Ohio County Schools

"A Great Place to Learn"

Response to Intervention

Procedural Manual

2009-2010

Response to Intervention

What is response to intervention?

Response to Intervention (RTI) refers to a process that monitors how well students respond to changes in instruction. This process is a new way of providing assistance to students before they fail. The goal is to quickly identify those in need of help, provide interventions that have been shown to be effective with other students, and then monitor their progress to determine if the interventions are working. If an intervention is not working, then a different intervention needs to be used and monitored for effectiveness.

Why are Ohio County Schools involved in this process?

It is the law.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) 2004
- NCLB
- US Department of Education 2006

Why do general educators think that RTI is special education's responsibility?

RTI is contained in IDEIA. The misconception is that RTI is a special education requirement. In reality, RTI is a general education responsibility because it must be done **prior to** a special education eligibility determination. **General education must assume responsibility for delivery of high-quality instruction, research-based interventions, and prompt identification of individuals at risk.**

Essential components of RTI:

- Two goals: prevent academic problems and more accurately identify students with SLD

- Three tiers of increasingly intense interventions

- Implementation of a differentiated curriculum with different instructional methods

- Varied duration, frequency, and time of interventions

- Explicit decision rules for judging learners' progress

During implementation of RTI:

- Students receive high quality, research-based instruction by qualified staff in their general education setting

- General education instructors and staff assume an active role in students' assessment in that curriculum

- School staffs conduct universal screening of academics and/or behavior

- School staffs implement specific, research-based interventions to address the student's difficulties

- Continuous progress monitoring of student performance occurs (weekly)

- School staffs use progress-monitoring data and decision rules to determine effectiveness of interventions and modifications needed

- Systematic assessment of the fidelity or integrity with which instruction and interventions are implemented

Program Overview
Ohio County has developed an RTI Model that incorporates the best information available. This is a work in progress, and the ultimate goal is for regular and special education to coordinate working together to obtain better outcomes for children.

During the 2008-2009 school year, the Ohio County School District initiated an RTI Program by purchasing RTI reference books for all certified staff to be used for book studies led by building administrators. All building and district administrators received the RTI Starter Kit. Dr. John McCook, RTI expert, addressed all building leaders and district staff on RTI plans. School psychologists worked with teacher and staff to create greater awareness of RTI, and teachers began collecting data on individual students struggling in areas of reading and/or math.

Rationale
RTI has been implemented to correct the problems associated with the ability-achievement discrepancy model to identify students with learning disabilities. Decisions about students and services are based on data obtained in real classroom learning activities rather than standardized test scores.

All parents and teachers want their children to do well in school. Children who have the most difficulty are often referred for an evaluation to determine if they need and qualify for special education services. The term "learning disability" has been used for many years to document a difference between a student's ability to learn and their actual performance in learning basic skills like reading. Large enough differences needed to qualify a student as "learning disabled" are typically not found until second or third grade. As a result, children do not receive the remedial help at an early age when it is most effective.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) of 2004 has provided school districts with alternative ways of identifying students with learning disabilities. Response to Intervention is the most promising of these techniques. RTI is a process of providing research-based interventions early in a student's program based on measures of academic performance and then using those same measures to assess progress over time to make educational decisions. Struggling students receive additional and increasingly more intense interventions before they have fallen significantly behind. The term "intervention" refers to the specific strategies, techniques, and/or programs used, in addition to the regular classroom instruction, to improve the student's performance.

A learning disability is not suspected until the student shows a lack of response to the interventions attempted. Reading experts have stated that approximately 80% of the students identified with a learning disability could have been remediated before labeling if intensive early intervention had occurred.

Thus, the primary purpose of a Response to Intervention is to provide an appropriate intervention before any consideration of a disability. In addition, there is a requirement to use a scientific, research-based intervention, which simply means we need credible evidence to indicate that the intervention has been effective. Data is gathered frequently to determine if an intervention is working for each student in the RTI process. If an intervention is shown to be ineffective, a new intervention is initiated.

Core components of the RTI process:

- *School-Wide Screening*
  All students are assessed with reliable, valid, time-efficient measures of academic skills to identify those who are "at-risk."
- *Early Intervention*
  Early interventions are the most efficient and effective.
- *Research-based Interventions*
  School staffs implement specific, research-based interventions to address the student's difficulties. Fidelity of program must be applied to each intervention.
- *Specific Interventions Address Learner Needs*
  Specific interventions match learner deficiencies. (For example, if a student has a deficiency in the area of phonemic awareness, intervention should be phonemic awareness activity/learning strategy, not fluency or comprehension, etc.)
- *Frequent Review of Student Progress*
  Student progress is assessed frequently so that progress can be examined and changes made if necessary.
- *Increasing Intensity of Interventions*
  Skills are monitored; if desired progress not obtained, intervention intensity increases.
- *Data Based Decisions*
  A student's performance is assessed with the data obtained during the interventions and decisions are made by the Team based on that data.

Benefits of the RTI Process

- Provides a picture of a student's performance compared to others in the Ohio County School System.
- Calls immediate attention to students who are having difficulty.
- Initiates research-based interventions early in a student's program when that help is most beneficial.
- Frequently monitors student progress and uses that information to make decisions regarding program changes.

Ohio County RTI 3-Tiered Process

Tier 1 Minimum of 6-9 weeks
Tier 1 is the regular education program and is designed to meet the needs of a majority of the school population. There are four critical elements in Tier 1: a) an effective core academic program, b) testing of students at least three times a year to help determine their instructional needs, c) the documentation of interventions by the classroom teacher to address any learning difficulties, and d) other classroom documentation pertinent to area of concern(s).

Tier 2 Minimum of 9 weeks (30 minutes/session)
Tier 2 is for students who are falling behind on basic academic skills and need additional support to meet grade-level expectations. Students in Tier 2 receive at least 30 minutes of additional instruction 3 days per week in the area of difficulty in addition to the core academic instruction. Students are tested once weekly to monitor the improvement of skills.

Tier 3 Minimum of 9 weeks (30 minutes/session)
Tier 3 is designed for students who still have considerable difficulty mastering necessary academic skills, even after Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions. Students in Tier 3 receive at least 30 minutes per day of additional instruction in the area of difficulty in addition to the core academic instruction. Students are tested once weekly to monitor the improvement of skills.

The Student Support Team is made up of 3-7 members:

1. Principal or Assistant Principal (**mandatory**)
2. Curriculum Coordinator
3. School Psychologist
4. Teacher Leader
5. Guidance Counselor
6. Referring Teacher
(Special Education Teachers do not serve on the SST.)

Procedures and Tier-by-Tier Guidelines for RTI Model

<u>Universal Instruction- all students</u>

1.) All students participate in minimum 2- 2 ½ hour language arts block at elementary, 45-50 minutes at middle and high.

2.) All students participate in a minimum 60 minute math block at elementary and middle, 50 minutes at high school.

3.) All students grades K-11 given a benchmark test three times a year- PAS Test, Observation Survey, and Basic Math Skills Test, to determine which students need more intensive intervention.

The classroom teacher will gather data, identify areas of weakness, and provide additional instructional and/or behavioral strategies/modifications with a struggling student. Information will be gathered from benchmark data, parents, previous teachers, guidance counselor, etc. During this period, the teacher may consult informally with other school staff to seek possible strategies for use with the student.

<u>Students who are "at-risk" in reading and math</u>
With students who have difficulties in reading and math, it is difficult to provide the intense interventions necessary to complete the RTI process in both areas concurrently (particularly at Tier III). Since reading is fundamental to so many other academic areas, it is recommended that students begin receiving reading interventions first. If a student is successful at Tier III in the first area, the Team can place the student in Tier III for the second area of concern immediately upon completion of intervention in the first area.

<u>Direct referral rather than to an RTI Team</u>-
If there is strong evidence that the student has a type of special education disability other than SLD (e.g., Autism, Traumatic Brain Injury, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Functional Mental Disability), the school should consider expediting the RTI process.

Tier 1

Tier I is the regular education program and is designed to meet the needs of a majority of the school population. There are four critical elements in Tier 1: a) an effective core academic program, b) testing of students at least three times a year to help determine their instructional needs, and c) the documentation of interventions by the classroom teacher to address any learning difficulties, and d) other classroom documentation pertinent to the area of concern (Saxon math tests, weekly skills tests, unit tests, class/homework grades).

When teacher is unable to resolve an academic or behavioral problem in consultation with parent and colleagues, a more structured approach needs to be implemented. Using the documentation gathered in Tier I, the teacher will complete the Referral Data. This form will become a referral to the Team when submitted to the designated school administrator. Upon receipt of this form, the designated school administrator will schedule a Team meeting for the student.

At Tier 1 the teacher will:
- At the first sign of struggle, implement interventions within the regular classroom for specific skills/concepts.
- Collect baseline data in area of concern(s).
- Keep detailed documentation of student work and assessments (make copies).
- Review effectiveness of intervention after four weeks.
- Complete referral form for SST if needed.

RTI Guidelines
- **Criteria**- students scoring in bottom 10% of benchmark assessments reviewed for being at-risk.
- **Intervention**- involves modifications to the core curriculum and interventions which are in addition to regular instructional practices already in place. Schools should use available scientific, research-based interventions. **Interventions available for Tiers 2 and 3 can be used in Tier 1 if teachers are proficient in their application.**
- **Progress Monitoring**- 1 time/week- administered by classroom teacher (e.g. weekly skills test, Saxon math test, unit tests, class and homework grades).
- **Intensity**- to be determined by teacher (minimum of 15 minutes/session recommended).
- **Frequency**- to be determined by teacher (minimum of 3 sessions/week recommended).

- **Duration**- 6-9 weeks
- **Fidelity**- Intervention fidelity must be maintained and evidence of intervention fidelity is required before proceeding to Tier 2.
- **Progress Reporting to Parent(s)**- minimum of 1 time/month
- **Data Collection**- teacher must be prepared to share data on intervention, intensity, frequency, duration, and fidelity with SST and/or parents.

The Student Support Team will meet to review the information prepared by the teacher (referral form, along with any additional documentation strategies/interventions/ modifications that have been implemented with the student and measured results). Following review of implementation of intervention as well as student motivation, the SST will utilize data to further define the problem, and then recommend one of the following options:

A. Discontinue intervention
B. Redesign or modify intervention
C. Remain in Tier 1
D. Move student to Tier 2

Tier 2

Tier 2 is for students who are falling behind on basic academic skills and need additional support to meet grade-level expectations. Students in Tier 2 receive at least 30 minutes of additional instruction 3 days per week in the area of difficulty in addition to the core academic instruction. Students are tested once weekly to monitor the improvement of skills.

At Tier 2, the Student Support Team will-
- Re-check the problem area to further define problem
- Check baseline data and review progress monitoring
- Develop Tier 2 Intervention Plan
- Adjust student schedule to allow for additional intervention
- Determine data to review effectiveness of the Intervention Plan*

*SST will reconvene after 4 data points if progress monitoring shows that intervention is not effective and may decide to modify/change intervention.

RTI Guidelines

- **Criterion**- score in bottom 10% of benchmark assessments
- **Intervention**- scientific, research-based interventions provided in area of academic deficiency in addition to regular instructional practices already in place. Additional intervention activities available are educational software, small group direct instruction activity, or small group or individual practice time as determined appropriate by SST.
- **Progress Monitoring**- AIMSweb probe 1 time/week –administered by classroom teacher/curriculum specialist/interventionist.
- **Intensity**- 30 minutes/session
- **Frequency**- At least 3 sessions/week
- **Duration**- At least 9 weeks
- **Fidelity**- 27 sessions within 45 school days. Evidence of intervention fidelity is required before proceeding to Tier 3.
- **Progress Reporting to Parent(s)**- 1 time/month

At the time determined by SST, the team will review student motivation and evaluate the effectiveness/fidelity of the intervention and the results of each strategy implemented. At this time, one of the following decisions will be made:

A. Discontinue intervention
B. Redesign intervention or change intervention
C. Remain in Tier 2
D. Move student to Tier 3

Tier 3

Tier 3 is designed for students who still have considerable difficulty mastering necessary academic skills, even after Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions. Students in Tier 3 receive at least 30 minutes of instruction per day. Students are tested once weekly to monitor the improvement of skills.

At Tier 3 the Student Support Team will-
- Re-check the problem area to further define problem
- Check baseline data and review progress monitoring
- Develop Tier 3 intervention plan
- Adjust student schedule to allow for additional intervention
- Determine date to review effectiveness of Intervention Plan.*

*SST will reconvene after 4 data points if progress monitoring shows that intervention is not effective and may decide to modify/change intervention.

RTI Guidelines
- **Criterion**- score in bottom 10% of benchmark assessments
- **Intervention**- scientific, research-based interventions provided in area of academic deficiency in addition to regular instructional practices already in place. Additional intervention activities available are educational software, small group direct instruction activity, or small group or individual practice time as determined appropriate by SST.
- **Progress Monitoring**- AIMSweb probe 1 time/week –administered by classroom teacher/curriculum specialist/interventionist.
- **Intensity**- at least 30 minute/session
- **Frequency**- At least 5 sessions/week
- **Duration**- At least 9 weeks
- **Fidelity**- 45 sessions within 50 school days. School Administrator/Designee monitors treatment fidelity if student is not showing adequate progress. Evidence of intervention fidelity is required before proceeding to formal referral.
- **Progress Reporting to Parent(s)**- 1 time/month

- **Rule Outs**- the SST should discuss any potential exclusionary factors and there must be evidence that none of these factors are the primary cause of the academic deficits before considering special education services (vision, hearing, or motor disability; mental retardation; lack of appropriate instruction in reading and math; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency).

At the time determined by the SST, the team will review student motivation and evaluate the effectiveness/fidelity of the intervention and the results of each strategy implemented. At this time, one of the following decisions will be made:

A. Discontinue intervention and continue progress monitoring (weekly)
B. Continue intervention at Tier 2 level
C. Redesign intervention or change intervention
D. Refer student for special education consideration (SST may assist in referral process)

RTI Flowchart

Step down and continue intervention at Tier 1

Tier 2
Core Curriculum
+ Interventions 3x/Week
6-9 Weeks
Progress Monitor 1x/Week

Discontinue intervention and continue progress monitoring

Tier 2
Supplemental Intervention
9 Weeks
27 Sessions within 45 school days
3-30 Minute Sessions/Week
Progress Monitor 1x/Week

Step down and continue intervention at Tier 2

Tier 3
Supplemental Intervention
9 Weeks
45 Sessions within 50 school days
5 – 30 Minute Sessions/Week
Progress Monitor 1x/Week

Discontinue Intervention and continue progress monitoring

Special Education Consideration