

What's going on with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)?

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What is RtI?

- FIRST AND FOREMOST...The RtI Model is a tiered approach to providing services and interventions to students at increasing levels of intensity based on progress monitoring and data analysis.
 - Rate of progress over time is used to make important educational decisions, including possible determination of eligibility for exceptional student education services.

Why?

- NCLB lays foundation
- IDEA 2004 says so
- History of...
 - Late Intervention “Services” with little evidence of efficacy
 - Rapidly increasing numbers of students labeled with disabilities
 - Disproportionality

What does NCLB do?

- Emphasizes
 - data-based decision making
 - use of scientifically-based research
 - accountability
- Lays the foundation for
 - A systematic problem-solving approach
 - Response to Intervention

What does IDEA 04 do?

Presents the “window” for RtI to become a widely articulated concept.

This creates the potential problem...that RtI may be perceived as a special education initiative.

(5) SPECIAL RULE FOR ELIBIGILITY DETERMINATION – In making a determination of eligibility under paragraph (4)(A), a child shall not be determined to be a child with a disability if the determinant factor for such determination is—

(A) lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including in the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the ESEA of 1965)

(B) lack of instruction in math

(C) limited English proficiency

Sec. 614 (b) (6)

Specific Learning Disabilities

(A) IN GENERAL

“ ...a local educational agency shall not be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy...”

Sec. 614 (6)

Specific Learning Disabilities

(B) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY

"...a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedure..."

- *Process* refers to "Problem Solving Process"
- *Responds* refers to "Response to Intervention"

What does our current
state board rule say?

Not much... yet!

SBER 6A-6.03018 (2)

Criteria for eligibility.

- (c) Evidence of academic achievement significantly below student's level of intellectual functioning
1. Below age 7: a significant discrepancy
 2. Ages 7-10: discrepancy of one standard deviation
 3. Ages 11 and above: discrepancy of one and a half standard deviation
 4. District may use additional criteria

SBER 6A-6.03018 (3)

Procedures for student referral.

(a) Minimum Procedures

1. ID of learning problem and current level of functioning
2. 2 conferences
3. 2 observations
4. 2 interventions
5. Screening
6. Review of cumulative record
7. Review of attendance

Update on Rule Revision Progress

The background features a grid of thin black lines. Several rectangular areas are filled with solid colors: a light yellow rectangle in the upper center, a light green rectangle on the right side, a light purple rectangle at the bottom center, and a blue rectangle at the bottom right. Other colored rectangles in shades of green, brown, and grey are partially visible at the top and left edges.

Impact of Federal Statute and Regulations

Implications for Policy Development and Practice

- Impact on general education to enhance core curriculum and select and implement deliverable Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions is significant
- RtI requirement for ALL special education referrals that address reading, math and LEP will impact all schools regardless of the LEA decision for LD
- Changes in types of assessment and use of assessment data will require leadership and training

Implications for Policy Development and Practice

- Some changes in staff roles (e.g., school psychology, teacher support staff) are inevitable
 - Assessment and data-based decision making
 - Intervention development, selection, and support
- Clearly articulated requirements for data-based decision making (e.g., intervention evaluation, eligibility determination) must be developed and professional development activities implemented to ensure implementation fidelity

Who will become *interventionists*?

- School Psychologists
- Speech/Language Pathologists
- Guidance Counselors
- SLD Specialists
- General and Exceptional Educators
- Parents
- Administrators
- etc.
- In essence: All Members of the Problem-Solving Team

Outcomes of State Efforts

- RtI TAP disseminated on March 3, 2006 and can be accessed at:
<http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/pdf/y2006-8.pdf>
- Emphasis on General Education Leadership
- Problem-Solving/RtI State Grant Project is established and accessible at:
www.floridarti@usf.edu

Statewide Training Focus

Demonstration Sites

Collaborators

- Bureau of School Improvement
- Bureau of Exceptional Student Education and Student Services
- Just Read, Florida!
- Florida Center for Reading Research
- LD Research Project
- Student Support Services Project
- Math and Science
- Reading First Professional Development

Statewide PS/RtI Project Team

- **Project Co-Directors**
 - George Batsche
 - Michael Curtis
- **Project Leader**
 - Clark Dorman
- **Regional Coordinators/Trainers**
 - Beth Hardcastle (North Florida)
 - Denise Bishop (Central Florida)
 - Kelly Justice (South Florida)
- **Technology Support**
 - Marshall Reeves, USF
- **Project Evaluation Coordinator**
 - Constance Hines, USF

Regional Trainers/Coordinators

- Disseminate information to districts within region
- Create network of contact persons in schools choosing to participate in statewide training
- Organize and deliver training for the region
- Provide support and technical assistance to network of contact persons
- Participate as members of state PSM leadership team to inform progress of the project

Tier 1 Services

UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS:

- Exist in an *effective* general education curriculum
- Include assessments that occur at least three times per school year to identify students at risk
- Include progress monitoring for all students
- Address barriers such as truancy, inadequate instruction, limited English proficiency, limited engagement and/or opportunity

Tier 2 Services

SUPPLEMENTAL INTERVENTIONS:

- Address needs of at-risk students who did not respond to tier one services
- Improve students rate of performance significantly below that of classroom peers
- Target students who have proven unresponsive to the effective instructional environment, even when identified barriers are removed (ie. truancy)
- Increase intensity of instruction and frequency of assessments

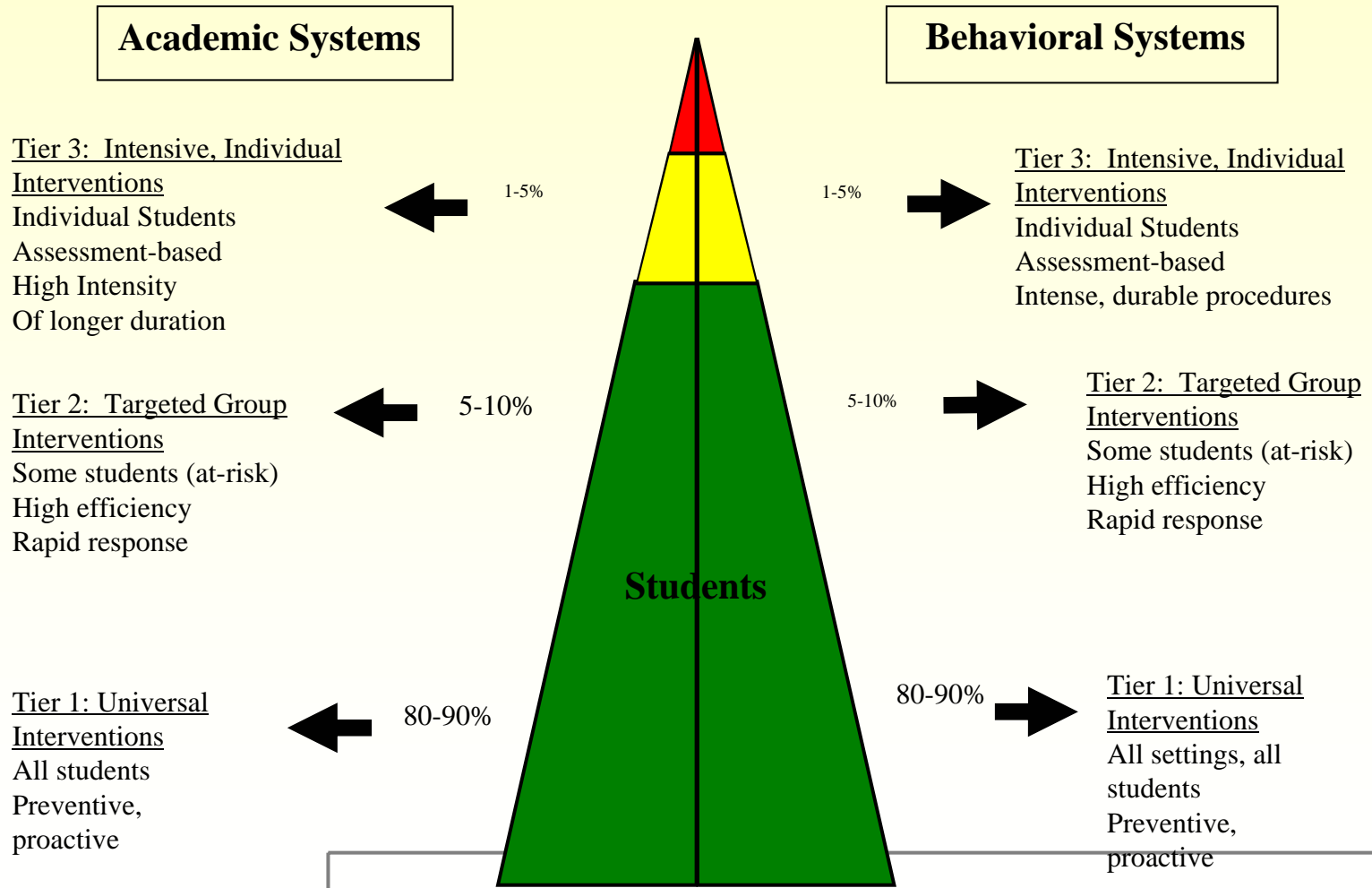
Tier 3 Services

INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS:

- Individualize instruction and provide for longer duration
- Provide multiple specialized approaches and monitor progress more aggressively

...If the IT3 services that are found effective in “closing the gap” require specially designed instruction at an intensity that should be provided under IDEA, then eligibility for special education services is considered and RtI continues in determination to find out what works.

Three Tiered Model of School Supports



What are the positive outcomes?

- Interventions based on reliable and valid data earlier than in the “wait to fail” scenario (discrepancy requirement);
- Disproportionality is reduced;
- Focus of attention to student progress, not student labels;
- Focus on if students are achieving benchmarks, regardless of whether the student is served in general education, gifted education, or as a student with a disability; Decisions are best made based on RtI because it links directly to instruction; and
- Staff training and support (e.g., coaching) improve intervention skills.

Where should we be by now?

- Have we...
 - Introduced RtI to all stakeholders?
 - Promoted conceptual understanding and awareness?
 - Clarified pre-established misperceptions?
 - Related RtI to all student populations?
 - Provide *initial* steps in professional development for implementation?

What possible effect will this have?

- More common language used to describe activities with common purpose
- Streamlined efforts and resources
- Increased collaboration for improving student outcomes
- Fewer misunderstandings about what Rtl is and who it is for (NASDSE "Myths" Document)

What are practical next steps?

Continue to analyze available information to increase awareness and clarity
(www.NASDSE.org/projects.cfm , www.NRCLD.org)

Intentionally foster an alliance between general and exceptional education personnel and parents regarding the benefits of RtI for all students

What are practical next steps?

- Begin implementing RtI as effective practice for determining appropriate strategies for struggling students and to improve/expand intervention activities by:
 - Building a strong bank of interventions for problem-solving team to select from
 - Building implementation integrity with high quality staff development plans aligned to intervention programs

What resources are available for selecting interventions?

For various content areas...

For reading...

For math...

How to select interventions?

- WWC (www.w-w-c.org)
- FCRR (www.FCRRReports/table.asp)
- What to look for?
 - Learner verified
 - Population used for field-testing
 - Progress monitoring capabilities
 - Alignment with core
 - Professional development safeguards for implementation fidelity

Also look for...

Integrated Assessment Systems

- Directly assess specific skills in standards
- Assess “marker variables” [demonstrated to lead to the ultimate instructional target, (e.g., reading comprehension)]
- Sensitive to small amounts of growth

Integrated Assessment Systems

- Brief
- Repeatable
- Easy to use
- Direct relationship to instructional decision-making

A Practical Resource...

Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice by Rachel Brown-Chidsey and Mark W. Steege

www.guilford.com

What constitutes evidence?

- Clearly defined independent variable (the intervention)
- Clearly defined dependent variable (the data)
- A set of procedures to consistently implement the independent variable
- Procedures for accurately measuring the dependent variable
- A design that controls for threats to the internal validity of the study

Where teams often lock-up...

- Research is presented that supports two different interventions
- Anecdotal evidence
- Familiarity
- Intuitive appeal

“Test Drive” the Interventions

- Is it effective (resulting in expected outcome)?
- Is it doable, and do we have the resources?
- Are staff members implementing accurately, and, if not, what types of and how much training are needed?

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“Test Drive” the Interventions

- Are the data recording procedures valid and meaningful?
- Are staff members able to collect data accurately?
- Are there aspects of the interventions that need to be modified?

A Comprehensive Resource...

Interventions for Academic and Behavior Problems: Preventative and Remedial Approaches

- edited by Mark R. Shinn, Hill M. Miller, and Gary Stoner
- published by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), 2002
- a remarkable group of contributing authors

YIKES! We have so many plans/models/initiatives going on!

What is the common thread?

- The Concept of Data-Based Decision Making through Systematic Problem-Solving within the
 - Florida Continuous Improvement Model
 - Student Progression Plan
 - K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan
 - Positive Behavior Support Plan
 - School Improvement Plan
 - Response to Intervention Model

Go forth and intervene!

- And don't forget to constantly measure...
- And don't forget to systematically problem-solve...
- And don't forget the real purpose of it all!