Concepts of Print	Ongoing	K-1	Foundational skills

Secondary

Screener	Assessment Window	Grade	Content
STAR Reading	Fall, spring	6-10	Reading
STAR Math	Fall, spring	6-8	Math
EOC Pre-Tests	Fall, spring	9-12	ELA, math, science, social studies
EOC	Fall, spring	9-12	ELA, math, science, social studies
GPA	Fall, winter, spring	10-12	ELA, math, science, social studies
Classroom	Ongoing	6-12	All Content Areas

assessments			
Behavior data	Ongoing	6-12	All Content Areas
Attendance data	Ongoing	6-12	
Grades	Ongoing	6-12	All Content Areas
Discipline data	Ongoing	6-12	
On track to graduate	Ongoing	9-12	All Content Areas
MAP	Spring	6-8	ELA, Math, Science
Acuity	Fall, winter, spring	6-8	ELA, Math

Definition and Description of Each Tier

Once they have been identified as needing interventions, students are placed on an RtI tier. Each tier builds upon the other in the intensity and duration of interventions.

Tier 1: Universal High-Quality Classroom Instruction and Screening

Within Tier 1, all students will receive high-quality, scientifically-based instruction, which is differentiated by qualified personnel to ensure that any lack of growth is not due to a child's inability to gain from whole-class instruction. Fidelity to the board approved curriculum is expected. Tier 1 is the foundation and consists of scientific, research-based core instruction and behavioral methodologies, practices and supports designed for all students to access the universal curriculum. All students will be screened three times a year to establish an academic baseline and to identify those learners who need additional support.

Tier 2: High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Small Group Interventions (4-6 students)

Within Tier 2, RtI teams will identify and problem-solve the needs of groups of students. The team will utilize assessment data and observations to indicate students' needs for interventions in order to be successful in the regular education classroom. Tier 2 is in addition to core curriculum and consists of scientific, research-based supplemental

instruction to the core instruction and behavioral methodologies. Practices and supports are designed for groups of at-risk students and are provided within or outside of the general education classroom. In addition to the foundation, all students will be screened three times a year to establish an academic baseline and to identify those learners who need additional support. Students who are not making progress in Tier 2 interventions should be progress-monitored every two weeks at their grade level on a curriculum-based measure. Instructional changes are grounded in data-based decision making, and progress should be reviewed every 6-8 weeks.

Tier 3: High-Quality, Research-Based Individual or Small Group Interventions (1-3 students)

As a general guideline, RtI teams will identify and problem-solve the need of a student who is performing below the 10th percentile on district and common-grade-level assessments. Tier 3 is in addition to core curriculum and consists of scientific, research-based interventions that are supplemental to core instructional and behavioral methodologies. Tier 3 is designed for those few students who are significantly below standards. Interventions are provided in small groups, allowing for flexibility within those groups. Students are given interventions outside of their general education classroom but in coordination with the general education expectations. Interventions should occur on a more intensive level as determined by the data and RtI team. Students are progress-monitored weekly at their grade level on a curriculum based measure. Instructional changes are based on data, and progress should be reviewed every 6-8 weeks at the elementary level and quarterly at the secondary level.

Decision-Making Process

Instructional Interventions (Tier 1)

- Regular classroom, evidenced-based interventions/enhancements are used.
- Curriculum and the instructional frameworks are implemented with fidelity.
- Instructional interventions can be presented in a large group setting.
- Interventions may be presented daily or 2-3 times per week.
- Interventions must be delivered with fidelity.
- Progress monitoring may occur once every six weeks.
- Progress monitoring data is typical classroom assessment data/benchmark assessment data/classroom artifacts.

Strategic Interventions (Tier 2)

- Parents should be notified of their child's tier placement
- Interventions must be evidenced-based.
- Interventions are delivered in the classroom; if needed a small setting may be used
- Interventions should be presented for a minimum of 30 minutes daily.
- Interventions must be delivered with fidelity.
- Progress monitoring should occur bi-weekly at a minimum
- Progress monitoring data should predict the student's success or lack of success with Strategic Interventions.

Intensive Interventions (Tier 3)

- Parents should be notified of any change in their child's tier placement
- Interventions must be evidenced-based.
- Interventions are more intense.
- Interventions are delivered in small group/individual setting.
- Interventions should be presented for a minimum of 30 minutes daily.
- Interventions must be delivered with fidelity.
- Progress monitoring should occur at a minimum 1 time per week.
- Progress monitoring data should predict the student's success or lack of success with Intensive Interventions.

Referring a Student to Special Education Evaluation

- Students should be receiving intensive interventions prior to a referral to the special education team for a SLD evaluation.
- Documented intensive interventions must be from the Park Hill Standard Protocol of Treatment for RtI.
- A minimum of at least two separate evidenced-based interventions (per skill area) of increasing intensity should be documented prior to a referral being made.
- Documentation should indicate each intervention has been delivered consistently and with fidelity.
- Referrals are based on the lack of progress made with intensive interventions.
    - Progress monitoring data should indicate a trend of data (a minimum of the last FOUR consecutive data points) below the student's goal line.
    - Trend should occur consistently over the course of at least TWO consecutive progress monitoring reviews or approximately 12-16 weeks.

- Classroom work samples and assessment data should support the student's lack of progress with intensive interventions.

Team Processes

Elementary Level

- Principal
- Intervention Specialist
- Grade Level Teachers
- ESL Teacher (as needed)
- SPED teacher
- PBS Facilitator (where applicable)
- Nurse (as needed)

Middle Level

- Principal
- Intervention Specialist
- Grade Level Teachers
- ESL Teacher (as needed)
- SPED teacher
- PBS Facilitator (where applicable)
- Nurse (as needed)
- Counselor/Social Worker (as needed)

High-School Level

- Assistant Principal
- Counselor
- Social Worker (as needed)
- Certified Teachers
- ESL Teacher (as needed)
- SPED teacher (as needed)
- Nurse (as needed)

Progress Monitoring

"NCRTI defines student progress monitoring as repeated measurement of performance to inform the instruction of individual students in general and special education in grades K-8. These tools must be reliable and valid for representing students' development and have demonstrated utility for helping teachers plan more effective instruction."

Essential Components of RTI - A Closer Look at Response to Intervention (April 2010)

What Is Progress Monitoring?

- A method of on-going data collection for a given skill (academic or behavioral)
- Data collection occurs frequently (i.e. weekly, bi-weekly)
- Requires interpretation of that data at regular intervals (every 6-8 weeks)
- Allows for changes to be made in instruction based on the interpretation of the data

What Is Progress Monitoring Designed to Do?

- Estimate rates of improvement (trends)
- Identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress
- Compare the efficacy of different forms of instruction (thereby designing more effective instructional programs for struggling learners)

What Questions Does Progress Monitoring Answer?

- Are students making progress at acceptable rates?
- Are students meeting short-term and long-term goals?
- Does the instruction or intervention need to be adjusted or changed?

Cultural Responsiveness

What Does It Mean to Ensure That ALL Learners Achieve Equitably?

Culturally responsive teaching recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning, enriching classroom experiences and keeping students engaged. Culturally responsive teaching leverages the students' cultural learning styles and tools.

Teachers hold beliefs, knowledge and skills related to teaching (Banks & Banks, 2004; Fang, 1996; Pajares, 1992; Vartuli, 1999) and related to teaching students of diverse populations in specific contexts (Gay & Howard, 2000; Kumar & Hamer, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sitwatu et al., 2011; Snider, 2015). Because beliefs are fundamental to teaching, it is critical for adults to engage in reflective professional learning and dialogue (Lortie, 1975; Nespor, 1987; Nieto, 2010; Pajares, 1992). Through such critical reflection,

teachers, and leaders develop knowledge and skills for being effective educators for diverse populations (Banks, 2004; Cochran-Smith et al., 2004; Howard, 2006; Sleeter & Delgado Bernal, 2004; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This transformative approach to reflective learning enables the development of cultural competence, leading to the actions and implementation of culturally responsive teaching (Howard, 2006) (as cited in Snider, 2015).

Beginning with early phases in 2016-2017, staff members will implement a common framework for engaging our diverse PreK-12 learners in culturally responsive teaching. It is critical for the Park Hill staff to dive into assumptions and myths with an open mind and work towards a transformation around being culturally responsive within and outside of the classroom structure.

Cultural Responsiveness and the RtI Process

As a part of this journey towards Cultural Responsiveness, the district RtI process must be observant of several important areas. Therefore, the RtI process will include the following key components:

- Examination of the relationship between motivation and diversity
- Identification of a framework which works to motivate diverse learners
- Approaches into multicultural curriculum reform
- Authentic ways to include multiple perspectives in curriculum
- Characteristics of caring; understanding pervasive teacher attitudes and expectations that impact the definition of caring
- The effects of teacher-student interactions on student outcomes can lead towards culturally responsive instruction
- The relationship between culture and communication

Frequently Asked Questions about Response to Intervention

Implementation

How is it determined who will receive services under RtI?

A student would not be "referred" to RtI the same as a student would be referred for a special education evaluation. These are two different processes. A student is identified for RtI through the data collection and analysis by a building level team. A special education request for evaluation can be "made by a parent of a child or by an employee of a State educational agency, another State agency, a local educational agency, or a community service agency" (23 IAC 226.110(b)). "Each school district shall develop and

make known to all concerned persons procedures by which an evaluation may be requested" (23 IAC 226.110(a)).

In a four-tier model, a school district should administer a universal screening tool, such as the STAR Reading test, in core academic areas at the beginning of each year to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses and to examine the effectiveness of the core curriculum and instruction. The team would then discuss which students would benefit from supplemental interventions in addition to the core curriculum.

Initially, a building level team consists of building staff members; however, once a student is identified by the team as a student who may need interventions, the parents of the child may become members of the team if needed, in order to develop an intervention plan.

What subjects should RtI encompass?

RtI should encompass the core academic areas, i.e., reading, math, writing, science, and social studies; however, when planning for the implementation of RtI, building teams should focus on reading and math as their starting point and expand to include all core academic areas.

Can students receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions as part of the regular literacy block instructional time?

The 90-minute Literacy Block, for example, is for Tier 1 or core academic instruction only. If a student is in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions, those are in addition to the 90 minutes. Interventions provide more instruction for students.

What types of supports are available to develop and implement RtI in early childhood programs?

State and federal regulations emphasize response to intervention implementation in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Many districts across Missouri utilize Recognition and Response in their early childhood programs.

The state will focus implementation supports on K-12 due to current requirements. Nevertheless, a district may choose to coordinate its early childhood program with RtI and K-12 programs to ensure a seamless transition between the two.

To what degree does a district have to implement an RtI process and how much latitude is it given to implement at its own pace?

All school districts must implement a scientific, research-based intervention model in order to comply with federal and state regulations. After completing the district self-assessment tool, a district will have a better understanding of what it already has in place and what it needs to fully implement RtI. The district plan will list needs and establish a timeline of activities. District plans must explicitly outline the transition phases describing how full implementation for all grade levels and content areas will occur.

Are different curriculum programs needed for each tier?

Instruction and program content should be aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards and Assessment Frameworks. Interventions provided to a student should match his or her needs, as identified through universal screening and ongoing progress monitoring tools. These tools should utilize curriculum based measures (CBMs); therefore, different programs may not be needed.

What are some math programs that are approved under the RtI guidelines for Tiers 1, 2, and 3?

DESE does not review or approve specific programs. However, several other entities do conduct program evaluations.

When students receive Tier 2 or 3 interventions or special education services, what subject area is missed?

This is a scheduling issue that should be determined at the building level. All students receive the core (Tier 1) instruction and interventions. Students needing additional support through Tiers 2, 3, or special education receive these services in addition to the core curriculum (Tier 1). Literacy and numeracy intervention blocks are becoming common practice across the state. Time is found by carefully examining current master schedules to determine how time is currently allocated and how to use staff resources flexibly in order to provide interventions for students.

What certification is required for staff who work with students under an RtI model?

There is no specific certification or endorsement for staff members working with students to provide interventions. The staff member who provides interventions should be trained in the program or curriculum that is used by the district.

How should districts adequately implement RtI at the secondary level?

RtI in secondary schools may have a different implementation approach. Specific universal screening tools may not be as prevalent for the secondary education setting; however, curriculum-based and/or department-level assessments could be used as universal screening tools to assist educators in making data-based decisions regarding student performance. Additionally, assessments already in place, such as STAR, EXPLORE, PLAN, and PSAT, could be used to make placement decisions. Reading should be taught across each content area. Every teacher should be reinforcing reading comprehension skills and focus instruction on how students engage with the text to ensure that all students have a full understanding of it. Additionally, differentiated instructional practices need to be emphasized. Classroom teachers must use a variety of strategies to engage all students in active learning practices.

How does the role of special education change in RtI?

The role of each staff member is determined at the local level. In regards to a special educator, the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) need to ensure that they comply with the district and state working guidelines.

In what setting/location can interventions specific to the RtI model be provided?

According to the federal regulations, 34 CFR 300.309(b)(1):

> Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel.

Therefore, general education instruction and interventions must be provided in the general education setting. These include interventions specific to the RtI model, since RtI is considered a general education practice.

Is the implementation of PBIS a mandate?

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is not being mandated. However, districts do need to use a district- or school-wide positive behavior intervention system to provide a tiered approach to meeting students' behavioral needs.

There are a number of assessments and screening tools available. A school-wide systems approach could include an analysis of the school data related to behavior and/or the analysis of the results from screening and assessment tools.

Data used to determine the need for additional student behavioral support, include office disciplinary referrals, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions. For more information on PBIS, please visit www.pbis.org .

In the state RtI plan, DESE supports the use of behavioral interventions and "continuous monitoring leads to responsive levels of interventions" (p. 3). State and federal regulations define the eligibility for services under the category of emotional disability.

Coordinated Services

How does a school coordinate the efforts of Title I, a four-tier model of instruction, and reading specialist services?

All of the supports and services available within the school should be coordinated collaboratively through the work of the building team rather than through the efforts of isolated departments and services.

Are English Language Learners (ELL) eligible to participate in RtI? If so, how does their status affect participation in RtI?

RtI is intended to benefit all K-12 students; therefore, students who are identified as ELL would participate in RtI just as all other students would participate; this is true for a child eligible for Title I, special education, and other federal or state funded programs. Entitlement to these programs is contingent upon specific criteria and there are specific obligations that a district must conform to for this entitlement. For instance, a student who is identified to receive Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services, must receive these services from an individual that is properly certified. Therefore, the building team could determine that a student that is eligible to receive LEP services would also benefit from RtI interventions. It would be crucial for the building team to involve the specialty teacher to ensure the student receives the most appropriate support from all necessary providers without a redundancy of supports.

A valuable resource on literacy and ELL students is available on the Doing What Works website of the U.S. Department of Education (http://dww.ed.gov/).

How do gifted students fit into the RtI model?

All students, including those identified as gifted, can benefit from RtI because of the differentiated instructional practices. Classroom teachers who differentiate their instruction provide multiple learning opportunities at various levels of learning. Students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in multiple ways. Further, if a student is identified as gifted but is experiencing difficulties in a specific academic or

behavioral area, that student could be considered for some type of intervention to address the targeted area of deficit.

Through analysis of universal screening data, students' strengths and weaknesses should be identified and instructional decisions made based on these data. Teachers need to tailor their instruction to meet the full range of student needs.

How do students with disabilities already receiving special education services fit into the RtI process?

All students need to receive instruction in the core general education curriculum, and interventions should be targeted to meet the students' identified strengths and weaknesses. The main difference for students who receive special education services is that a special educator provides services determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

Parent Involvement

What is the role of parents in the RtI process?

One of the main components of the RtI process is the collaborative team effort. Parents, as members of this team, will be involved in data sharing and decision-making. Raw score data may be analyzed by building personnel; however, the results or conclusions drawn from this analysis should be shared with the team, which includes the parent. The information shared should be specific to the student's progress and allow the team to make informed instructional decisions in a timely manner. The frequency of the data sharing and decision-making timeline should be established by the team when the student's intervention plan is initially developed.

Data Tools

What are the data collection requirements for RtI?

Decisions about specific data-collection processes and tools will be made at the local level and could be considered as local assessment data for district improvement planning.

Team Process

What are the responsibilities of the building team in RtI?

Building teams should use a problem-solving method of decision making to match instructional resources to a student's educational needs. The team must define the problem the student is experiencing by determining the discrepancy between expected performance and the student's actual performance. Once this has been determined, the team establishes a student performance goal in the targeted area(s), and develops a plan that details specific interventions to address the goal and determines how the student's progress will be monitored and implementation integrity will be ensured.

What is the timeline for continuing to use the intervention before determining that a special education evaluation is needed? Is there a maximum time that a student can remain in RtI?

A special education evaluation may be requested at any time, as the federal and state regulations maintain.

There is no set timeline or maximum amount of time that interventions should continue prior to special education referral. The team, which includes the parent, must consider each student's needs on an individual basis and use student data to determine how long an intervention should be continued.

Factors they will need to be consider are: Is the student progressing? Are the interventions being provided sufficient to meet the student's needs? Is the student making sufficient progress to close the gap in the identified area(s)? Can the current interventions be maintained?

How does the RtI process affect the evaluation process?

The Special Education Eligibility Considerations section of the State RtI Plan states "…eligibility decisions typically occur within Tier III when students do not respond to the most intensive interventions, but may occur at any tier." Additionally, the data collected during the RtI process can and should be used as part of the evaluation process for determining special education eligibility.

If a student is found to need an evaluation, what are the types of evaluations used to address processing deficits? Is only the RtI data used, or is other testing included?

Neither federal nor state regulations require assessment of processing deficits when conducting an evaluation to determine eligibility under the category of specific learning

disability (SLD). The regulations do, however, require that a full and individual evaluation be conducted before the initial provision of special education and related services. The state special education regulations at 23 IAC 226.130 state the following in regard to determining SLD eligibility: "…each district shall, no later than the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year, implement the use of a process that determines how the child responds to scientific, research-based interventions as part of [emphasis added] the evaluation procedure described in 34 CFR 300.304." Therefore, while a district must utilize an RtI process as part of the evaluation procedures, it is expected that evaluation data will be collected from multiple sources. The decision about other types of data needed and the evaluation tools used to collect them lies with the building team, which includes the parent.

Appendices