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# Response to Intervention Policy and Procedure Manual

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Education Association

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## Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
I. Definition of RtI	4
A. What is it?	4
B. Why do it?	5
C. What does this mean for Special Education?	6
II. Essential Elements of a Comprehensive RtI Plan	8
A. Assessment	8
B. Instruction	10
▪ Pyramid of Services Diagram	11
C. Infrastructure	12
D. Special Education	12
III. Implementation	14
A. Step-by-Step Procedures	14
B. Data Decision Rules	21
C. Student Records and Reports	26
D. Responsibilities of Personnel	27
APPENDICES	29
A. Tier Model	30
B. Legal Considerations	33
C. Scientifically Based Intervention Resources	35
D. Sample Forms and Letters	36
a. Parent Notification Letter	37
b. Notification of Team Meeting	38
c. Problem Identification	39
d. Individual Student Intervention Plan	40
e. RtI Log Sheet	42
f. Intervention Plan Evaluation	44
g. Student Strengths and Weaknesses Chart	46
E. Graphing Data	47
F. References and Acknowledgments	49

## **Introduction**

This manual was written to provide ISEA member school districts with guidelines for implementing RtI programs. ISEA views the RtI initiative as an opportunity for general education and special education services to collaborate in the provision of early intervention supports and quality instruction. ISEA is committed to providing support to districts in order to help all students master the academic and behavior skills necessary for educational success. This manual is written to help administrators, teachers, school psychologists, social workers, and other education professionals during the initiation and implementation stages of RtI.

The intent of this manual is to provide guidelines and samples for assessment and intervention processes, forms, data collection methods, and tier models of interventions. Although school districts may alter forms for their specific use, they are encouraged to seek advice from ISEA personnel in order to ensure all legal regulations are adhered to. Any changes to be made to this manual by the districts must be approved by ISEA Administration.

It is recognized that districts are at varying degrees of familiarity and/or implementation of the practice of RtI. It is important for all districts to review this manual to include the necessary components of RtI, especially the use of scientifically based interventions and data based decision making.

RtI is a rapidly evolving topic, therefore, there will be questions left unanswered by this manual. Questions can be referred to George Gwinup, ISEA Director at 815-265-8601 or e-mail him at [ggwinup@isea.k12.il.us](mailto:ggwinup@isea.k12.il.us).

## I. Definition of RtI

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

Student outcome data are crucial to:

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

### A. WHAT IS IT?

The practice of RtI has three key components:

1. **High Quality Instruction and Intervention** matched to student need, which has been validated through scientific research and practice
  - High quality instruction must include a well-researched core curriculum that meets the educational needs of 80-85% of students.
  - The next focus of RtI is supplementing the core curriculum with research-based interventions rather than supplanting it with remedial instruction.
  - ***Interventions must be explicit, systematic, and research-based.*** The strategy or program should be carefully planned and target a specific skill that has been clearly identified through assessment. Research should demonstrate the intervention is effective for students of similar demographics or needs.
  - ***Interventions differ from accommodations.*** Accommodations take the core curriculum and change the way it is presented (e.g., extra time, fewer responses, read items to student, etc.). Interventions are individualized or small group instructional approaches utilizing specialized teaching techniques or curricula that not all students receive or need (e.g., fluency drills, pre-teaching or re-teaching, special/remedial curricula, etc.). Essentially, accommodations help to improve grades while interventions help to improve skills.
  - While interventions do not necessarily have to be a published program, the likelihood the skill will be taught explicitly and systematically is greater with the use of published programs.

- The RtI problem-solving process and the resources used to provide assistance in direct proportion to student needs is typically depicted in a three-tier model. The higher the tier, a greater level of support is required. (Refer to Appendix A.)

**2. Learning Rate & Level of Performance** – These are the primary sources of information used to make ongoing educational decisions. Learning rate (a.k.a. Rate of Improvement, Rate of Progress) is a student’s academic or behavioral growth over time. This growth is compared to the individual and peer group. Level of performance refers to a student’s “relative standing on some dimension of achievement/performance compared to expected performance.” (p. 5; Batsche, Elliot, Graden, Grimes, Kovaleski, Prasse, et al., 2005).” Ongoing decisions about the use of more or less intense interventions are made utilizing data on learning rate and level.

- Assessment must address
  1. The effectiveness of an intervention
  2. The child’s progress in the core curriculum
- Intervention effectiveness is determined by brief measures (DRA, DIBELS, ThinkLink, or building created curriculum based measurement probes) on the specific skill targeted; that is, the student’s learning rate.

**3. Data-Based Decision-Making** – Decisions about the need for more or less intense intervention services, including special education eligibility, and discharge from special education services, are informed by the continuous gathering of data on learning rate and level.

- Levels of support are increased and/or the content of supports are changed, until interventions that result in positive response to intervention are identified.
- Levels of support are decreased and/or the content of supports are changed to determine if desired growth is stable, or if support must be sustained.

## **B. WHY DO IT?**

### **Early Intervention is the Key:**

It has been well established in a number of educational studies and publications that the most effective approach in the remediation of educational deficits is through early, systematic, and explicit intervention (Stanovich, 1986; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Torgesen, 1998). Unfortunately, much of this same research has indicated most students are not referred for academic difficulties until second or third grade in school’s using the traditional discrepancy model for identifying learning disabilities. These are critical years for working toward remediation of academic skill deficits. By the time a student is referred in the traditional model they are often years behind their peers, making it very unlikely they will receive the intensive intervention required to catch up to average peer levels (Vaughn, Moody, & Schumm, 1998). Even when systematic, explicit, and research

validated interventions are implemented, older students in third or fourth grade show significantly less growth than younger students in kindergarten and first grade. Each year a student is promoted to the next grade without proper intervention, the academic discrepancy grows.

Early intervention provides the opportunity to prevent any academic, behavioral, or emotional deficits before the student falls behind their fellow classmates. Early intervention enables school personnel to remediate deficits early in the learning process, thereby increasing the likelihood that skills may eventually become automatic for the student.

### **A Flawed Model**

The traditional discrepancy model of identifying learning disabilities is inadequate for a number of reasons.

1. This model is not responsive to identifying academic deficits early.
2. It has no means of providing regular, objective data to suggest a student is making gains in deficit areas.
3. This model is not outcome based. The results of a traditional evaluation provide little or no information on how to best remediate identified academic deficits.
4. According to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP): “The department does not believe that an assessment of psychological or cognitive processing should be required in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability (SLD). There is no current evidence that such assessments are necessary or sufficient for identifying SLD.”
5. Traditional models have been found to not be culturally sensitive, thus over-identifying minority students.

### **C. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION?**

RtI is a required process for special education eligibility decision-making (34 CFR 300.309 and 23 IAC 226.130 – Refer to Appendix B for additional legal considerations.)

The former “discrepancy” model for identifying students with a learning disability is changing to a “longitudinal” model. One point in time, assessments are being replaced by ongoing progress monitoring. Decisions are no longer made simply on a discrepancy between a student’s intellectual ability and their academic performance. Decisions are now based on a student’s learning rate.

Students are no longer eligible for special education simply because they are behind peers. Students may be behind for reasons other than having a disability. Some may have lacked opportunity to learn or have lacked explicit, systematic instruction. The goal of RtI is to provide special education for those with a true disability and those that need similarly intensive instruction to make adequate progress.

RtI increases the demand for special educators to provide research-based instruction and to complete ongoing progress monitoring to more effectively evaluate student achievement toward IEP goals.

## II. Essential Elements of a Comprehensive RtI Plan

By January 2009 all districts **must** develop a plan to transition to RtI. By 2010-11 all districts must be implementing RtI. Administrators should refer to: [www.isbe.state.il.us/pdf/rti\\_state\\_plan.pdf](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/pdf/rti_state_plan.pdf) to review ISBE's RTI plan for guidance on their district plan development, including timelines for professional development, funding sources, and evaluation plans. ISEA's guidelines are intended to provide additional support to districts in their plan development.

ISEA recognizes that implementation of RtI will vary from school to school. This section is intended to provide recommended processes that will lead to effective implementation. Although step-by-step guidelines and detailed procedures are provided, it is important to note that several processes should occur simultaneously. Processes fall under four essential elements: Assessment, Instruction, Infrastructure, and Special Education. Each school is encouraged to thoroughly review each element to determine its starting point for planning and implementation.

### A. ASSESSMENT

#### 1. *Universal Screening*

- a. The purpose of universal screening is to provide a quick way to target students who are not meeting expected benchmarks of performance.
- b. ALL students, especially those in grades K – 3, should be screened three times per year in reading and math. In schools not screening all students past grade 3, follow-up screening should occur in subsequent years for those who participate in intervention sessions.
- c. Although most current screening measures address reading and math skills, screening measures for written language and behavior skills may also be utilized.
- d. To ensure the screeners are implemented with fidelity, they cannot be tailored or modified in a different way.
- e. Although ISEA personnel may assist with screening, each district must develop a school-based assessment team.
- f. Schools must collect a minimum of three years of data at each grade level in order to develop local norms for benchmarks.

#### 2. *Progress Monitoring*

- a. The purpose of progress monitoring is to determine if a student is positively responding to the selected intervention. By monitoring the rate of progress, decisions regarding continuing the intervention and the frequency and intensity of the intervention can be made.
- b. Students who are not meeting pre-established benchmarks on universal screenings should be assessed regularly to monitor progress. (Refer to "Data Decision Rules" section on page 21 for more details.)

- c. When an intervention is selected, schools should make decisions regarding method of progress monitoring, frequency of monitoring and personnel responsible.

3. *Additional Diagnostic Assessment*

- a. Once a student is targeted as at-risk from universal screening, it may be necessary to conduct additional assessment in order to identify the interventions entry point.
- b. Diagnostic assessments provide teachers with the information needed to develop skill-specific intervention groups. These assessments are more comprehensive than screening measures.

4. *Behavior Assessment - Clarify with ISBE 217-782-5589*

- a. Teachers with students that have behavioral concerns may consult with their district psychologist prior to developing behavior assessment methods and materials.
- b. In addition to processes for assessing district, school, and individual academic data, districts should consider how behavior data is collected and analyzed.
- c. Behavior data must be regularly and systematically collected and reviewed on a group and/or individual basis.
- d. The behavior must be operationally defined and the frequency, duration, and intensity of the behavior must be charted.
- e. Behavior data must be collected for a period of at least six weeks in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention implemented.
- f. The intervention may be modified if there is evidence that there is no change or if there is a negative impact on the behavior after a period of two weeks.

5. *Referral for a Full and Individual Evaluation*

- a. ISEA has developed a process to determine when a student will be entitled to Special Education services. This will be completed only when a student fails to demonstrate an adequate rate of progress after sufficient implementation of scientifically-based interventions. (Refer to “Entitlement” on page 19 for more details.)
- b. A student must participate in Tier 3 interventions before an evaluation for eligibility for Specific Learning Disability (SLD) special education services will be considered.
- c. Within 14 school days of a referral, parents must be provided with the team’s decision regarding the request and state the reason for the denial or acceptance. This response must be provided in writing.

## **B. INSTRUCTION**

### *1. Matrix or pyramid of interventions*

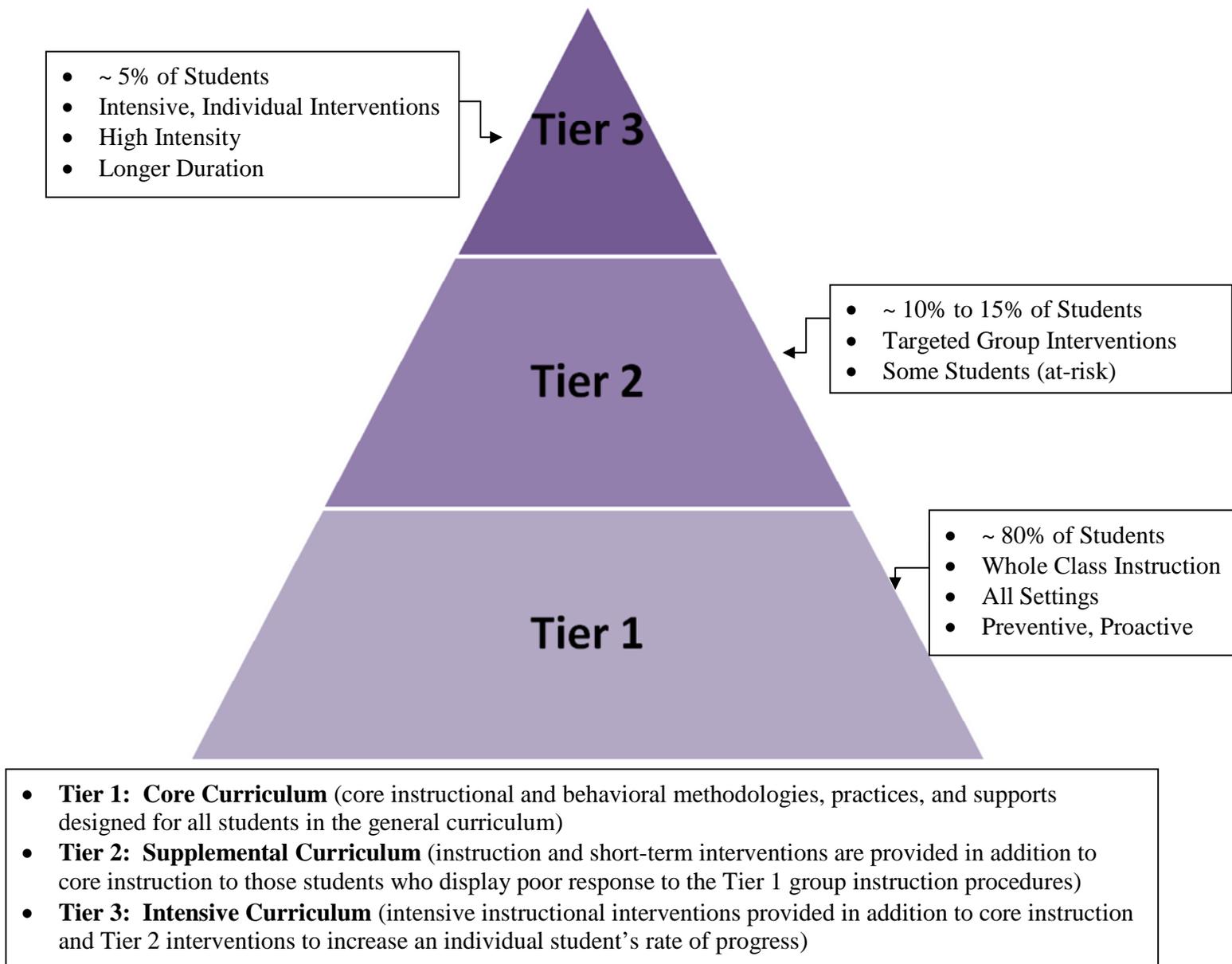
- a. A matrix or pyramid of interventions provides a summary of the available resources and materials for a school.
- b. Schools typically organize resources and materials into a three-tiered model.
- c. School personnel should begin by cataloging the research-based materials currently in use in their school. (For reading, be sure to include resources and materials addressing the 5 Big Ideas of Reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension.)

### *2. Accessing Additional Resources*

- a. Schools should conduct a review of their pyramid of interventions. The initial goal of the review is to identify if there are particular target areas that are not covered in the core curriculum. Efforts should be made to ensure that appropriate resources and materials are provided for teaching all students skills through the core curriculum.
- b. After a solid core curriculum is established, the school should identify the research-based resources and materials required for effective tier 2 and tier 3 levels of supplemental and intensive instruction

### *3. Integrity of Instruction/Intervention*

- a. Schools should develop a method to ensure that instructional methods and research-based interventions are implemented in the manner intended. Instruction should be explicit and systematic.
- b. To ensure that the intervention is implemented with fidelity, it cannot be tailored or modified in a different way. It loses its “research-based” status when any modifications are made.



### **C. INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Schools shall provide parental notification of the school's implementation of RtI. This could be done through a letter, brochure, or in the student/parent handbook. (Sample letters provided in Appendix D.)
2. Roles and responsibilities of various school personnel must be clearly defined. (See "Responsibilities of Personnel" section on page 27 for more details.)
  - a. Schools shall begin by organizing their core RtI team.
  - b. The RtI team shall consider the existing skills of all school personnel when determining each individual's role in the RtI process.
  - c. Teams might consider assignment of an RtI Building/District Coordinator and/or Data Coach/Assessment Coordinator to assist in the organization of all RtI efforts.
3. Schools are encouraged to create a master schedule with time blocks for core reading instruction and intervention groups. A schedule that includes intervention group time will make it easier for teams to determine when supplemental or intensive supports or additional instruction in the core curriculum can be provided.
4. Grade level and/or team problem-solving meetings should be scheduled on a regular basis to review on-going data and make important educational decisions.
5. Schools should plan for how and when individual problem-solving meetings will occur.
6. Ongoing professional development for school personnel is essential to the effective practice of RtI. Schools will need to assess what training for all administrative, instructional, and student support staff is needed to implement and sustain RtI and how it will be delivered.
7. Schools should determine what evaluation process will be used to determine the effectiveness of RtI.

### **D. SPECIAL EDUCATION**

1. Although some people view RtI as a general education initiative, the practice of RtI is a required component of the eligibility decision-making process. All special educators should remain informed about the practice of RtI.
2. Schools should determine the role of their special educator(s) in the practice of RtI for general education students. Special education teachers can share in serving as interventionists with general education students as long as the special education teacher is meeting the needs of their caseload. The school needs to make it clear to parents and other educators that they are serving in the capacity as an interventionist and not as a special education teacher. The roles and responsibilities should be equally distributed with other educators available within the system.
3. ISEA reserves the right to limit the number of RtI individuals being served by a special education interventionist/teacher.
4. Progress monitoring should continue once students are entitled to special education services. Progress monitoring data is required for making ongoing instructional decisions and the decision-making process during re-evaluations.
5. Schools should review current instructional practices used with special education students. Schools must ensure that the specialized instruction provided is research-based.
6. The practice of RtI and its key components of providing high quality instruction/intervention MUST continue once a student is entitled to receive special education services. If an intervention has produced positive results, that intervention should continue to be provided

by the special education teacher. The interventions should continue to be matched to student need, and learning rate over time and level of performance data should continue to be used to make important educational decisions.

### III. Implementation

The following section provides a sample of processes involved in RtI. This sample addresses the steps to be followed for the area of reading. Research has demonstrated that RtI is effective for reading and math; however similar intervention strategies should be considered for the areas of written expression, behavior, or other areas of concern.

#### A. STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURES

##### 1. Parent Notification

Provide notification to ALL parents about the school's RtI process. Include information in the student handbook or send out a brochure. (Refer to Appendix D for a sample form.) Individual parental permission is not required for students to receive early intervention services at Tier 2 or Tier 3.

##### 2. Universal Screening

*Benchmark Data via Universal Screener*

- Benchmark assessment occurs for all students, three times per year (Fall, Winter, and Spring). Common benchmark assessment tools include DIBELS ([www.dibels.uoregon.edu](http://www.dibels.uoregon.edu)) which evaluates early literacy skills and reading fluency for K-6, ThinkLink for reading K-2 Early Skills, ThinkLink 3-8 reading comprehension and math concepts, ThinkLink 9-11 PSAE, and Get It Got It Go! ([www.ggg.umn.edu](http://www.ggg.umn.edu)) for preschool.
- Designated RtI Team members (or Grade Level Team - i.e. regular teacher, Title I teacher, and other staff with appropriate training in data analysis) evaluate the benchmark data in a quick and timely manner.
- Results for each grade/class should be graphed by skill area. A data management system that can be easily accessed and revised should be considered (e.g. DIBELS data system, ThinkLink data, or Microsoft Excel).
- Data might be compiled into data notebooks (individual, class, or grade level notebooks) or some other form of easily accessible data collection system (refer to "Student Records and Reports, pg. 26).

##### 3. Identification of Target Students

- After universal screening data (e.g., DIBELS) have been collected, the RtI team then meets to identify target students eligible to receive intervention. The decision regarding student nomination for intervention may be determined in any of the following ways:
  - Student who falls in the "At Risk" range on DIBELS
  - Student who falls below a designated percentile (e.g., 20<sup>th</sup> percentile)
  - Student whose performance falls below locally determined cut score

- In situations where screening data does not match teacher professional opinion, teacher nomination should be considered by the team.
- The team must determine the appropriate Tier of support needed for target students. The cutoff for target students often varies from school to school. However, a targeted group of 20% of students is common (approximately 5% in Tier 3, 15% in Tier 2). It is recommended all target students begin with Tier 2 prior to participation in Tier 3 intervention (see section “Tier Models” for more information).

#### 4. Intervention Groups

##### *Research Based Interventions*

Simply put, a research based intervention is an intervention that has been scientifically validated to be effective for **most** students it is intended for. Information and ratings of regarding research based interventions may be found at such resources such as Oregon Reading First, The Florida Center on Reading Research, the Texas Reading Institute, and recommendations from districts who have been implementing RtI over time. The intent is to build a small menu of highly effective interventions available at each of the three tiers of interventions.

There are multiple advantages to using a small number of highly effective research based interventions including: ease of implementation, reduction in the amount of individual problem solving required by teams, improved likelihood of intervention effectiveness, increased likelihood of good intervention integrity (i.e. interventions are implemented as they are intended to be implemented), ease in diagnosing intervention implementation difficulties, ability to determine local validity/effectiveness of intervention efforts.

- A school administrator can assist the teachers in designing a schedule for the intervention groups if one is not already established.
- Districts determine which research based intervention methods are used (e.g., Great Leaps, DIBELS, etc.) See Appendix C for potential interventions which can be edited for district specific methods.
- Provide research-based small group instruction (intervention groups) to students with scores below benchmark target(s). Seven data points are strongly recommended before making decisions regarding student progress. The minimum number of data points to be collected on a given student in each Tier are:
  - Tier 2 – collect data every other week for a period of 9 weeks
  - Tier 3 – collect data every week for a period of 6 weeks
- Document dates, times, intervention methods (e.g., Great Leaps, M. Haggerty, etc...), progress monitoring tools, and progress monitoring schedule. (Refer to Appendix D, Sample Forms section for a sample instructional planning form.)
- Students receiving Tier 2 interventions should receive a minimum of 30 minutes of instruction at least 3 days per week in addition to the 90-120 minutes of Tier 1 core

instruction. Districts with ½ day Kindergarten may reduce time requirements by as much as 50% at the Kindergarten level.

- Students receiving Tier 3 interventions should receive 60 minutes per day of instruction in addition to Tier 1 instruction. Districts with ½ day Kindergarten may reduce time requirements by as much as 50% at the Kindergarten level.

## 5. Progress Monitoring

- Progress monitoring probes are administered regularly to students receiving Tier 2 (minimum every 2 weeks) or Tier 3 (minimum every week) levels of instruction in order to assess the efficacy of instructional and curricular interventions. Student performance is graphed and includes a standard of performance (i.e., aimline) for comparison.
- The team must decide the type of instrument to be used and the appropriate level to monitor (e.g., instructional, goal-level, grade-level). A Survey Level Assessment (SLA, e.g. graded word list, graded oral reading passages) or Curriculum Based Assessment (CBA; e.g. assessments provided in the general curriculum) can aid in determining a student's instructional level.
- Research suggests a *minimum of 7-10 progress monitoring data points* should be gathered before making an adequately informed decision on a student's *rate of progress* (Shinn, Good, & Stein, 1989). The more data points available the more reliable the RtI Team's decision will be.
- The frequency of progress monitoring depends on the severity of the deficit. As a rule, the more data points obtained, the better informed the RtI Team will be when determining a student's rate of progress, and subsequent instructional decisions.

## 6. Evaluation of Group Intervention Effectiveness

- Schedule 60-minute meetings per grade level every 4-7 weeks (minimum 7 data points).
- Include Title I teacher, special education teacher, and other support personnel as appropriate (speech therapist, social worker, psychologist).
- Grade level teams should review, revise, and/or discontinue small-group instruction based on student performance and progress toward the benchmark at the end of 6 weeks.
- If the student shows adequate progress\*, raise the performance goal and continue intervention.
- If the student does not show adequate progress\*, then the instructional program needs to be revised. For students not yet showing progress toward meeting the goal by the end of the first 6 weeks, change the intervention or increase the intensity, duration, and/or frequency of current intervention and continue to monitor progress for at least another 6 weeks.

- Grade level teams continue to review, revise, and or discontinue intervention throughout the school year. The team must also decide when, if necessary, it is appropriate to reintegrate students back into Tier I or when individual problem-solving or entitlement is necessary.

*\* For guidelines in determining adequate progress, please refer to the Data Decision Rules section of this document.*

## **7. Individual Problem Solving**

If data suggest a student has continued to show insufficient progress toward goals, the RtI Team may decide more specific problem-solving is necessary. An RtI Meeting is scheduled with the parents, if possible, to conduct individual problem solving. (Refer to Appendix D for sample forms to use for individual problem-solving meetings.)

The steps of individual problem solving involve:

### **a. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION**

**Purpose:** Identify the problem previous interventions failed to address

**Duties:**

- i. Choose target problem (include convergent data from previous intervention(s))
- ii. Be specific with strategy used and deficits encountered
- iii. The following steps should then occur:
  - a. Review records
  - b. Interview teachers/parents/student as needed
  - c. Observe the student in the classroom or environment that the behavior is occurring most frequently in
  - d. Compile all data to determine if a discrepancy between target student and his/her peers exists. (This information may already be available from universal screening and/or progress monitoring data)
- iv. Quantify the discrepancy for baseline data and write a discrepancy statement (Must use at least one):
  - A discrepancy ratio quantifying how many times the student is discrepant from his peers (e.g., Johnny is 1.81x discrepant from grade-level peers in Oral Reading Fluency)
  - A percentile performance from universal screening, progress monitoring, or other data collected by team (e.g., standardized testing, teacher assessments)
  - A calculation of current rate of improvement (i.e., slope) using progress monitoring data already collected during grade-level team phase (e.g., 2.3 Words Read Correctly per week). This may be represented by a trendline on progress monitoring graphs.

*Example of a Discrepancy Statement\*\*:* Johnny read 10 words correct per minute on the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Winter Benchmark Assessment, which places him in the 9<sup>th</sup> percentile of his class and is considered Below Average.

*\*\*For more detailed information explaining how to quantify a discrepancy, please refer to page 19, Step 8 (Entitlement Procedures).*

**If these steps have been exhausted and two interventions have been implemented then the procedures under Step 8 have been met. The next step should be a domain / special education referral and additional areas of concern may be explored.**

## **b. PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

**Purpose:** Hypothesize why the problem is occurring in an effort to make appropriate instructional changes.

**Duties:**

- i. Review problem identification data and collect any additional data
- ii. Conduct an error analysis to determine specific skill deficits (e.g., decoding, self-monitoring, comprehension, prosody) that may require individualized intervention. This data could be collected from a reading specialist, teacher, or other individuals who are familiar with the student. Consult your school psychologist for assistance.
- iii. Assess and/or gather additional information in areas (e.g., vision/hearing, functional performance, social/emotional) noted as significant concerns in Problem Identification stage.
- iv. Form a hypothesis, or an informed prediction, on why the problem is occurring based on the data available.

## **c. PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

**Purpose:** Write an Intervention Plan and create a goal

**Duties:**

- i. Using information/data collected in I and II, write an Intervention Plan including the following:
  - a. Instructional Strategy/Intervention Program
  - b. How often, how long, and at what time intervention will occur
  - c. Who will implement the intervention
  - d. When intervention will begin
  - e. Where intervention will be implemented
- ii. Write a measurable goal (For details about goal writing, please refer to the section entitled “Data Decision Rules”).
- iii. Decide how progress toward goal will be monitored and determine who, what, where, and when data will be collected.
- iv. Data should be evaluated and reviewed based on the requirements stated in Step 4 of the Implementation Section.

#### **d. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

**Purpose:** To ensure implementation integrity

**Duties:**

- i. Provide support to those implementing interventions
- ii. Observe intervention in action
- iii. Use the implementation integrity checklist
- iv. Make adjustments to intervention plan, if needed
- v. Continue to collect progress monitoring data

#### **e. PLAN EVALUATION**

**Purpose:** Evaluate intervention effectiveness and/or make changes to goal or intervention.

**Duties:**

- i. Examine graphical data to determine whether sufficient progress is being made
  - a. Examine placement of points against an aimline.\*
  - b. Compare rate of improvement (i.e., slope) of target student to expected rate of improvement (i.e., slope).\*
- ii. Make a decision regarding instructional/intervention change and any necessary goal changes.
- iii. Schedule a follow-up meeting to recycle through steps III and IV or consider entitlement.

\* For details about evaluating data, please refer to the section entitled “Data Decision Rules.”

### **8. Entitlement Procedures**

Entitlement for Special Education may be considered if the following guidelines have been met:

- Student’s performance has been identified & analyzed.
- Student has participated in at least 2 research-based interventions (group or individual). The student’s progress resulting from these interventions was evaluated per Tier 2 and Tier 3 guidelines.
- Data illustrating rate of improvement over time (i.e., slope) for a target problem was collected.
- The following data must be reviewed and considered prior to finding an individual eligible for special education services:
  - The slope of the student’s growth line
  - The percentile rank of the student’s level of performance compared to district or national norms

- The discrepancy of the student's level of performance from their grade-level peers.
- The number of progress monitoring points that have been above the aimline within the previous 6 weeks of data.
- After Tier 3 interventions have been completed, data must confirm at least **two** of the following in order to find an individual eligible for special education:
  - Student's slope of growth continues to be below grade-level slope rates.
  - Student's level of performance continues to be at least at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile or below compared to district or national norms.
  - Student's performance on progress monitoring probes has not resulted in 4 consecutive data points above the aimline, either at present or during previous evaluations of performance.
  - Student's level of performance continues to be significantly discrepant from grade-level peers (at least 2 times lower than – refer to page 22, #2 for calculation instructions).
- Team determines to sustain or continue progress is beyond the scope of general education.

If these guidelines have been considered, a special education evaluation may be deemed appropriate. If an evaluation for special education entitlement is deemed appropriate by the team, the following procedures should occur:

- A request for a special education evaluation is made. The team proceeds in the same manner as other requests for evaluations. A domain meeting is scheduled during which the team decides if additional information (e.g., standardized achievement testing, IQ, Behavior Rating Scales, etc) needs to be obtained. Remember, convergent data/information confirming a student's discrepancy from peers is required for entitlement. Progress monitoring data should NOT be the only information used to determine eligibility. The team must also rule out visual, hearing, or motor deficits, cognitive disability, language impairment, emotional disability, environmental or economic disadvantage, or cultural factors as determinant factors for the discrepancy.
- If an evaluation is deemed appropriate, parental consent is obtained. The team has 60 school days to gather any additional data needed and/or compile all existing data into a comprehensive report and hold an Eligibility IEP meeting.
- If the team decides that no additional evaluation is needed, then data collected throughout the RtI process is gathered, organized, and compiled into a report written by the evaluation team. When the report has been completed, an eligibility meeting is scheduled and a decision is made regarding whether a student is eligible for special education services.
- Initial eligibility team must include LEA administrator, general education teacher, special education teacher, school psychologist, and any other school personnel per the domain.

**NOTE: Students suspected of having a Cognitive Disability should be immediately referred for a special education evaluation.**

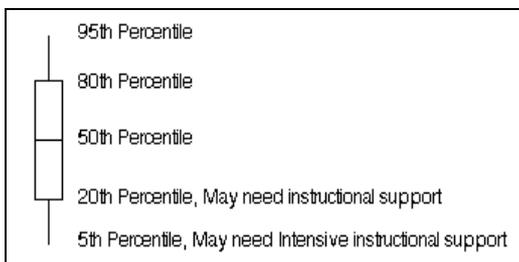
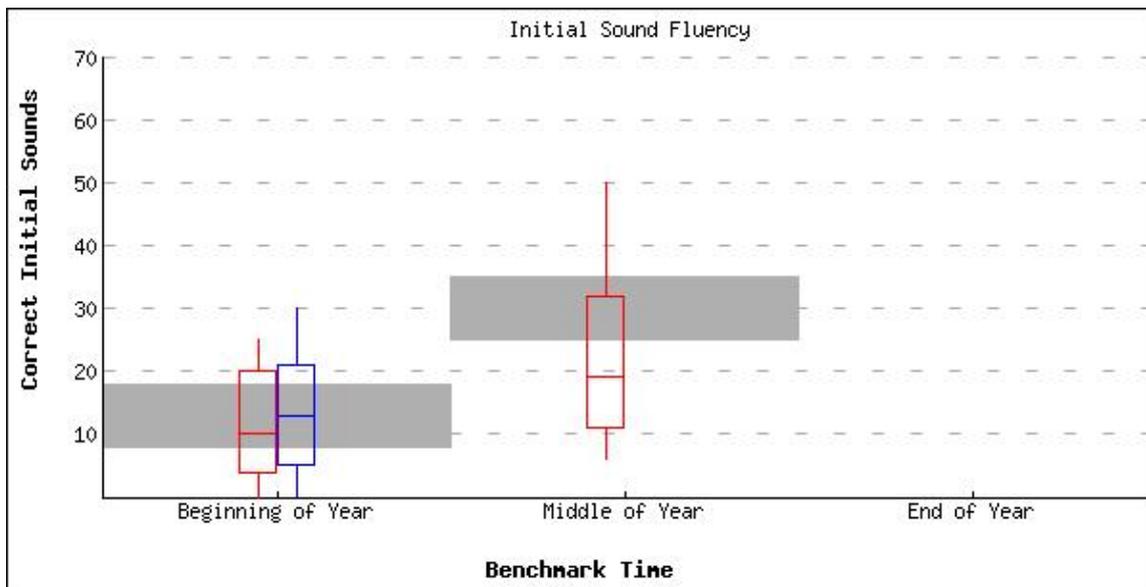
## **B. DATA DECISION RULES**

### *Guidelines for Practice*

The following rules for data-based decision making should be applied during the practice of RtI and continued for students entitled to special education in order to make decisions regarding progress on IEP goals and the need for continued services.

### **WAYS TO QUANTIFY A DISCREPANCY FOR PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION**

1. Determine the **percentile** of the student's performance compared to national or local norms. A percentile is a descriptive statistic that ranks scores from 0 to 100 and indicates whether a score is above or below a certain value. Typically, this type of information can be displayed on what is called a Box Plot:



Above is an example of a box plot showing the benchmark performance of a kindergarten class on Initial Sound Fluency in Fall & Winter 2006-2007 and Initial Sound Fluency in Fall 2007-2008. The boxes and the lines extending from the top and bottom of these boxes represent the range of scores resulting from the assessment. The key below the graph illustrates the descriptive ratings for different areas of the boxes. These descriptive ratings correspond to percentiles. For example, a student score falling on the horizontal line in the

center of the box indicates a score at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile which is considered “average.” A target student’s score can be compared to his or her classroom in order to determine whether he/she is discrepant from peers.

2. Identify the significance of a student’s discrepancy from peers by calculating a **Discrepancy Ratio**. A discrepancy ratio helps to quantify how many times the student’s current level of performance varies from that of his/her peers. To calculate a discrepancy ratio, use this formula:

$$\frac{\text{Peer Performance}}{\text{Target Student Performance}}$$

For Example: *When given a 4<sup>th</sup> grade DIBELS reading probe, Sarah is reading 80 correct words per minute while average 4<sup>th</sup> grade peers are reading 145 correct words per minute.* To determine how discrepant Sarah is from typical 4<sup>th</sup> grade peers, we would use the discrepancy ratio formula:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Peer Performance} \\ \text{Target Student Performance} \end{array} = \frac{145}{80} = 1.81x$$

Therefore, in this example, Sarah is 1.81 times discrepant from her peers. Typically, a severe discrepancy is a student who is at least 2 times discrepant from his/her peers.

3. Compare target student’s **Rate of Improvement** (i.e., slope) to peers:
  1. A student’s raw data can be manipulated into a trendline that illustrates whether a student’s performance is improving, declining, or showing no change in progress. The steepness of this trendline is called the “slope.” Simply put, slope illustrates how fast a student is learning (i.e., rate of improvement) in comparison to typical peers using local or national norms. A slope can be calculated using Microsoft Excel. (See Appendix D.)

## WRITING MEASURABLE GOALS FOR PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Four key components are necessary in writing appropriate goals:

1. Determine the target student’s **current performance** (instructional level). One way to determine current performance is through the use of a Survey Level Assessment (SLA). A SLA could be used by testing a student down grade levels, beginning with their actual grade, until you determine what grade-level material a student has mastered. For example, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student may currently be successful in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading material, reading 60 WRC on 2<sup>nd</sup> grade passages.
2. **Decide the time frame** for the goal. Time frames usually start when interventions begin, and end at the end of the school year.
3. **Determine a future performance level**. Where do you want the student to be performing by the end of the year? For example, the team may decide that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade student currently successful in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading material may be expected to be successful in 4<sup>th</sup> grade material in one year. Determining the future performance level is a team decision. Teams must use their best professional judgment.

4. The problem-solving team then must **set a standard** for successful performance. For example, the team may decide that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade student in this example should be expected to read 95 WRC from 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading material. Three different types of methods have been described in research that may help teams set standards:

- **Use DIBELS Benchmark assessment data from previous year.** Create a box plot of previous year’s DIBELS Benchmark Assessment data for Fall, Winter, and Spring. If the goal were to have the student read 5<sup>th</sup> grade passages like average, end-of-the-year 5<sup>th</sup> graders, then the goal would be a Spring DIBELS ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) score at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. If the goal were to have the student read 5<sup>th</sup> grade passages like low-average, end-of-the-year 5<sup>th</sup> graders, then the goal would be a Spring DIBELS ORF score at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, and so on. Average class performances from previous benchmark assessment could also be used as a standard.
- **Use National DIBELS Benchmark Norms created by the DIBELS website.** Simply choose a grade level and a target score associated with a particular time of year (Fall, Winter, or Spring). For example, we would like our 5<sup>th</sup> grade student, who is currently successful at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade material, to be reading like a typical 4<sup>th</sup> grade student in the Winter. Refer to the target scores (“No Risk” range) provided on the website corresponding to the grade and time of year the team chose.
- **Calculate a standard using a formula similar to one created by Fuchs, Fuchs, Fernstrom, Germann, & Hamlett (1993). This method may be more appropriate for students who are more than one grade level behind:**

$$\text{Standard for Success} = \text{Score on SLA} + (\text{Realistic or Ambitious Growth Rate} \times \text{Number of Weeks})$$

The “Score on SLA” is the median raw score obtained during the Survey Level Assessment. Enter the median raw score obtained during the SLA corresponding to the grade-level team has chosen to be the future performance level or goal. “Realistic growth rate” is considered the average amount of growth expected. The “ambitious growth rate” refers to the amount of growth needed to more quickly close the performance gap. The “realistic or ambitious growth rate” can be obtained from the charts below:

*Realistic & Ambitious Growth Rates for Reading (WRC = Words Read Correctly)*

Grade Level Probes	Realistic Goals	Ambitious Goals
1	2.0 WRC per week	3.0 WRC per week
2	1.5 WRC per week	2.0 WRC per week
3	1.0 WRC per week	1.5 WRC per week
4	.85 WRC per week	1.1 WRC per week
5	.50 WRC per week	.80 WRC per week
6-8	.30 WRC per week	.65 WRC per week

Note. Adapted from by Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Walz, & Germann (1993).

*Realistic & Ambitious Growth Rates for Math (CD = Correct Digits)*

Grade Level Probes	Realistic Goals	Ambitious Goals
2	1.0 CD per week	1.5 CD per week
3	.65 CD per week	1.0 CD per week
4	.45 CD per week	.85 CD per week
5	.30 CD per week	.65 CD per week
6	.30 CD per week	.65 CD per week

Note. Adapted from Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Walz, & Germann (1993).

*Realistic & Ambitious Growth Rates for Spelling (CLS = Correct Letter Sequences)*

<b>Grade Level Probes</b>	<b>Realistic Goals</b>	<b>Ambitious Goals</b>
2	1.0 CLS per week	1.5 CLS per week
3	.65 CLS per week	1.0 CLS per week
4	.45 CLS per week	.85 CLS per week
5	.30 CLS per week	.65 CLS per week
6	.30 CLS per week	.65 CLS per week

*Note.* Adapted from Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Walz, & Germann (1993).

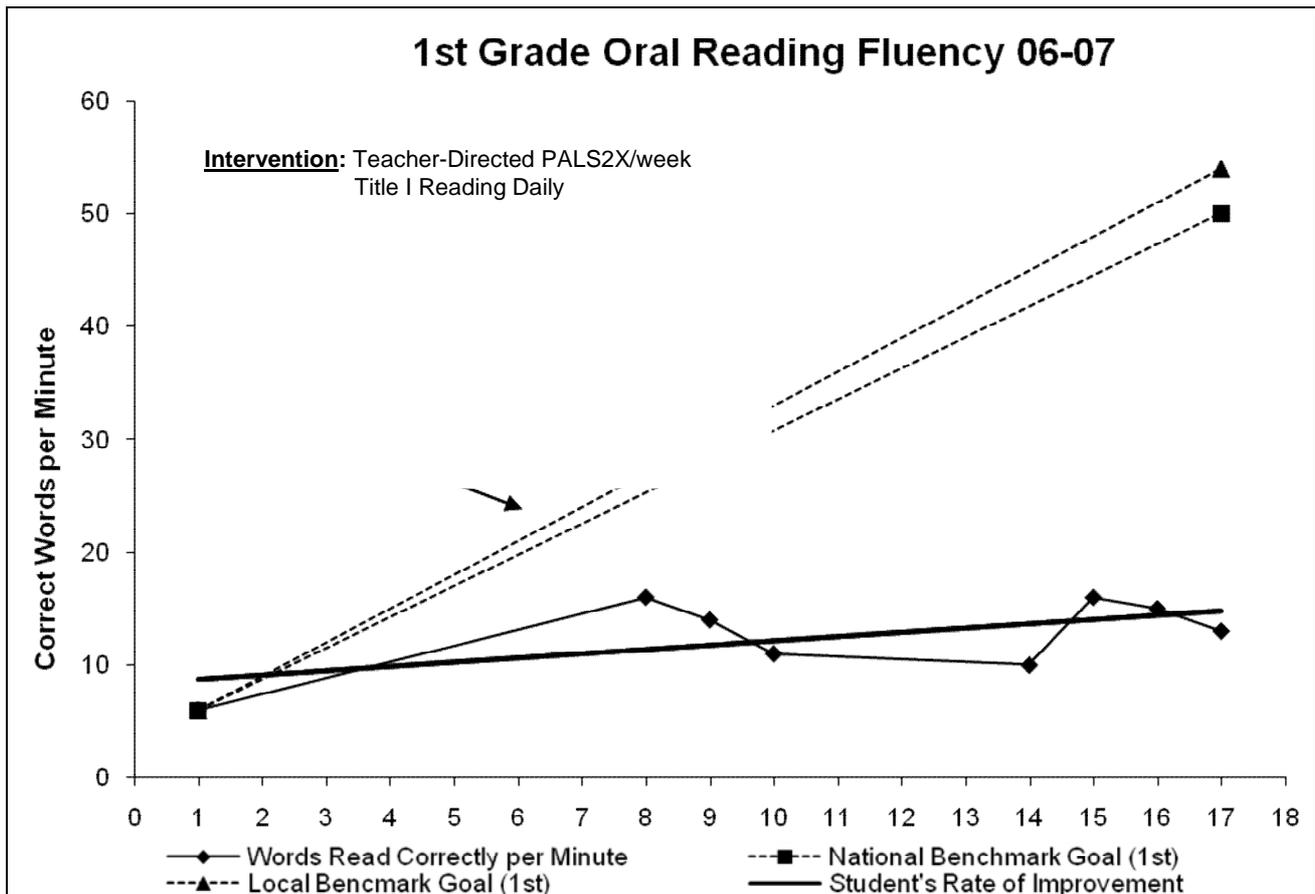
The growth rate can also be derived by local norms collected at your school. The “Number of Weeks” is simply the number of weeks from when the intervention starts until the end of the year.

**Example of a Well-Written Goal Including 4 Key Components:**

*In 32 weeks (1 school year), Matt will read 79 words correctly from Grade 3 DIBELS ORF Probes.* By utilizing these components, we can now objectively assess whether our instructional change/intervention is improving student performance over time.

**USING DATA TO EVALUATE OUR PLAN: Is Our Intervention Successful?**

After an appropriate goal has been set, we can begin recording our data on a graph. The most important element of a progress monitoring graph is the aimline (or goal-line). An aimline is a visual representation of the written goal the problem-solving team sets for a target student. Specifically, the aimline illustrates a student’s current performance (e.g., benchmark assessment score, median score of 3 reading probes) and the level we want him/her to be achieving within a specified time frame. Below is an example of a graph showing a student’s aimline and progress over time:



Teams can use the goal-line to decide whether the target student is making sufficient progress towards his/her goal. Here are a few ways we can assess sufficient progress:

1. Use Data Decision Rules comparing a student's weekly scores to his/her aimline. The 4-Point Rule is one way of following a data decision rule:
  - a. If the four most recent consecutive scores are above the aimline, the end-of-the-year performance goal needs to be increased and a new aimline drawn. In cases where the student is more than one grade level discrepant from peers, the "future performance level" should be changed to one grade-level above the original grade-level chosen in the goal. If the target student's aimline corresponds to his actual grade-level, then the criteria for success should become more stringent. For students being monitored at grade-level, it may not be necessary to increase the end-of-year performance goal. In these cases, evaluate the direction and position of the trendline against the aimline to additionally evaluate progress. Evaluating trendlines will be discussed on the following page.
  - b. If the four most recent consecutive scores are below the aimline, the student's instructional program needs to be revised. This could include increasing intervention's time, change the intervention's frequency, or altering the intervention's content.
  - c. If the data are variable, make no change or consider revising your plan.
2. Compare target student's Rate of Improvement (i.e., slope) to peers, as described previously in this section. "Rate of Improvement" is illustrated on graphs as a trendline. Consider the following when evaluating trendlines:

- a. Trendline Direction
  - i. Upward Trend – Intervention appears to be resulting in improvement. Continue intervention or reintegrate student back into Tier 2 or 1.
  - ii. Downward/Horizontal Trend – Intervention does not appear to be improving student performance. Consider modifying intervention.
- b. Trendline Position
  - i. Moving toward aimline – Target student appears to be learning faster than peers, and making sufficient progress
  - ii. Moving away from aimline – Performance gap appears to be widening between target student and peers. Insufficient progress is being made by target student.
  - iii. Parallel to aimline – Target student appears to be learning at same rate compared to peers. This may indicate that the target student is a slow learner, but is making sufficient progress relative to previous growth.
3. Determine the percentile of the student’s performance, as described previously in this section.
4. Identify the significance of a student’s discrepancy from peers by calculating a Discrepancy Ratio, as described previously in this section.

NOTE: Available research/literature provides many examples of how to monitor student progress and evaluate data. The guidelines explained in this section are popular suggestions described in the literature. Individuals who are responsible for setting up graphs, developing goals, and evaluating data are strongly encouraged to investigate this area in addition to reading this document.

### **HOW MANY INTERVENTIONS DO WE NEED TO IMPLEMENT BEFORE CONSIDERING A REFERRAL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION?**

A **minimum** of two interventions must be implemented before considering a referral for special education; however there is no maximum number of interventions that should be used. The data obtained from the individual’s actual skills and performance levels, anticipated skills and performance levels, outcomes and length of interventions, and any additional data are more important and provide more information for decision making than does the passage of time or number of interventions attempted.

## **C. STUDENT RECORDS AND REPORTS**

### *1. Data Notebooks*

- Each school is responsible for maintaining records from universal screenings. It is recommended each school develop “data notebooks.” These can be done at the building, grade, classroom, or individual level depending on the size of the school.
- For students requiring supplemental or intensive interventions, an individual data notebook be maintained.
- The data notebook should contain all assessment information (e.g., universal screenings, progress monitoring, diagnostic assessments, curriculum-based assessments, behavior charts, etc.)
- Data notebooks should be taken to each team meeting.

- Assessment information for the purpose of RtI is not required as a part of the child's cumulative record; however, copies could be included in the cumulative folder at administrative discretion.

2. *Test Booklets for Universal Screening*

- Buildings are responsible for purchasing or copying test booklets for universal screening.
- Organization of materials for universal screening should be completed by the school's designated assessment coordinator.
- Booklets should be stored at the school level and should be easily accessible to any team member if student performance review is needed.

3. *Graphs*

- Graphs containing school, grade, or individual data should be placed in the data notebook.

4. *Individual Problem-Solving Records*

- Students referred for individual problem-solving must have a separate folder for records of all problem-solving meetings.

**D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL**

Note: Roles and responsibilities will be determined by the district. The following personnel are recommended, but not limited to, participating in the RtI program implementation and intervention team.

**1. Administration**

a. *District Level (Superintendent, Directors of Special Service.)*

- Provide philosophical and instructional leadership support
- Help obtain and commit resources for screening, assessment, and interventions
- Policy and procedure development at the district level

b. *Building Principals*

- Provide philosophical and instructional leadership support
- Motivate the team by using relevant data, not legal requirements
- Provide for training and support to teams
- Monitor use of a research-based curriculum
- Help obtain and commit resources for screening, assessment, and interventions
- Active team participation and attendance
- Provide leadership for the team, organize and implement agendas, monitor role clarity and fidelity
- Have the authority to assign work

c. *ISEA Administrators*

- Provide technical assistance and troubleshooting
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Develop a lending library of research-based intervention programs
- Assist in the organization of universal screening
- Monitor entitlement decisions

vi. Evaluate effectiveness of the model

**2. Grade Level Team Leaders (Could be a general education teacher or other assigned personnel)**

- a. Facilitate grade level meetings
- b. Complete required paperwork
- c. Coordination and communication with all involved parties
- d. Judge the fidelity of implementation

**3. Interventionists**

- a. *Administrator*
  - i. Could be used to provide supplemental intervention
- b. *General Education Teachers*
  - i. Implement core curriculum
  - ii. Implement supplemental Interventions in intervention groups
  - iii. Progress monitor
- c. *Title One Teachers/Reading Specialists/Tutors*
  - i. Implement supplemental interventions in intervention groups
  - ii. Progress monitor
  - iii. Could serve as assessment coordinator/data coach
- d. *Special Education Teachers*
  - i. Implement intensive interventions for those students that are unsuccessful in supplemental curriculum (NOTE: Special education teachers should only work with general education students as long as services on all IEPs are being provided).
  - ii. Implement intensive interventions for those eligible for special education
  - iii. Progress monitor

**4. Additional staff that may be used to support the RtI program include: Speech Therapists, Paraprofessionals/Teaching Assistants, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Occupational Therapists**

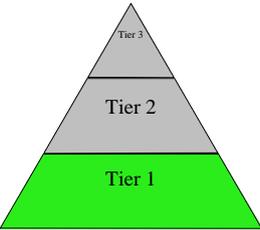
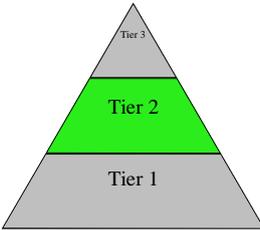
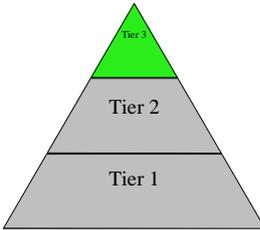
**5. Building Level RtI Coordinator**

- a. Organize universal screening schedules, materials, etc.
- b. Organize, analyze, and present screening data
- c. Can assist in setting goals for students, plan for progress monitoring, plot data, and interpret data to determine the effectiveness of interventions
- d. Train teachers and paraprofessionals to progress monitor

# **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Tier Model

<b>Level of Support</b>			
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core reading instruction using research-based strategies and materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplemental instruction</li> <li>• Intervention groups with explicit and systematic instruction using research-based strategies and materials to address specific skill areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive instruction</li> <li>• Explicit and systematic small group instruction using research-based strategies and materials</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize learning for all students and minimize the number of students in need of intervention</li> <li>• Core curriculum addresses the learning needs for most students with 80-90% of students meeting expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify students at risk for not reaching academic and/or behavior standards</li> <li>• Provide sufficient and appropriate systematic instruction so that students' performance rapidly reaches or exceeds established standards thereby preventing school failure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <i>intensive and/or sustained</i> support for students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• who don't progress with targeted supports</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• whose assessment data indicates the need for Tier 3 support in order to make progress</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Student Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who score locally between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on curriculum-based measures</li> <li>• This typically includes 15% of students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually students who score locally below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile on curriculum-based measures, and have participated in Tier 2 intervention.</li> <li>• This typically includes less than 10% of students.</li> </ul>
<b>Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90-120 minutes per day of instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional 30 minutes 3-5 days per week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 additional minutes per day beyond Tier 1</li> </ul>
<b>Interventionists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General educators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General educators</li> <li>• Title I teachers</li> <li>• Reading specialists</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Student support personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General educators</li> <li>• Title I teachers</li> <li>• Reading specialists</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Student support personnel</li> <li>• Special educators</li> </ul>

	<b>TIER 1</b>	<b>TIER 2</b>	<b>TIER 3</b>
<b>Progress Monitoring</b>	<p><u>How Frequently?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark Monitoring: fall, winter, and spring</li> </ul> <p><u>Who Does It?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade level teachers or designated team</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessment Tools (Examples)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIBELS</li> <li>• DRA</li> <li>• ThinkLink</li> </ul>	<p><u>How Frequently?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress Monitoring: every other week</li> </ul> <p><u>Who Does It?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interventionist or designated person</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessment Tools (Examples)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIBELS progress monitoring</li> <li>• AIMSweb</li> <li>• ThinkLink</li> </ul>	<p><u>How Frequently?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress Monitoring: 1x/ week</li> </ul> <p><u>Who Does It?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interventionist or designated person</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessment Tools (Examples)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DIBELS progress monitoring</li> <li>• AIMSweb</li> <li>• ThinkLink</li> </ul>
<b>Goal Setting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For 80% of students to meet or exceed expectations in the core curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use aggregate benchmark of current grade</li> <li>• Use rate of improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use aggregate benchmark of current grade.</li> <li>• Use rate of improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Instructional Decision making/ Problem Solving</b>	<p><u>Why?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make sure that the core reading program is meeting the needs of 80% of students</li> <li>• To ensure alignment with best practices in reading instruction</li> </ul> <p><u>When?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each benchmark period</li> </ul> <p><u>What?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review core reading curriculum</li> </ul> <p><u>How?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement change</li> <li>• Conduct analysis of group data</li> </ul>	<p><u>Why?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make sure the students in the intervention groups are increasing their rate of progress and decreasing their discrepancy from peer performance</li> <li>• To determine effectiveness of the intervention</li> </ul> <p><u>When?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly (recommended)</li> </ul> <p><u>What?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review core reading</li> <li>• Review group data to select instructional groups for intervention</li> </ul> <p><u>How?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement change</li> <li>• Document progress of all group members on a chart</li> <li>• Conduct analysis of group data</li> <li>• Determine need for individual problem-solving</li> </ul>	<p><u>Why?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make sure the individual student is increasing their rate of progress and decreasing their discrepancy</li> <li>• To determine effectiveness of the intervention</li> </ul> <p><u>When?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly (recommended)</li> </ul> <p><u>What?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Individual data</li> </ul> <p><u>How?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold RtI meeting with parents, if possible, to individually problem-solve</li> <li>• Implement change</li> <li>• Document individual progress on a chart</li> <li>• Analyze data</li> <li>• Determine if referral to special education is warranted.</li> </ul>

	<b>TIER 1</b>	<b>TIER 2</b>	<b>TIER 3</b>
<b>Parent Communication</b>	<u>What to Share</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual benchmark data</li> <li>• Reading suggestions for home</li> </ul>	<u>What to Share</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual benchmark data</li> <li>• Individual student progress monitoring graphs</li> </ul>	<u>What to Share</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual benchmark data</li> <li>• Individual student progress monitoring graphs</li> </ul>
	<u>Frequency of Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/Teacher conferences + end of year</li> </ul>	<u>Frequency of Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/Teacher conferences + end of year</li> <li>• Graphs sent home 1x per quarter with report card</li> </ul>	<u>Frequency of Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/Teacher conferences + end of year</li> <li>• Monthly RtI meetings</li> <li>• Graphs sent home if parent doesn't attend meeting</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Legal Considerations**

#### **Federal Regulations**

(IDEA 2004, effective July 1, 2005, with final regulations effective on October 15, 2006)

In general. Notwithstanding section 607(b), when determining whether a child has a specific learning disability as defined in section 602 (29), a local educational agency shall not be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability...

(B) Additional authority. In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local educational agency may use a process that determines **if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention.**

(5) SPECIAL EDUCATION RULE FOR ELIGIBILITY 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 factors 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 appropriate instruction in math; or
- (C) limited English proficiency.

*Federal Definition of “Scientifically-Based Research”:*

- A. *“Research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs”;* and
- B. *“Includes research that (I) employs systematic empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment; (II) involves rigorous data analysis that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn; (III) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators; (IV) is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition; (V) insures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication, or at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and (VI) has been accepted by a peer reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.”*

*In other words, research-based practices are instructional practices that have been proven effective in experimental studies. To be research-based, the strategy needs to be scientifically studied by more than just one person. Research-based also implies that the strategy works better than something else (or*

nothing at all). People often publish strategies on the internet and in books, but unless they provide citation to the research.

## **Illinois Regulations**

(Effective June 28, 2007)

### Section 226.130 Additional Procedures for Students Suspected of or Having a Specific Learning Disability

- a) *In addition to the requirements set forth in Sections 226.110 and 226.120 of this Part, the district shall adhere to the procedures set forth at 34 CFR 300.307, 300.308, 300.309, 300.310, and 300.311 when evaluating a student who is suspected of, or who has previously been identified as having, a specific learning disability as described in 34 CFR 300.8.*
- b) *Provided that the requirements of this subsection (b) are met, **each district shall, no later than the beginning of the 2010-11 school year, implement the use of a process that determines how the child responds to scientific, research-based interventions as part of the evaluation procedure** described in 34 CFR 300.304. When a district implements the use of a process of this type, the district shall not use any child's participation in the process as the basis for denying a parent's request for an evaluation.*
- c) *No later than January 1, 2009, **each district shall develop a plan for the transition to the use of a process that determines how the child responds to scientific, research-based interventions as part of the evaluation procedure** described in 34 CFR 300.304. Each district's plan shall identify the resources the district will devote to this purpose and include an outline of the types of State-level assistance the district expects to need, with particular reference to the professional development necessary for its affected staff members to implement this process. The transition plan developed pursuant to this subsection (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1.85(b)) if one exists.*
- d) *In addition to using an identification process of the type required by subsection (b) of this Section, a district may use a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability.*

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Examples of Scientifically Based Interventions Resources**

#### **Web Sites:**

- Florida Center for Reading Research: [www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org)
- Oregon Reading First Center: <http://reading.uoregon.edu>
- Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts: [www.texasreading.org](http://www.texasreading.org)

#### **Universal Tier 1 Benchmark/Core Reading Programs:**

- Trophies
- The Nation's Choice
- Macmillian/McGraw-Hill Reading
- Open Court
- Reading Mastery Plus
- Scott Foresman Reading
- Success For All
- Wright Group Literacy
- M. Haggerty
- 6 Minute Solutions
- Touch Math
- Lexia

#### **Tier 2 Targeted Strategic/Supplemental Reading Programs:**

- Early (Soar to) Success
- Read Well
- Reading Mastery
- Early Reading Intervention
- Great Leaps
- REWARDS
- Ladders to Literacy
- Read Naturally
- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)
- Success Maker
- Touch Math

#### **Tier 3 Intensive Reading Programs:**

- Corrective Reading
- Language!
- Wilson Reading System Reading Mastery
- Earobics
- Great Leaps/Read Naturally
- REWARDS
- Soar to Success
- Success Maker
- Touch Math

**APPENDIX D**  
**Sample Forms and Letters**

## Parent Notification Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are pleased to inform you that we are implementing a practice of early intervention services known as **Response to Intervention (RtI)**. RtI provides high quality instruction/intervention to meet each child's identified needs. RtI involves brief, but frequent assessments of your child's learning rate (academic or behavior growth) and his/her level of performance (compared to expected performance). These assessments will be used to make important educational decisions. Teams of school personnel will meet regularly to discuss progress and determine which students will participate in intervention groups.

All students will participate in the core academic and behavior curriculum (known as Tier 1). Many students will also receive Supplemental Services (known as Tier 2). This means they will spend more time learning a particular skill through specific interventions and accommodations. Tier 2 instructions may be provided by the classroom teacher, the Title 1 teacher, or a support staff member (school psychologist, school social worker, speech therapist, teacher assistant, etc.) Because students will move in and out of groups as they master skills, parental permission to participate in groups will not be obtained.

Students who continue to struggle will also receive Intensive Services (known as Tier 3). This means your child will receive additional small group instruction and interventions targeted to his/her needs. Again, many different school personnel may provide this intervention, including special education personnel.

Extra time for additional instruction may occur during other classes, such as PE or music. Please understand that, first and foremost, we want your child to be able to master skills in reading, math, writing, and behavior. This is our educational priority.

As always, you will be informed of your child's educational progress over the course of the school year. If your child requires Tier 3 intervention, you may be invited to come to a meeting to discuss your child's educational needs. Students who continue to require Tier 3 intervention for an extended period of time may be entitled to special education services with parental permission. If a parent requests an evaluation for special education, a meeting will be held to discuss the request. However, a student may not be entitled to special education if they have not received Tier 3 intensive instruction.

In the past, your child may have had a "FLEX" plan. This was a written plan that stated what accommodations/interventions your child was receiving. RtI is an extension of our former practice of "Flexible Service Delivery." We will no longer be writing individual "FLEX" plans for students unless they require Tier 3 interventions or are at risk of requiring special education services.

We are very excited about RtI. We strongly believe by teaching and assessing specific skills explicitly and systematically students will make academic and behavior gains. Teaching will become more precise, and concrete data will be used to make decisions about instruction.

If you have any questions about the practice of RtI, please contact the building principal

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)**  
Notification of Team Meeting

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian,

You are invited to be a member of your child's Response to Intervention (RtI) team. The RtI educational model provides services based on the unique individual needs of each student. In an RtI model your student is provided with research-based instruction, curriculum, and interventions matched to your student's specifically identified needs. The effectiveness of these interventions are continually monitored, modified, and discussed at regular team meetings in order to maximize each student's learning potential.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this meeting is to create and/or revise your child's RtI plan. Those included in this team are:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please try to attend this meeting and be an important member of your child's RtI team. You have the right to bring an advocate or others with you to the meeting. If you require a translator, interpreter, or need to reschedule the meeting, please contact us by calling:

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.  
Name Phone #

Date Sent: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>CUMULATIVE FILE REVIEW</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>By Whom:</b>
<b>Significant Findings:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attach Completed File Review Form</b>	

<b>INTERVIEW SUMMARY</b>			
	Teacher	Parent	Student
<b>Date</b>			
<b>Type of Interview</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attach Completed Interview Forms</b>			

<b>OBSERVATION</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>By Whom:</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	
<b>Significant Findings:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attach Completed Observation Forms (if applicable)</b>	

<b>PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY</b>
<b>Prioritized Area of Concern:</b>
<b>Discrepancy Statement:</b> _____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attach quantifiable data illustrating student’s discrepancy from peers (i.e., baseline data). Identify type of data attached:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> DIBELS Box Plot (i.e., percentile) <input type="checkbox"/> Discrepancy Ratio <input type="checkbox"/> Rate of Improvement (i.e., slope)
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attach data collected during Grade Level Team meetings (i.e., progress monitoring data)</b>

## RESPONSE to INTERVENTION *Individual Student Intervention Plan*

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

**Discrepancy Statement:**

*\*\*Please refer to the **Problem Identification Summary Form** for graphs illustrating discrepancy.*

### PROBLEM ANALYSIS

**Briefly describe results of error analysis & identify specific skill deficit:**

### GOAL STATEMENT

### INTERVENTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

**Brief Description:**

**Implementer:**

**How Often:**

**What Time:**

**Where:**

**Start Date:**

**Other Accommodations  
and/or Interventions  
Occurring Concurrently  
with this Plan:**

<b>MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (i.e., Progress Monitoring)</b>	
<b>Progress Monitoring Tool:</b>	
<b>Who Will Collect/Graph Data:</b>	
<b>What Will be Recorded:</b>	
<b>How Often:</b>	
<b>Days/Times Data Will be Collected:</b>	

<b>DECISION MAKING RULE</b>	
<b>Type:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 Consecutive Data Point Rule <input type="checkbox"/> DIBELS Box Plot (i.e., percentile) <input type="checkbox"/> Discrepancy Ratio <input type="checkbox"/> Rate of Improvement (i.e., slope) Analysis
<b>Criterion for Intervention to be Considered "Effective":</b>	

**Plan Evaluation Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Place:** \_\_\_\_\_





**INTERVENTION PLAN EVALUATION**  
**Special Education Eligibility Consideration Data Form**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Evaluation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION**

**Intervention(s) Provided:**

\_\_\_\_\_

The intervention being evaluated began on \_\_\_\_\_ and continued through \_\_\_\_\_.

Total number of interventions attempted to date: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of *data points* being considered during this intervention phase is: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of *instructional weeks* occurring during this intervention phase is: \_\_\_\_\_

**EVALUATION (MUST meet 2 of the 4 criteria for eligibility):**

**Describe placement of data points in relation to goal-line for this intervention phase:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of *progress monitoring points* that have been above the aimline within the previous 6 weeks of data:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must be less than 4 above the aimline)

**What is the *slope* of the student's rate of progress during the current intervention period?**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Must be below grade level slope rates)

**What is the *percentile rank* of the student's level of performance compared to district and/or national norms during the current intervention period?** \_\_\_\_\_

(Must be at 10<sup>th</sup> percentile or below)

**What is the discrepancy of the student's level of performance from their grade-level peers?**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Must be at least two times lower than grade-level peers, z must equal 2.0 or higher)

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Peer Performance} \\ \text{Target Student Performance} \end{array} = \frac{x}{y} = z$$

**\* *Graph of student's data points with aimline must be attached* \***

## **RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS**

### **As a result of this intervention:**

- Student is not making adequate progress
- Student is making adequate progress, but has not met goal
- Student met goal

### **The next step will be:**

- Modify intervention
- Maintain current plan
- Fade out intervention and reintegrate into regular education
- Continue intervention and refer for special education (\*must meet criteria specified in RtI Manual)

**Students Strengths and Weaknesses  
(Optional)**

<b>+ Fluency + Accuracy + Comprehension</b>	<b>+ Fluency + Accuracy - Comprehension</b>	<b>+ Fluency - Accuracy</b>	<b>- Fluency + Accuracy</b>	<b>- Fluency - Accuracy</b>

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Graphing Data**

Effective data-based decision-making is facilitated by accurate and efficient compilation of data into graphs. The following graphing instructions using Microsoft Excel have been provided by Gary L. Cates, Ph.D., N.C.S.P., Illinois State University:

1. Open Microsoft Excel
2. In cell A1 type "Session"
3. In cell B1 type "Baseline" This will be where you type in baseline data only
4. In cell C1 Type "Treatment 1" This will be where you type in Treatment 1 data only
5. In cell D1 Type "Treatment 2" This will be where you type in Treatment 2 data only
6. In cell A2 Type "1"
7. In cell A3 Type "2"
8. Highlight Cell A2 & A3 by clicking on cell A2 with the left mouse button and then holding it down as you drag on to cell A3 and then let go.
9. Grab onto the bottom right corner of cell A3 by left mouse clicking on it and holding it. Now, while holding, drag your cursor to cell A21 and then let go. This should have filled in all of your cells under the session column with a sequential list of numbers to represent session number.
10. In cell B2 type "#N/A" and hit enter.
11. Now, right mouse click on cell B2 and choose "copy".
12. Highlight all of the remaining cells (B2-B21 through D2-D21) and then right mouse click and choose paste.

You should now have "#N/A" in all of the cells. You now have a worksheet completed to graph baseline and treatment data for two treatments.

1. Enter data into the appropriate cells.
2. Keep in mind that the data must go into the appropriate session row. So, if you are starting treatment 1 on the fourth session (i.e. after three baseline sessions) then you should input the first data in cell C5.

Once the data are inputted, you are ready to construct a graph.

1. Choose the chart wizard icon. If it is not on your toolbar, then go to View, toolbars, and make sure "standard" is checked. This will add the chart wizard icon for you.
2. Once you have clicked on the chart wizard icon, choose ".xy scatter" (click only once) and then choose the bottom left example pane and click next.
3. Clear the data range field and click on the "series" tab.
4. Choose "Add".
5. Clear out the Y Values field and with your cursor still in the field, go back to your data and highlight the cells B2-B21 in the baseline column. You will notice it puts a formula in the Y Values field for you. Click add and repeat this process for both treatment columns.
6. Do the same thing in the X values field, but highlight use the session column for data to be inputted.
7. After all data of interest are added to be graphed then choose next.

8. In the title column, type “SESSIONS” in the X axis field and “RATE OF PERFORMANCE” in the Y axis field. Leave chart title blank.
9. Click on the “Axis” tab. Make sure all boxes are checked.
10. Click on the “Gridlines” tab. Uncheck any boxes that may be checked.
11. Click on the “Legend” tab and uncheck any boxes that may be checked.
12. Click on the “data labels” tab and uncheck any boxes that may be checked.
13. Choose next.
14. At the dialogue box, choose “Save as new sheet” and call it Graph.

You should now have a graph of your data.

1. Double click on the inside region of your graph and choose “none” for both “patterns” and “area”.
2. Click on a number on the X axis. Change minor and major units to 1. Change maximum to 20 and minimum to 0.
3. Click on a number on the Y axis. Change your minor to 1, major to 10, minimum to 0, and maximum to 120.
4. Use the drawing tools to draw a vertical phase line between session 3 and 4. You can access this from the tools menu as you did for the chart wizard icon, if it is not shown at the bottom of your screen.
5. Use arrows to point to one datum for each condition.
6. Use text boxes to label each arrow. Instead of arrows, you can also label conditions at the top of each condition phase.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Acknowledgements and References**

In order to be effective, the implementation and practice of RtI requires teamwork and collaboration from numerous individuals. The content of this manual was largely reproduced from various RtI resources. Specifically, the RtI Manual developed by the Rural Champaign County Special Education Cooperative provided the majority of the material used in this document. There were several key members of the ISEA team that provided their time and expertise in order to ensure a comprehensive and informative manual. A special thanks goes to the following individuals for their time and knowledge: George Gwinup, Director, Kimberly Morris, Ph.D. and Mark Moore, School Psychologists, Lavonne Gillespie, Reading Specialist, David Roehrig, Program Coordinator, and Kolene Lucht, Program Coordinator.

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