

# Thornton Township High School District 205

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## Introduction

TTHS District 205's Response to Intervention Guidance Document was created using the Illinois State Board of Education's RTI Guidance Document as a framework.

## Vision Statement of RTI

Our vision for Response to Intervention aligns with TTHS District 205's Mission Statement:

*"District 205's school community will create an environment where every student can learn."*

## WE BELIEVE

- The individual has intrinsic value.
- Learning and teaching should be guided by high expectations.
- All students can learn.
- Education is a shared responsibility of the school, student, family, and community.
- Diversity enriches the school community.
- Students learn best in and have a right to have a safe, positive, supportive environment.
- Schools foster social responsibility.

## Definition of Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention (RTI), according to Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), is: "...a multi-level framework designed to maximize student achievement by providing support to students at risk for poor learning outcomes."

RTI is also defined by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE 2007), as the practice of:

1. Providing high quality instruction /intervention matched to students needs.

2. Using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions.

Bender and Shore (2007) explain that "RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION is a process of implementing high-quality, scientifically validated instructional practices based on learner needs, monitoring student progress, and adjusting instruction based on the student's response".

RTI can be used to improve academic achievement as well as behavior. This approach, adopted by ISBE includes:

- Core instruction for all students
- Universal Screening
- Increasingly intensive research-based instructional interventions for students who need extra help
- Progress monitoring

In short, RTI is a problem solving approach to provide additional supports for struggling students.

1. **Core Instruction**

All students receive high-quality, research-based core instruction in their regular classroom. Core instruction includes whole-group and small-group instruction (such as reading groups).

2. **Universal Screening**

School staff screens students by assessing their academic/behavioral performance. This screening is used to identify students who are struggling (for example, failing to reach established learning benchmarks) and may need specific interventions.

3. **Increasingly Intensive Research-Based Interventions**

When results of screening or other data indicate that a student is struggling, an intervention to help with the specific problem is implemented. These research-based interventions are determined by a team that includes the parent and student, and are provided for a specific duration and increase the intensity of instruction in order to improve the student's achievement.

### 4. **Progress Monitoring**

Progress monitoring is used to make informed decisions based on the student's response to research-based interventions. Progress monitoring occurs frequently during the course of an intervention to determine how productively the student is responding.

#### RTI *IS*...

- Moving away from immediately placing students in special education at the first sign of struggle.
- Providing targeted and intense academic support to students in order to enhance or increase their motivation for learning and overall academic success.
- Addressing the reason for academic failure.
- Intended to help as many students as possible meet proficiency standards.
- Focused primarily on effective instruction to enhance student growth.

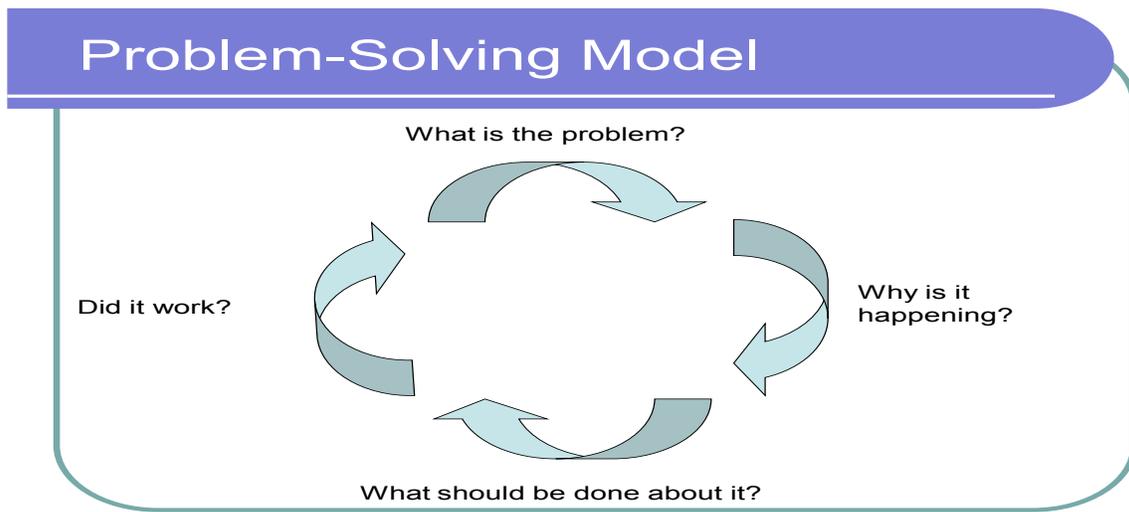
#### RTI *IS NOT*...

- A program for increasing or decreasing special education numbers.
- A stand-alone education initiative.

## CORE PRINCIPLES OF RTI

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) has identified the following core principles of RTI

- **We CAN effectively teach ALL children**  
All children can learn.
- **Intervene Early**  
It's best to intervene early, when learning and behavioral issues become apparent.
- **Use a multi-tier model of service delivery**  
To efficiently differentiate instruction for all students, tiered models of service delivery are used in RTI systems.
- **Use research-based, scientifically validated interventions/instruction**  
To ensure that students are exposed to curriculum and teaching that has demonstrated effectiveness.
- **Monitor student progress to inform instruction**  
The only method to determine if a student is improving is to monitor the student's progress.
- **Use data to make decisions**  
A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.
- **Use a problem-solving method to make decisions within a multi-tier model.**



### **Benefits of RTI**

Implementation of RTI will enhance learning across the board in our classes and ultimately *benefit all of the students we service* (Bender and Shores, 2007).

"Taken seriously and implemented effectively, RTI has the potential to *transform classrooms into highly effective, highly motivating arenas of learning*" (Shores & Chester: 2009).

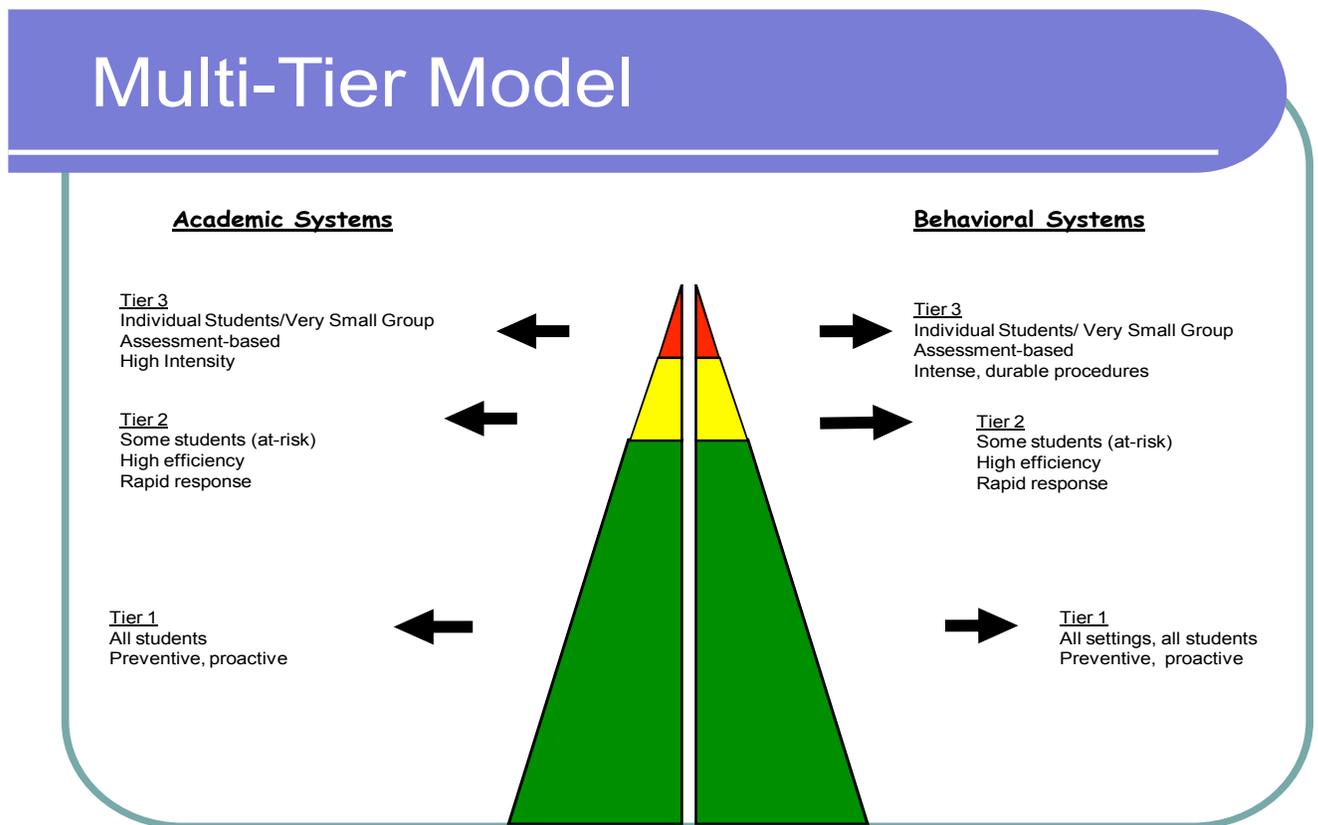
RTI focuses the entire educational system on the success of all students. This systemic process enables educators to target instructional interventions in response to children's specific areas of need as soon as those needs become apparent. Research supported by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA), states that implementing an RTI process through scientifically-based programs and early intervening services reduces the need to label children with learning or behavioral disabilities. This fact results from educators matching instruction and interventions to meet individual student needs in a general education setting (Batsche, Elliot, Graden, Grimes, Lovaleski, Shrag, M. & Tilly, 2005). In addition, RTI fosters collaboration between teachers, school support personnel, administrators, and families in order to educate all students. Families receive information regarding their child's progress more frequently, and continuous home-school collaboration allows parents to become active and meaningful participants in the school staff's educational efforts (Reschly, 2007).

### **Additional Benefits of RTI include:**

- Documentation of learning rates across peers in response to the same instruction.
- Communication of the school's expectations for monitoring of student performance.
- Provision of collaborative teaching experiences.
- Administrative leadership attaining a global picture of instructional practices in the school.
- Improved identification of students with disabilities. (Adapted from Commonwealth of Virginia DOE, 2007)

Tiers of RTI

Response to Intervention is usually identified by a 3 tier model. Tier 1 refers to the core curriculum that meets the learning needs of approximately 80% or more of the students in the school. Tier 1 has no intervention plan, because the research-based and differentiated instructional strategies used and practiced in the classroom are effective. Tier 2 refers to students who may be identified as "at-risk", or who require targeted supports/ interventions/instruction in addition to those provided within the core curriculum to be successful. Approximately 20% of the population can be identified as Tier 2. Tier 3 refers to approximately 5% of students who are not successful at Tiers 1 or 2 and need more intensive, small group or individual interventions to supplement the core curriculum.





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	Step 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is still low-responding or the successful intervention is so intensive that the student may require formal support: refer student for Special Education consideration.</li> <li>• IEP Eligibility Meeting as required by law.</li> </ul>
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Tier	Interventions
<b>Tier 1</b>	Core curriculum and instruction provided to all students with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research or evidence based instructional strategies</li> <li>• Differentiation</li> <li>• Embedded Interventions</li> <li>• Common accommodations</li> <li>• CRISS strategies</li> <li>• Quantum learning strategies</li> <li>• PLATO Lab</li> <li>• Communication Period</li> <li>• TASP/ARC/ASAP</li> <li>• Saturday Tutoring School</li> <li>• Twilight School</li> <li>• Small group/peer tutoring</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 2</b>	Targeted interventions for some low-responding students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted/strategic differentiation</li> <li>• Continue Tier 1 supports</li> <li>• Double dose classes</li> </ul>

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<b>Tier 3</b>	Intensive interventions for individual low-responding students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wilson reading</li><li>• Pre-Algebra</li></ul>	
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### STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Before implementing RTI systems, schools must first address their preparedness. Each should develop a comprehensive framework for implementing RTI that includes an evaluation of the current infrastructure relative to leadership, learning, curriculum, screening, and professional development. Excellent resources that provide concrete guidance are the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), *Response to Intervention: Blueprints for Implementing, District and School Building Levels* (Elliot & Morrison, 2008; Kurns & Tilly, 2008). These documents may be found at <http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/DISTRICT.pdf> and <http://www.nasdsc.org/Portals/0/SCHOOL.pdf>.

Based on the Building-Level Blueprints for Implementation, to implement RTI within Thornton Township School District 205, a school's comprehensive framework should involve three components:

- Component 1: Consensus Building
- Component 2: Infrastructure Building
- Component 3: Implementation

Component 1 focuses on schools having the time and support available to build consensus among key stakeholders, having the necessary tools, and understanding the process and importance of building buy-in through these steps:

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- Provide information and coordination with district administration.
- Provide information to school staff and others about RTI.
- Identify consensus level among staff necessary for implementing RTI
- Determine next steps
- Plan to support change initiative.

Component 2 includes a school identifying and appointing a district committee that has appropriate training and skill development to lead RTI and support the building in working systematically through RTI guiding questions. Critical components of this phase include the following:

- Form a committee.
- Provide the committee with appropriate training and skill development to lead RTI.
- Develop an action plan

Component 3 focuses on building a master schedule around the needs of the students, including providing for interventions/extensions in addition to the core instruction. The team establishes scheduled dates for the assessment system and decision making, as well as evaluation. Actions that are part of component three include:

- Provide professional development and ongoing supports for those administering assessments and providing instruction.
- Implement established procedures for assessments and periodic data analysis.
- Implement established procedures for core, supplemental, and intensive instruction.
- Monitor implementation.
- Collect, analyze, and summarize program evaluation data.
- Communicate regularly with school staff
- Celebrate successes.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

RTI is an ongoing team effort and, as a result, many roles and responsibilities of educators will change. The following responsibilities reflect examples of how roles may transform when implementing RTI. Local Education Agencies (LEA) maintain authority over defining the roles of administrators, general and special educators, student services personnel and support staff.

## **RTI District Leadership Team**

- Team Tasks
  - Assemble a multi-disciplinary team, including administrators, teachers representing all levels and instructional areas, counselors, school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, parents, community leaders, and students.
  - Become familiar with the content of the RTI guidance document.
  - Secure "buy-in" on beliefs of response to intervention as a systematic process from all invested parties in the district.
  - Lead efforts to create infrastructure for implementing RTI in Illinois, including establishing rules to determine when a student is not responding to instruction and to assess effectiveness of instruction.
  - Conceptualize instruction to the tiers and identify instructional supports.
  - Provide necessary technology, materials, and resources.
  - Attend to state and district practices and needs regarding screening and diagnostic assessment of students.
  - Provide initial and continuing professional development/coaching opportunities for new staff, and refresher training for other staff.
  - Provide support as needed to principals and other leadership staff.
  - Expand knowledge of student progress monitoring.
  - Acquire knowledge of existing screening and diagnostic assessments.
  
- Establish consistency of RTI processes across the district.

## **School-Level RTI Leadership Team**

- Team Task
  - Educate parents about RTI practices.
  - Identify needs for professional development.
  - Identify Tier 2 and 3 instructional intervention/supports.
  - Write intervention plans.
  - Communicate intervention plans and progress to all personnel involved
  - Monitor progress of all students receiving targeted and intense interventions.

## **Principals/Assistant Principals**

- Assistant Principal's Tasks
  - Familiarize school RTI team and staff with the systematic process.
  - Help team procure resources and provide needed professional development.
  - Ensure fidelity of implementation through routine, periodic observation and discussions with staff.
  - Create conditions that enable teachers to be successful
  - Assist in establishing criteria for increasing/decreasing intensity of student interventions.
  - Provide professional development activities that will advance the implementation of RTI processes.

## **General Educator**

- General Educator's Tasks
  - Implement the system of progress monitoring in the classroom and across content (reading, writing and math areas/ AIL and Coaches).
  - Identify students for diagnostic testing or for targeted intervention.
  - Provide aggregate data of classroom results to RTI Team.
  - Provide information to parents if using the results for reporting student progress.
  - Collaborate in content meetings to align, map and implement evidence-based curricula, common assessments and progress monitoring tools.

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- Use evidence-based instructional strategies.
- Document any relevant information and interventions used on a student (anecdotal notes, RTI Form, Power School etc.)

### **AIL's and Literacy and Numeracy Coaches**

- **AIL/Coaches' Tasks**
  - Collaborate with general educators to assist in identification of students for secondary/tertiary tier intervention and to provide suggestions/consultations on instructional strategies.
  - Collaborate by assisting in planning and delivery of Tier 1 & 2 interventions and differentiated instruction.
  - Provide targeted and intensive interventions.
  - Document any relevant information and interventions used on a student

### **Specialists (Guidance Counselor, Dean, School Psychologist, Social Worker, Other Specialists)**

- **Specialists' Tasks**
  - Participate as members of the RTI Team to:
    - Provide appropriate behavioral instruction and prevention programs.
    - Analyze school and student data to identify impediments to academic and behavioral achievement.
    - Use a multi-disciplinary team to identify learning, behavioral and health difficulties for those students not meeting standards.
    - Use a problem solving method to determine the most appropriate interventions for identified students.
    - Progress monitor, document, and adjust interventions in light of the student's response
  - Provide research-based social, emotional, and behavioral supports as needed.

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- Reading and math specialists-provide support, diagnostics, and interventions.

### **RTI District Coordinator**

- Coordinator Tasks
  - Monitor progress of students in secondary/tertiary tiers of intervention in a particular content area.
  - Identify when a student is making adequate progress in a more intense instructional level.
  - Collaborate with general educators to assist in identification of students for secondary/tertiary tier intervention, and to provide suggestions/consultation on instructional strategies for students.
  - Support progress-monitoring goals into plan development.
  - Collaborate by assisting in planning of Tier 1, 2 & 3 interventions that implement differentiated instruction to meet and/or accommodate a student's specific need.
  - Provide direction on targeted and intense interventions.
  - Support documentation of any relevant information and interventions used on a student (anecdotal notes, RTI Forms, Power School).

### **Meeting the Needs of All Learners**

#### **Low Incidence Students**

The goals of education for students with low-incidence disabilities (i.e. blindness, low vision, deafness, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blindness, significant developmental delay, complex health issues, serious physical impairment, multiple disability, and autism) do not differ from those expected for all students: high expectations with access to general education standards and benchmarks, inclusion in the community, and a high quality of life. Although some students with specific needs require specialized curricula and instructional practices, all can learn and most can learn within the general education curriculum when appropriate teaching techniques, accommodations, and modifications are utilized (Jackson, 2005). Strategies for using Universal Design to meet the needs of students with low-incidence

disabilities within an RTI process may be found at:

[http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac\\_lowinc.html](http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_lowinc.html).

### **English Language Learners**

"The implementation of a tiered instructional approach for English language learners (ELLs) should include consideration of the process and timelines of second language acquisition, specifically Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) development, as well as cultural and linguistic differences among students. The response to intervention framework, with specific regard to English Language Learners, should be designed to reduce threats to the reliability and validity of decisions and inferences that arise due to language and cultural differences." (Ortiz & Ochoa, 2006).

Several Federal and State legal statutes (Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S.,563,1974; Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act; the Office of Civil Rights) require English language development instruction for limited English proficient (LEP) students. In the implementation of a tiered instructional approach such as RTI, Tier 1 practice for all LEP students includes English language development instruction.

The Illinois English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and LAS Links English Proficiency Assessment data should drive instruction and assessment practices for LEP students. According to the Office of Civil Rights guidelines, educators must document English proficiency level appropriate instruction and assessment modifications and adaptations at all tiers within the RTI model on an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each LEP student.

Language development must not be the sole basis for the determination for LEP student placement and/or movement from one intervention tier to another. Guiding questions for LEP student tier placement should include, but are not limited to the following questions:

- Is the instruction targeted to and appropriate for the student's level of English proficiency and learning needs?
- Is the teacher implementing appropriate research-based practices with fidelity?

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- Is the learning environment culturally and linguistically conducive to language development and English language learning?
- Is the student making progress (language or academic?), and how is progress being measured?

If it is determined that a student has not made adequate progress after receiving appropriate English language development instruction in Tier 1, educators may consider interventions. A multi-disciplinary team, including members with expertise in culturally responsive instruction, should convene to determine appropriate intervention programming. Any LEP students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions must continue to receive English language development instruction. All students, regardless of tier placement, must also have access to the general education curriculum and instruction in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment.

Educators must evaluate any student with limited English proficiency considered for special education services in their native language in order to recognize the evaluation as a valid indicator of academic development delay. A qualified team of SL (Speech and Language) professionals should also be included in the evaluation process. Detailed guidelines for the referral, evaluation and retention of LEP students are available from the Office of English Language Learning and Migrant Educations.

### **African-American Students**

Research identifies RTI as an effective structure to meet the academic and behavioral needs of African-American students, and to prevent over-identification for special education services. VanDerHeyden, et al. (2001) report that students responded positively to RTI interventions and that African-American students responded more quickly than other ethnic groups, while Marston (2001) identified a 50% decrease in cognitive disability placements of African-American students over a six-year period and a 12% drop in placements in all exceptionalities over a three-year period. RTI also results in an overall significant decrease in the risk indices for minority students (Batsche, 2006).

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Implementation of a tiered instructional approach for African-American learners should include staff development that promotes culturally responsive teaching, respect of students' cultural identity, evidence-based vocabulary instruction, instruction and interventions that reflect population identity, and increased development of family-school partnerships (Cooper, 2008; Klingner, et al, 2005)

### **Children of Poverty**

Robert Pasternack (2007) stated that "if students don't learn the way we teach, we must teach the way they learn." RTI offers a tool that helps schools monitor the effectiveness of curricula, instruction, and interventions/extensions and a means to meet the differentiated instructional needs of diverse student populations. Children of poverty often enter school with inadequate expressive and receptive vocabularies and a limited background of experiences (Horowitz, 2005). They may have limited resources available to them and few learning activities supported in the home. These deficits frequently result in inappropriate placement in special education.

Implementation of a tiered instructional approach for children of poverty should include effective district and school leadership, staff development that promotes understanding the culture of poverty, targeting low-performing students, starting as early as possible and extending instructional time, implementing evidence-based curriculum and instructional improvements (especially vocabulary development and background enrichment), data-based decision making, and engaging families and communities (Parrett, 2005).

### **Connections to Special Education**

#### **Eligibility Determination for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)**

In District's 205 RTI Plan, eligibility for a SLD is explored when a student is still a non-responder after Tier 3 or the frequency and duration of the Tier 3 intervention is so intensive it would fall under special education services. "IDEA regulations identify non-responders as follows:

- The child does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State approved grade-level standards in one of the areas identified in

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paragraph (a)(1) of this section when using a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based interventions...(U.S. Depart of Education, 2006, Sec. 3300.309(a)(2)(i))

This determination should be made based on careful interpretation of the data and consideration of the appropriateness of the interventions provided. Some students may receive multiple interventions or multiple rounds of a single intervention prior to reaching this point. Essentially, the data must indicate that the student has made inadequate progress and is unable to meet grade-level mastery without more intensive evaluation and/or intervention. At this point, the RTI Team may consider the need for further information to determine the presence of disability." Shores & Chester, 2009)

Under Article 7, the eligibility determination for specific learning disabilities focuses on insufficient progress, appropriateness of instruction, and instructionally relevant assessment information, not on the discrepancy between academic achievement and global cognitive (intellectual) functioning. A student with a specific learning disability does not achieve at age/grade level and makes insufficient progress when using a process based on his/her response to evidence-based instruction practices and a demonstrated pattern of strengths and weaknesses. These attributes cannot be a result of any of the following factors:

- A visual, hearing, or motor disability
- A cognitive disability
- An emotional disability
- Cultural factors
- Environmental or economic disadvantage
- Limited English proficiency
- Lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math

Therefore, identification requires data documenting the school provided appropriate instruction in general education and administered repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals. These assessments should demonstrate inadequate academic growth when considering grade- and age-level expectations and insufficient progress over time or patterns of deficits in skills

and factors related to the area of suspected disability that do not result from above cause. Schools must also provide evidence of utilization of evidence-based instructional and intervention strategies and fidelity of implementation.

**At any time, a parent may make a request for an evaluation to any licensed personnel (teachers, counselors, school psychologists or social workers, principals or other administrators) either verbally or in writing.** The school then has ten instructional days to provide written notice proposing or refusing educational evaluation that includes the evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report and any other relevant factors on which the decision is based. If an evaluation is proposed, the notice must also include a description of the evaluation process; if denied, the parent may challenge. If educators have monitored the student's response to evidence-based interventions, evaluation must take place within twenty instructional days; if not, the time-line changes to fifty instructional days to allow the school time to collect relevant data.

### **Eligibility Determination for Emotional Disability**

Eligibility as a student with an emotional disability in Article 7 includes analysis of the following:

- Current academic achievement
- Emotional and Behavioral functioning
- Social and developmental history (including communication skills, social interaction skills, responses to sensory experiences, relevant family and environmental information, patterns of emotional adjustment, and unusual or atypical behaviors)
- A functional behavior assessment that details any interventions used to address the behaviors leading to the referral
- Medical and mental health information that is educationally relevant
- Any other relevant assessments that inform the Case Conference Committee about the student's needs

Therefore, identification requires data documenting that the school provided appropriate behavioral and social-emotional evidence-based instructional and

intervention strategies in general education, monitored the student's progress toward grade- and age-level expectations, and ensured fidelity of implementation.

### **Eligibility Determination for Language Impairment**

Language impairments refer to deficits in the comprehension or expression of spoken or written language resulting from organic or nonorganic causes that are non-maturational in nature. These deficits affect the student's primary language systems in one or more of the following components:

- Word retrieval
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Semantics
- Pragmatics

Under Article 7, eligibility for special education as a student with a language impairment is based on:

- Assessment of the student's progress in the general education curriculum that includes an analysis of any interventions used to address the academic concerns leading to the referral for the educational evaluation and current academic achievement
- A social and developmental history (communication skills, social interaction skills, responses to sensory experiences, relevant family and environmental information, etc.)
- An observation of the student in his/her learning environment to document the student's academic performance in the area(s) of difficulty
- Available medical information that is educationally relevant
- Any other assessments and information to inform the Case Conference Committee of the student's special education and related services needs

Therefore, identification requires data documenting that the school provided appropriate instruction in general education and administered repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals that demonstrate inadequate

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academic growth when considering grade- and age-level expectations and insufficient progress over time. Schools must also provide evidence of utilization of research-based instructional and intervention strategies and fidelity of implementation.

### **District 205 Research-Based Strategies and Assessments**

#### The District 205 Three-Tiered Model of Student Supports

The District 205 RTI Team recognizes that student achievement is directly related to the quality of instruction delivered in the classroom on a daily basis. The three-tiered model of student supports ensures that instructional strategies, interventions, and supports that are put in place for all students are scientifically research-based and effective.

In order to determine whether or not a strategy is effective in promoting student achievement, educators must closely monitor student progress. The three-tiered model of student supports requires that educators document student response to research-based classroom interventions prior to referral to more intensive instructional supports, including referral for special education testing or services.

#### **District 205 Problem-Solving Model for Decision Making**

A problem-solving approach to RTI allows for individual student needs to be matched with appropriate interventions. District 205 has selected a problem-solving model for its RTI program that is built upon the following steps:

1. Data will be utilized to identify individual student needs
2. Identification of individual student needs will require the development of appropriate interventions and supports for that student
3. Student progress will be closely monitored as a means of assessing student response to these interventions and supports

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These problem solving steps are followed at each Tier of the RTI process, and are explained in detail below.

### 1. Data will be Utilized to Identify Individual Student Needs

"Data" for the purpose of identifying individual student needs can come from a combination of:

- Teacher observation
- Curriculum-Based Measures
- EXPLORE scores
- Literacy screeners
- Grades
- Performance on standardized testing instruments
- Performance on teacher-made tests or quizzes
- Performance on interim assessments
- Attendance records
- Detentions
- Referrals

Utilizing available data, the teacher determines that a student is not achieving at the expected level, OR, that student behaviors are impeding expected achievement.

The teacher will:

- identify the nature of the problem: academic, attendance, or behavioral
- complete an RTI referral form identifying the problem in detail and documenting interventions attempted

### 2. Identification of individual student needs will require the development of appropriate interventions and supports for that student

Once a student has been identified for Tier 2 interventions:

- the team will develop an intervention plan to meet the student's individual needs
- the team will establish a goal or achievement standard for the student

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- the team will determine how student progress will be monitored

### 3. Student progress will be closely monitored as a means of assessing student response to these interventions and supports

Once the team establishes a goal or achievement standard for the student, progress is monitored on an ongoing basis. Depending on the nature of the intervention, progress monitoring may take the form of:

- monitoring student performance on interim assessments
- monitoring student performance on curriculum based measures
- the regular review of student work samples
- Teacher/team observation
- Behavioral measures, including frequency counts, etc.

The team may determine that a lack of response to intervention may require additional/alternative supports.

### Integrated Data Systems that Drive Instruction

As students move through the tiers of the RTI process, progress monitoring of student achievement becomes both more specific and more frequent. For example, students receiving Tier 1 Universal instruction are monitored district-wide on a quarterly basis within each CORE classroom (Math, Science, English), and on a more frequent basis via curriculum based measures within the classroom. Students who are identified as not meeting established performance criteria as a result of progress monitoring data are targeted for additional interventions within Tier 2.

Progress monitoring at Tier 2 is both more specific and more frequent. Data are collected at least bi-weekly as a means of monitoring student performance on individually established goals.

For students receiving intensive interventions within Tier 3, data are collected at least weekly as a means of monitoring student progress on individual established goals.

At all Tiers of the RTI process, progress monitoring via data collection is a crucial component in designing the targeted interventions and supports that best meet

individual student needs. In addition, any determination of student eligibility for special education or related services requires that data indicating a student's response to interventions be collected at each stage of the RTI process.

### **RTI: Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Who should serve on the RTI Team?**

RTI Teams can be flexible in their membership but should be multidisciplinary (e.g., school counselor, special or general education teachers, building administrator, etc.). The RTI Teams will make every effort to solicit teachers' input to increase the team's credibility with classroom personnel.

#### **What is the parent's role in the RTI model?**

The school is responsible for finding ways for struggling students to be successful—whether or not parents choose to actively participate in their children's educational program. Nonetheless, there is wide agreement that parents play a crucial role in guiding and motivating their children toward academic success. For example, parents can serve as influential role models for work and study skills, set up and supervise homework sessions, stay in close communication with the school about their child's academic performance and behaviors, and dispense home privileges contingent on the effort that their child makes in school. There is no question that the protective factors offered by parents who are positively involved in their children's schooling directly promote academic success and support the mission of RTI. Schools must, however, also recognize that, for a variety of reasons, not all parents find it easy to be involved in their child's education. Schools can most fully engage the power of parent participation by expecting that teachers will contact parents when a student begins to experience difficulties in school, inviting parents to attend RTI team meetings.

**Once an intervention plan has been designed by the RTI Team, how long should that intervention last before the team meets again to evaluate its effectiveness?**

An intervention plan should be in place long enough to judge with confidence whether that plan is working. District 205 recommends about 3-4 weeks. However, teams should also have the latitude to set longer or shorter intervention time spans based on the facts of the specific student case. For example, a high school may allow 6 instructional weeks to pass before holding a follow-up RTI Team meeting on a student whose intervention targets content area vocabulary but may schedule a follow-up meeting in only 3 weeks for a student whose intervention addresses disruptive classroom behaviors.

**How many intervention plans should the RTI Team implement before deciding that a student has failed to adequately respond to general-education interventions?**

The RTI team will develop its own criteria for judging when a series of general education intervention plans have failed to work and for deciding that a student is not responding adequately to intervention on an individual basis. The district's RTI decision rules for a referral to special education should require evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that a student is not responding to general education interventions.

**Can parents request an evaluation while their child is involved in an RTI process?**

Yes. The right for parents to request a special education evaluation at any time has not changed, nor have the requirements associated with the district's response to such a request. Therefore, parents can request a special education evaluation at any time prior to, during, or following their child's involvement in an RTI process. If the district agrees that the student may be a student with a disability requiring special education and related services, then it must provide notice of the intent to conduct an evaluation, obtain written parental consent, and complete the evaluation. If the district does not agree that a special education evaluation is

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warranted, a written notice must be provided to the parents that informs them of this decision and explains the reasons why it has been determined an evaluation is not indicated. The parent can challenge the district's decision by requesting mediation and/or a due process hearing to resolve the dispute over the student's need for an evaluation. Once written parental consent is obtained, the 60 school-day timeline begins for completing the evaluation, determining eligibility, and if the student is eligible, developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### **Parent Involvement**

It is important to keep constant communication between school staff and parents in regards to student's progress and related school activities. Through this two-way communication, parents are able to play an important role as they assist in the learning process by being involved in decision making, as it affects the instruction that their child will receive on a daily basis. This is done in an attempt to prevent long term academic failure, and increase the probability of a student's overall success.

In the RTI process parents should expect the following:

- Knowledge of interventions that are being applied
- Identification of staff responsible for delivering the instruction
- Expected outcomes for their child
- Frequent communication with all staff involved in the RTI process
- Frequent progress data
- Due process, hearing, and placement decisions
- Mutual agreement on the implementation, plan, and timeline

### **Parent Links**

- What You Need to Know about IDEA 2004 Response to Intervention (RTI):  
New Ways to Identify Specific Learning Disabilities  
<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/rti.index.htm>
- A Parent's Guide to Response to Intervention (RTI)  
<http://www.abcadvocacy.net/ABC%20FAQ%202008.htm>

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- What is RTI?  
<http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/what/whatisrti>
- More About RTI  
<http://k12advocates.com/articles/More-About-RTI.html>
- Response to RTI intervention  
<http://www.rtiap.org/rti/about/faq.php>

Parent involvement is reflected in District 205's core values through responsive communication, shared leadership, and stake-holder focus. At District 205 parents should be involved throughout the educational process. The following bullets illustrate many of the ways we involve and communicate with parents.

### **Tier 1**

- ✓ Access to Power School assignments, grades, and attendance
- ✓ Notes/phone calls or conferences when a student's grade drops or there is a behavior issue
- ✓ Progress reports
- ✓ Report cards
- ✓ Robo call
- ✓ Parent- teacher conference
- ✓ Positive reinforcement

### **Tier 2**

- ✓ Progress monitoring updates
- ✓ Informal communication with parent/guardian concerning Tier 2 interventions
- ✓ Suggest intervention strategies
- ✓ Where applicable implement and reinforce interventions at home
- ✓ Any other interventions used in Tier one
- ✓ Conference with RTI team

### **Tier 3 (Our interventions include, but are not limited to)**

- ✓ Parents invited to RTI team meeting
- ✓ Required notification of tier 3 interventions provided to parents
- ✓ Progress monitoring updates
- ✓ Parents involved in the development of a behavior plan
- ✓ Regular communication with your child's teachers

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Accommodation:**

Accommodations are changes in instruction that enable children to demonstrate their abilities in the classroom or assessment/ testing setting.

Accommodations are designed to provide equity, not advantage, for children with disabilities.

### **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):**

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is a statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It requires each state to ensure that all schools and districts make adequate yearly progress as defined by states and as approved by the US Department of Education.

### **At Risk Students:**

At risk students are students whose initial performance level predict poor learning outcomes unless intervention occurs to accelerate knowledge, skill, or ability development.

### **Core Curriculum:**

The core curriculum is the course of study deemed critical and usually made mandatory for all students of a school or school system. Core curricula are often instituted at the elementary and secondary levels by local school boards, Departments of Education, or other administrative agencies charged with overseeing education.

### **Criterion-Referenced Assessment:**

Criterion-referenced assessment measures what a student understands, knows, or can accomplish in relation to a specific performance objective.

### **Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM):**

CBM is an approach to measurement that is used to screen students or to monitor student progress in math, reading, writing, and spelling. With CBM, teachers and schools can assess individual responsiveness to instruction.

### **Differentiated Instruction:**

Differentiated instruction refers to educators tailoring the curriculum, teaching environments, and practices to create appropriately different learning experiences for students in order to meet each students' needs. To differentiate instruction is to recognize students' varying interests, readiness levels, and levels of responsiveness to the standard core curriculum and to plan responsively to address these individual differences.

### **Disproportionality:**

Disproportionality is the over- or under-representation of racially, culturally, ethnically or linguistically diverse groups of students in special education, restrictive learning environments, or school disciplinary actions in comparison to other students.

### **Early Intervening Services:**

Early intervening services are the preventative components of No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Early intervening services are implemented to benefit students who manifest risk for poor learning outcomes but have not been identified as needing special education.

### **Evidence Based Practice:**

Evidence based practices are educational practices and instructional strategies that are supported by scientific research studies.

### **Fidelity:**

Fidelity refers to the accurate and consistent provision or delivery of instruction in the manner in which it was designed or prescribed according to research findings and/ or developers' specifications.

### **Formative Assessment:**

Formative assessment is a form of evaluation used to plan instruction by systematically providing continuous feedback to both the student and the teacher diagnosing skill, ability and knowledge gaps, progress and instruction.

### **IDEA:**

IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, also referred to as IDEA. It is a federal statute related to providing a free, appropriate, public education and early intervening services to students with disabilities from birth through age 21.

### **Inclusion:**

Inclusion is a service delivery model where students with identified disabilities are educated with general education age/grade-level peers.

### **Intensive Intervention:**

Intensive academic and/or behavioral interventions are characterized by their increased focus for students who fail to respond to less intensive forms of instruction. Intensity can be increased through many dimensions including length, frequency, and duration of implementation.

### **Learning Disability:**

The IDEA of 2004 definition of a Learning Disability/ Specific Learning Disability is: The child does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet State approved grade level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or state approved grade level standards:

- a) Oral expression
- b) Listening comprehension
- c) Written expression
- d) Basic reading skill
- e) Reading fluency skills
- f) Reading comprehension
- g) Mathematic calculation
- h) Mathematics problem solving

### **Modifications:**

Modifications are alteration that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level.

### **Norm-Referenced Assessment:**

Norm-referenced assessment compares a student's performance to that of an appropriate peer group.

### **Problem Solving Approach:**

Within RTI, a problem solving approach is used to individually tailor an intervention. It typically has four stages: problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation, and plan evaluation.

### **Progress Monitoring:**

Progress monitoring is used to assess students' academic performance, to quantify a student rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.

### **Respond to Intervention (RTI):**

Response to intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and 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.

### **Scaffolding:**

Scaffolding is an instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn the task and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students.

### **Screening:**

Universal screening is conducted, usually as a first stage within a screening process, to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening tests are usually brief; conducted with all students at a grade level; and followed by additional testing or short term progress monitoring to corroborate students' risk status.

### **Second Tier:**

Secondary intervention supplements primary intervention such that students receive additional research-based preventative treatment.

### **Summative Assessment:**

Summative assessment is a form of evaluation used to describe the effectiveness of an instruction program or intervention.

### **Third Tier:**

Tertiary intervention supplements primary and secondary intervention to intensify instruction. Tertiary level of intervention often occurs under the auspices of special education. Individualized education program (IEP) goals are established; individualized student programs are developed formatively using systematic progress monitoring; and student progress data are also used to determine when a student may return to secondary or primary prevention.

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This glossary was compiled using the following resources:

The RTI *Glossary of Terms* developed by the IDEA Partnership at NASDSE, the RTI Action Network *Glossary*, the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring, and the National Center on Response to Intervention.