

TRI-COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Response to Intervention

I. Regulatory Authority

Providing legal authority and definition to the following description and implementation plan for Response to Intervention are regulations are the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (34 CFR, Parts 300 & 301) and Illinois regulations (23 IL Administrative Code, Part 226).

II. Principles for Transition to Response to Intervention (RtI) (approved March 5, 2007).

Attached.

III. Framework for Supporting RtI Implementation in Member School Districts (approved March 6, 2008).

Attached.

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Principles for Transition to RTI
(Approved March, 2007)

Big IDEAS include:

- ◇ **Meet the learning needs of children early and often. All have the right to support services.**
- ◇ **Accept individual differences.**
- ◇ **Integrate, or synthesize, research into practice.**
- ◇ **Collaborate—help one another.**
- ◇ **Be accountable for services and outcomes.**
- ◇ **Provide ample professional development/support throughout the change process.**

Keep the good things that are already working; let's integrate RTI practices into what we know works in individual locations. Let's synthesize research into practice.

Districts and Tri-County personnel will work collaboratively in the decision making, on how to implement A-Teams and intervention methods.

Understand that staff members' roles may change (i.e., use of social worker, psychologist & district personnel to implement intervention groups).

Follow these common practices while allowing for flexibility in implementation:

- ◇ Use eligibility criteria consistently.
- ◇ Offer access to some level of direct services to all children and access to consultation services to the educators and family members who support them.
- ◇ Allow use of problem-solving teams /student assistance teams for all students.
- ◇ Use research-based interventions.
- ◇ Implement standard practices with integrity to legal, ethical, and educational principles.

Focus on parental involvement and increased awareness.

Understand and learn more about the global research on assessment and instruction.

Remember, all students have the right to receive the supportive educational services they need to achieve.

Accept individual differences in children. Children are always different from one another; infrequently, differences are disabling.

Provide the most personalized and most intensive educational services for students with disabilities, while monitoring the effectiveness of the services.

Implement an evaluation system that uses a comprehensive set of methods, while guiding effective instruction for all students.

Pair progress monitoring of student outcomes with all interventions: (reading, math, behavior, social skills, counseling) to measure the effectiveness of our services.

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Framework for Supporting RTI Implementation in Member School Districts

**Approved March 2008
Tri-County Executive Committee**

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RTI Framework—Common Roles

RTI implementation often develops gradually, but someone or some group is performing each of the following roles whenever the model is operational. Individuals may perform one or more roles. So may teams.

Building Level

Leadership team—makes major decisions essential for planning, implementing, and evaluating RTI at the building-level. Includes the Internal Coach, below—possibly, but not always, as the team leader. Includes the External Coach as needed or desired. The focus of this team is system-wide use of the RTI process—overseeing implementation so that it works most effectively in each building and making necessary “course corrections.” This team may or may not consist of the same members as the problem-solving team described below.

Internal Coach—Guides the Leadership team and building-level teachers towards RTI implementation, using the External Coach for support. Thinks about what’s next for students and services. Identifies resources. Plans and leads RTI-related meetings, or shares responsibilities with others. Partners with others to meet the needs of students using an effective problem solving process, the three-tiered intervention model and the progress monitoring/benchmarking assessments associated with RTI. The Internal Coach deeply understands instruction, problem-solving, student needs, resources, people and the community associated with each building. Expertise and acceptance at the building-level are essential.

Problem-Solving Team/Student Assistance Team/Interventional Assistance Team/A-Team—The focus of this team is on meeting the needs of all students, typically on an individual (one student at a time) basis. Responsibilities include involving parents, analyzing problems, designing intervention plans, monitoring progress, evaluating outcomes and making decisions about individual needs. This is a key vehicle for meeting the needs of struggling students before problems have a chance to get worse. It is key for minimizing skill deficits, preventing unnecessary failures, retentions and referrals to special education.

Principal—Instructional leader. Facilitates RTI implementation; manages building resources. The principal may participate or lead building-level teams or perform any of the building-level roles.

Participants—the students, teachers, related services providers, teaching assistants and parents who are informed enough to effectively participate in the RTI process with some level of ongoing support from those who are leading RTI implementation. Any or all might participate as providers of intervention support at Tiers 1, 2, or 3. All adults might refer students for problem solving, participate in problem-solving meetings, and supervise the implementation and outcome reporting associated with problem-solving. All might contribute specific intervention ideas and consult with others about their areas of specialization.

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District Level

Optional—District do not need to have teams, coaches, etc. in order to implement RTI. RTI is essentially a building-based structure for meeting the needs of students and monitoring/reporting their progress. But, district superintendents need to be acutely aware of RTI and its service implications. Superintendents will want someone at the district-level to lead public awareness and to insure board understanding. Superintendents will determine the extent to which implementation decisions among buildings need to be standardized and will create the necessary district-level structures (e.g., committees) to support RTI. Superintendents need regular reports about the decisions being made at the building and cooperative levels and recommendations for making the best use of existing resources.

Cooperative Level

External Coaches—Unlike Internal Coaches who work exclusively in one or two buildings on a daily basis, External Coaches have responsibilities in several different schools. They contribute a deep understanding of the RTI model, of student assessment (benchmarking and progress monitoring procedures and interpretation), of specific research-based intervention materials or methodologies suitable for each tier, of problem-solving methods for addressing both academic and behavioral concerns, and of a variety of resources that are available to support RTI implementation in the educational community.

Professional Development Providers—Plan, teach, evaluate, provide ongoing instruction or support to all of the above personnel and for all of the above purposes. Coordinate with professional development providers at all other levels to avoid redundancy and to increase both the effectiveness and the efficiency of area-wide training and technical assistance.

Other Support Systems

Some availability to provide professional development activities, external coaches, and funding or in-kind donations of time and resources to support RTI implementation. Awareness of who is doing what where and when is essential. Finding the best match for each school is a challenge.

Regional options for different types of RTI information and implementation support include:

Regional Offices of Education

The Heart of Illinois Low Incidence Association

ASPIRE—Central Illinois Region

The Flexible Service Delivery Consortium

Illinois School Psychologists Association

Illinois State University—School Psychology and Special Education Program faculty.

**Tri-County Special Education Association
(2007)**

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RTI Framework—Common Components

Three Tiers of Increasingly Intensive and Individualized Instruction and Intervention Use empirically-validated assessment methods and materials. Make data-based decisions.

Tier 1 Universal Instruction (Successful for 80% of population).

Tier 2 Targeted Interventions (Needed for 15% of population to be successful).

Tier 3 Intensive, Individualized Interventions and Special Education (Needed for 5% of population to be successful).

Problem-Solving.—Teams use a structured problem-solving process, use empirically-validated intervention methods and make data-based decisions after documenting the impact of interventions on the performance of students.

Integrated Data Collection that Informs Instruction

Universal Screening through Benchmarking (measuring degree of success in core curriculum and identifying students who need extra support to meet expectations).

Use empirically-validated assessment methods and materials. Make data-based decisions about how all students are performing in key skill areas and about which individual students need extra instruction in those same skill areas. In the former circumstance, Leadership Teams use benchmark data to decide when it might be time for a school to replace, revise, or supplement core curriculum and instructional practices in order to achieve a higher level of success for the majority of students. In the latter circumstance, the individual scores that fall in an at-risk range signal the need for focused attention. Skill areas targeted for benchmarking typically include the five big areas of reading (National Reading Panel, 2000), math fundamentals, and social-emotional or behavioral performance. Reading is the most developed of all performance areas.

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reading: | Phonemic Awareness Systematic Phonics Instruction Fluency Vocabulary Comprehension |
| Math: | Often use CBM probes (Deno, Marston, etc.) to monitor overall math performance. Other |
| Social-Emotional/Behavioral: | PBIS model/measures, e.g. # office referrals. Other |

Progress Monitoring (Data-Based Decisions about Instructional Needs).

Use empirically-validated assessment methods and materials. Make data-based decisions about the instructional needs of individual students by reviewing graphs and other displays of data.

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RTI Framework—Timeline

2006-2007 School Year:

- ✓ Increase awareness of RTI in cooperative (RTI overviews within districts; disseminate CASE-NASDSE booklet; incorporate RTI content into TC board meetings and professional development experiences).
- ✓ Experiment with RTI components and role changes in TCSEA buildings, base RTI trial projects on the mutual interests of TCSEA and building personnel and on the needs of students in specific buildings.
- ✓ Develop and maintain local norms for CBM, DIBELS, and other measures that are commonly used for benchmarking and progress monitoring of academic skills (reading, early literacy, written expression, and math).

Consider ways to document that no child is eligible for special education primarily because of (a) cultural or language differences and (b) lack of instruction.

- ✓ Identify evidence-based practices and research-based materials to recommend to teachers. Demo, teach, support, try, and coordinate group purchases of recommended products.
- ✓ Study RTI. Consider ways to successfully implement in local schools. Begin building-level planning.

Select team members & coaches (Partial accomplishment).

- ✓ Convene RTI committee; include parent mentor. Make recommendations.
- ✓ Obtain Executive Committee approval for RTI Committee recommendations.
- ✓ Draft forms and LD criteria for use in pilot schools; add to KIDS program.
- ✓ Prepare pilot buildings for use of RTI to identify LD in the next year.

Summer 2007

- ✓ Complete RTI professional development plans.
- ✓ Collect and create RTI planning or implementation tools.
- ✓ Design RTI problem-solving team training. Begin teaching.
- ✓ Prepare notebook of resources and tools that can be used by TC schools.
- ✓ Prepare to implement both pilot projects and professional development to support RTI.

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2007-2008 School Year:

- ✓ Select building and Tri-County personnel implement RTI in reading: serve on teams, act as internal and external coaches, collect and interpret data, provide interventions.
- ✓ Develop a list of coaches and team members, by building and district. Include contact information.
- ✓ Teach problem-solving process to all building-based teams (completed all elementary; some middle and high school teams—5 sessions, 30 teams, 159 people).
- ✓ Identify, try, and evaluate research-based practices/curriculum materials in collaboration with district personnel (i.e., Voyager Passport Journeys reading for middle & high schools in Ridgeview and LeRoy, SOLO for written expression in Olympia, Headsprout for early literacy in all districts, Second Step for social skills in many districts, many other specific interventions, explore Lexia and math products through participation in CSC Learning scholarship program, Boardmaker and other visual strategies).
- ✓ Teach use of selected intervention or instructional materials (Intervention Day; KU Learning Strategies designed for middle and high school students, personal consultation and technical assistance to TC educators, HILIA Summer Conference June 2008).
- ✓ Pilot use of RTI for determining the existence of a learning disability in elementary schools (Blue Ridge, Olympia, Lincoln Elementary, Mt. Pualski, Clinton, W. Lincoln-Broadwell).

Review identification practices in IDEA and IL regulations. Revise TC practices, criteria, and forms according to legal requirements, best practices, and district needs.

Develop guidelines for decision making and sample referral questions for planning evaluations intended to identify LD.

- ✓ Begin developing tiers of academic intervention in all elementary buildings and exploring options for the same at middle and high school buildings.
- ✓ Begin benchmarking student performance in key academic areas, in all elementary buildings and in selected middle school buildings.
- ✓ Teach CBM/DIBELS to teachers and interventionists for benchmarking and progress monitoring purposes.
- ✓ Implement professional development for internal coaches and external coaches.
- ✓ Incorporate RTI process within TCSEA into existing professional development plans.

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- ✓ Understand and experiment with the application of RTI to Pre-K school readiness.
- ✓ Woven Word and Second Step purchases by cooperative; Parent-Child Interaction Group in Olympia; related projects by the McLean County Peaceable Schools Committee; development of intervention alternatives for at-risk preschoolers (academic and social-emotional concerns).
- ✓ Understand and experiment with the application of RTI to social-emotional difficulties (*co-sponsored PBIS overviews; plans to prepare 3 TCSEA personnel to be external coaches for PBIS; C-EL introduction of PBIS with support from TC*).
- ✓ Use progress monitoring for determining academic readiness (i.e., Pre-K) and for social-emotional performance.
- ✓ Recommend materials for school readiness and social-emotional intervention.
- ✓ Revise TCSEA procedures, policies, and forms to be consistent with our RTI plans and with IL regulations.

Monitor and report the impact of RTI practices on student performance (happening locally through charts and graphs reviewed by psychologists and building personnel), on incidence rates (too early to tell), on teacher and parent satisfaction (not attempted).

Prepare all elementary buildings (through grades 5 or 6) for next year—implementation of RTI for LD identification in reading.

- ✓ Reconvene RTI committee Winter, 2008.

Conduct needs assessment of RTI readiness using RTI form and review ISBE's RTI plan.

Draft district plans for RTI implementation.

Summer 2008 through the 2008-2009 School Year (Italics print--Consider recommend changes and add ideas):

More fully develop RTI tiers of academic intervention, benchmarking and progress monitoring in all middle and high schools.

Identify math interventions at all levels; organize social-emotional interventions at all grade levels according to possible tiers.

Implement RTI problem-solving and data collection for academic concerns in all elementary buildings.

Benchmark reading in middle schools. Benchmark math calculation.

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Develop a schedule for updating local norms and for expanding benchmarking into other areas and to all grades.

Develop and approve RTI-based procedures and eligibility criteria for identifying learning disabilities.

Implement new LD criteria and RTI-based identification process in all elementary buildings (through grades 5-6) in the area of reading (initial referral and reevaluation).

Continue to identify and discuss RTI procedures and data collection measures for the areas of social-emotional skills and school readiness.

Continue professional development that supports RTI implementation in reading; expand to math. Standardize professional development options available to Tri-County districts.

Continue developing the expertise of coaches, teams, administrators, families, and community members. Begin involving family members on RTI committees in each district.

Adopt and implement a comprehensive system for evaluating the outcomes associated with RTI implementation (student performance, incidence or identification rates, and teacher/parent satisfaction).

Summer 2009 through the 2009-2010 School Year (Add recommended steps for cooperative-wide priority):

Maintain up to date local norms and benchmarks for CBM/DIBELS: reading, math, written expression. Expand to measures identified during previous year.

Make decisions about data collection relating to academic readiness, written expression, and social-emotional behavior.

Implement RTI in reading and math, K-8.

Reconsider implementation and what to set as a goal for social-emotional RTI.

Summer 2010 through the 2010-2011 School Year (Add recommended steps for cooperative-wide priority):

Implement RTI at all levels for the identification of learning disabilities arising from reading, writing, and/or math difficulties.

Continue evaluation, professional development, and technical assistance to districts.

RTI Framework—Highlights of Tri-County’s Professional Development Plan

Workshops and consultation services available from TCSEA upon request

Math interventions.
Reading interventions.
RTI Overviews.
Intervention training—other topics.
Curriculum and methods appropriate for special education instruction.
Co-teaching instruction.
Problem-solving.
Accommodations and modifications.
Inclusion and co-teaching.
IEP goal writing and progress monitoring.
Evaluation procedures, methods and criteria for all disabilities.

Workshops/workshop topics offered annually by TCSEA

New staff orientation—benchmarking and data collection using DIBELS, etc.; problem-solving process for new teams or new team members.

Problem-solving process. Basics for new teams and new people.

Practice with Problem-solving.

Some intervention training in areas of reading, math, social-emotional.

Some training in Assistive Technology (AT).

Understanding new criteria, forms, and process for identifying LD.

Ongoing support for those who lead RTI Implementation

TC personnel provide in-service to district personnel before beginning of a school year.

List of resources available within and beyond the borders of Tri-County.

List contacts information for district personnel who wish to visit other programs or who will allow others to visit and observe their programs for RTI.

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Discussion board or email exchanges—someone to moderate questions and answers/replies about any aspect of RTI implementation.

Data analysis and interpretation—helping educators decide what is working for whom at what level so they can choose what to do differently, if anything, in the future.

Keeping new people up to date with RTI processes.

Sit in on building-level meetings, teams and committees (e.g., Leadership teams, problem-solving teams, curriculum study committees, discipline committees, other).

Provide some intervention directly to students, but mostly in order to model and work out the details associated with making the interventions successful. Consider from the beginning how and when to teach other educators to do the interventions and to collect the benchmarking and progress monitoring data.

Bring quality products (interventions, assessment tools, curriculum, etc.) to the attention of district personnel. Provide active support for experimenting with new materials and methods.

Provide trainers and coaches for implementing RTI, but who can gradually transition building-level staff toward leading RTI in each school.

RTI Framework—Resources Available to TCSEA Districts

Maintain a small resource library of reading and math interventions for districts to use on a trial basis. Maintain a list of interventions/resources and distribute the list annually.

Maintain and distribute a list of interventions used by personnel in each Tri-County school.

Be available to help provide and to teach interventions by discipline and by tier. Bring the best new ideas for curriculum and intervention to member districts.

Make external coaches available to support RTI implementation in districts.

Provide ample access to Problem Solving Team training.

Provide ongoing support for internal coaches by offering regular trainings and/or meetings.

Maintain a library of current screening and assessment tools.

Provide expertise and resources to support the evaluation of the impact of RTI in local schools.