2012

Response to Intervention

Michelle Lynn Huguenin
Central Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/graduate_projects
Part of the Educational Methods Commons, and the Elementary Education and Teaching Commons

Recommended Citation
Huguenin, Michelle Lynn, "Response to Intervention" (2012). All Graduate Projects. 66.
http://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/graduate_projects/66

This Graduate Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Student Projects at ScholarWorks@CWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Graduate Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@CWU. For more information, please contact pingfu@cwu.edu.
NOTE:

SIGNATURE PAGE OMITTED FOR SECURITY REASONS

THE REGULATIONS FOR SIGNATURE PAGES CAN BE FOUND ON CWU’S GRADUATE STUDIES WEBPAGE:

CWU.EDU/MASTERS/
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

A Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education
Master Teacher

by
Michelle Lynn Huguenin
May 2012
ABSTRACT

Response to Intervention

by

Michelle Lynn Huguenin

May, 2012

As the education system evolves, educators have the opportunity to learn more about research-based teaching skills and strategies that are most effective in meeting the growing needs of each individual student. It is crucial that student needs are met in order for every child to experience academic success (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.).

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a three-tiered program designed to deliver individualized intervention services early in a child's academic career. Prior to 2004, the education system had a “wait to fail” system in place for students. RTI is a model designed to change this by providing intervention before the child experiences academic failure. By providing students with this three-tiered intervention program, students may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.).

The goal of this project is to provide educators for grades K-4 with a manual of tips, tools, resources and strategies about successfully implementing and maintaining the RTI program.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong> INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Purpose of this Project</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Project</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Project</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of Terms</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Overview</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II</strong> REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of RTI</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems Associated With RTI</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Needs in Relation to RTI</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III</strong> PROJECT PROCEDURE</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Project</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Procedure</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Development</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV</strong> WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V</strong> CONCLUSION</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTI Instruction Manual</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Project

As the education system evolves, educators have the opportunity to learn more about teaching skills and strategies that are most effective in meeting the growing needs of each individual student. It is crucial that student needs are met in order for every child to experience academic success. Providing intervention services is instrumental to this type of individualized instruction (Boucher, n.d.).

There is a national movement aimed at providing early intervention programs such as Response to Intervention (RTI) to students. The concept of providing RTI services in the areas of reading and math earlier rather than later in a child’s career is showing great gains in student achievement (Boucher, n.d.).

Prior to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 (Boucher, n.d.), educators routinely waited until students were in second or third grade to refer children with learning disabilities for special education services. This “wait to fail” method resulted in approximately 74% of students who did not receive early intervention services to have reading difficulties as far as the ninth grade and beyond ("Response to intervention", 2007).

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a three-tiered model designed to provide early intervention to students who may be in danger of being referred for special education services in the future if early services are not provided (Boucher, n.d.). This model also
emphasizes the importance of positive classroom relationships and teamwork amongst staff (Whitten, Esteves, & Woodrow, 2009).

Tier one of RTI provides all students with high-quality, research-based core curriculum that is aligned with state standards. Delivery of tier one instruction takes place in the general education classroom. The first RTI tier also includes universal screening of every student in hopes of identifying those who may need early intervention ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010). Approximately 80-90% of students will have their needs met within tier one ("Response to intervention", n.d.). Evidence shows that when effective classroom instruction takes place, the number of students who are inappropriately classified as learning disabled can be greatly reduced ("IRA," 2010).

The second tier of intervention includes students who are not responding to the core curriculum being provided within the general education setting. Approximately 5-10% of all students will need tier two services ("Response to intervention", n.d.). This tier may include students who are one to two years below grade level standards (California Department of Education, 2010). Tier two of RTI consists of a combination of high quality, research-based core curriculum in the general education classroom as well as small group interventions. These small group interventions vary in intensity level and frequency based on student response and specific needs (National Center on Response to Intervention, n.d.). Services in tier two should take place 3-5 times per week for thirty minutes or more each (Wright, n.d.). By utilizing the small group method of instruction, students are able to learn within his or her capabilities through the guidance and facilitation of the teacher (Dunn, 2005). Teaching students in small groups, ideally
five students or less, is a critical component to the second tier of intervention ("Response to intervention", n.d.). Research shows that individualized instruction in small group settings is an effective way to reduce the number of students being classified as learning disabled (LD) ("IRA," 2010).

The third tier includes a combination of one-on-one intervention as well as tiers one and two of RTI. Tier three is the most intense level of intervention. Tier three services should take place five days per week for 30 minutes or more at a time (Wright, n.d.). Depending on the student’s level of response to treatment, data gained from this tier may lead to a referral for special education ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010). Approximately 1-5% of all students in the United States will be involved with this tier of intervention ("Response to intervention", n.d.). This tier generally includes students who are two or more years below grade level standards (California Department of Education, 2010).

Each of the three tiers of RTI includes continuous monitoring of student progress to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as needed (Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2007). Universal screening and frequent progress monitoring are required components of the RTI process. RTI involves measuring each student’s response to treatment as well as the amount of intervention necessary to generate that response (Duhon et al., 2009). The RTI process spans across both general and special education and is not exclusive to one or the other ("IRA," 2010).

IDEA (2004) authorized the use of RTI in schools nationwide to insure that all students receive research- based instruction and frequent progress monitoring to measure
growth. This information is used to make decisions in terms of frequency and intensity of intervention delivery as well as modifications that may be necessary. RTI is also a more practical way of identifying students who may have a learning disability earlier than in the historical “wait to fail” programs and builds upon framework of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.).

RTI is included in IDEA because it helps to differentiate between children who actually have a specific learning disability (SLD) from children who may be having difficulties that can be resolved with specific, scientific-based, general education interventions (Knudson, 2008). RTI involves measuring the student’s response to treatment as well as the amount of intervention necessary to produce that response (Duhon et al., 2009). This is accomplished through frequent progress monitoring of students using resources such as Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Curriculum. Based Measurement (CBM) and AIMSweb (Academic Improvement Monitoring System). The expansion of RTI requires that a reasonable variety and amount of academic supports be in place for struggling students (Dufrene et al., 2010).

The general consensus of RTI is that students who do not respond to these tiers of intervention are possibly at risk for having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) (Duhon, Mesmer, Atkins, Greguson, & Olinger, 2009). This intervention model serves as an integrated approach to student learning that includes general, corrective and special education instruction (Hightree-Sitzmann et al., n.d.). IDEA 2004 allows state educational agencies (SEA's) and local educational agencies (LEA's) to use data gained
through the RTI process when making a determination in regard to specific learning disabilities (SLD) that may exist ("Progress Monitoring," 2006).

Data collection is an important aspect of the decision making process with RTI. Collection of student data show patterns of strengths and/or weaknesses assist staff in making decisions about students needing additional instruction and/or progress monitoring. It also helps staff to identify students who are ready to graduate from the program ("IRA," 2010).

Though IDEA states that children in kindergarten through 12th grade are eligible for early intervention services (Boucher, n.d.), this project focuses primarily on grades kindergarten through fourth. Since RTI is a relatively new approach to student learning, there are many unanswered questions that recent research studies are attempting to explore and gain new knowledge of (Duhon et al., 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Prior to introducing the RTI model in 2004, students enrolled in public schools had to experience academic failure before receiving additional assistance. The foundation of RTI is to provide intervention services much sooner than the "wait to fail" model previously in place. Data show that students who take part in this three-tiered intervention program may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.).

Before RTI, the education system routinely prolonged the referral of students for additional services until second or third grade. This left many students floundering who
would have possibly been more successful if earlier intervention services had been provided ("Response to intervention", 2007).

On the other hand, many students have been referred for special education services unnecessarily because intervention services were provided later in the child’s school career. RTI helps educators to meet the needs of students struggling academically while reducing the number of students who are inappropriately placed into special education programs (Boucher, n.d.).

With districts facing major budget shortfalls nationwide, it is essential for schools to find cost effective resources that are supportive of RTI. While further budget cuts are looming, there are many inexpensive and / or free products and resources that can be used for implementing and maintaining RTI (Wright, n.d.).

State and federal policies have experienced minimal changes in the areas of identifying, evaluating, and focusing on children and / or youth with disabilities since the late 1970’s. RTI is aimed at changing that by intervening earlier in the child's academic career (Wedl, 2005).

Clearly, early intervention is a beneficial means of helping students achieve greater success. In order to bring about the best intervention strategies earlier rather than later in a child’s life, educators must be equipped with the most effective tools and strategies to provide every child the best opportunity to be as successful as possible.

Being that budget cuts in education continue to take place across the nation, there must be more cost effective ways in delivering education services for students in grades K-4 at nation, state, district and school levels. Using RTI can be a cost efficient way to
curtail costly referrals to special education by providing academic interventions earlier than in the past ("Parent Page," 2007).

As with many other school districts across the United States, the Highland School District is not providing academic intervention services early enough to struggling students (Boucher, n.d.). The premise behind RTI is to provide intervention services before the learning gaps become insurmountable for the child (Wright, n.d.).

The Purpose of this Project

The purpose of this project was to develop a manual of beneficial tips and tools that can be used to implement and maintain the RTI program. Since RTI is a fairly new program, many teachers are unaware of the various components of this intervention model and what it has to offer. This project will bring greater awareness about the value and benefits of RTI to educators who teach grades kindergarten through fourth at Highland Elementary in Classic, Washington. This project is necessary because it is essential for the Highland School District to deliver academic interventions earlier for students who are struggling.

While the RTI program is flexible, many educators may be reluctant to take part in the process because it could appear to be overwhelming in the beginning (Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, & McGraw, 2009). This project was completed to familiarize educators about RTI using implementation and maintenance tools and tips to enhance the success of this intervention model.

This is an important project because RTI is a federally funded and mandated program that is showing great success nationally as well as in Washington State
This project will help educators to better understand the various elements of RTI, provide teaching resources as well as tips about how to implement and maintain the program. This project is aimed at familiarizing teachers and administrators with RTI by providing tips, tools and data necessary to implement and maintain RTI.

Significance of the Project

This project is significant because it will assist educators in providing intervention services to students. The intent of RTI is to identify students who may not qualify for special education services but if no intervention services are provided, qualification may be necessary in the future (Boucher, n.d.).

RTI is a three-tiered program designed to provide intervention before a child falls through the cracks. Studies show that when children receive early academic intervention, he or she may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.). One study completed in a Minnesota school district showed a decrease from 4.4% to 2.5% of special education referrals after implementing the RTI model (Wedl, 2005).

Research shows that the majority of struggling readers who receive early intervention are able to read at grade level by the conclusion of tier one intervention services (Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, & McGraw, 2009). Essentially, all students can learn and should be given ample opportunity to do so.

This project emphasizes the importance of identifying students in need of academic interventions as early as possible. Unfortunately, intervention systems of the
past have taken place too late for many (Howard, 2009); the development of this project is designed to change that.

Also included in this project is information about the importance of having high expectations for all students. Each of the three intervention tiers includes having high expectations for each and every student (Boucher, n.d.). As encompassed by the constructivist belief system, it is important to develop high standards and expectations for all students to be held accountable (Dunn, 2005).

Marzano (2007) states that “teacher beliefs greatly influence student achievement” (p. 162). In essence, expectations set forth by the teacher can be reflective of student success or lack thereof. It is essential for educators to communicate high expectations to all students. Change takes time, work and patience. This project will provide a valuable overview that allows educators to better understand the nuts and bolts of RTI.

The research available in favor of RTI further affirms the importance of this project. This plan is necessary because it will fill a gap by providing educators information about RTI.

Limitations of the Project

This project contains various limitations. One limitation is that it does not include many behavioral aspects of intervention; the primary objective of this project is to emphasize academic interventions.

Since RTI contains many components and steps, educators may find the process to be overwhelming and unfamiliar in the beginning. This has caused some educators to
be reluctant about learning more about RTI and what it has to offer (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2009).

The RTI process also requires collaboration amongst staff and parents. If some staff members do not work well together, there could be difficulties with the overall implementation and maintenance of RTI (Whitten et al., 2009).

Another limitation of this project is that some schools may not be able to fully utilize RTI due to limited personnel and funding resources being available (Dufrene et al., 2010). This could become increasingly difficult provided the recent budget cuts in Washington State.

Lastly, since RTI is a fairly new concept in the field of education, this project will presumably need to be updated with more current information from time to time as additional studies are conducted.

Glossary of Terms

The vocabulary listed below may be utilized as a reference to better understand the terminology being used in this project.

**Academic Improvement Monitoring System (AIMSweb)** - A benchmark and progress monitoring system based on repeated, constant student evaluation. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management system that compares student, school and school district information to national norms (http://www.aimsweb.com/).
Baseline - a set of critical observations or data used for comparison or a control (dictionary.com)

Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) – Screening tools used to measure subject areas such as fluency, writing and math. These align with school district standardized goals (Wright, n.d.).

**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels)** – A comprehensive, scientifically-based formative assessment system used to identify students who may need additional academic support (Hoffman, Jenkins, & Dunlap, 2009).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** - The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that children with disabilities will have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). IDEA focuses on improving learning for children with disabilities (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

**Individualized Educational Program (IEP)** - A document describing personalized special education programs developed by the IEP team to address a student's exceptional needs. This document provides the foundation necessary to provide a quality education for each child with a disability (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

**Intelligence quotient (I.Q.)** - A test designed to determine the mental capacity of an individual (dictionary.com).

**Intervention**- Instructional strategies used to improve student progress (Lay, 2009).

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** - Requires all states to establish academic standards as well as a state-wide testing system that meets federal requirements (http://www.k12.wa.us/).
Professional Learning Communities (PLC)- A collaborative, student focused program that shares teaching and learning strategies aimed at improving instruction, collaboration and empowerment (Carlson & Golden, n.d.).

Progress monitoring - Used to evaluate, measure and assess how students are responding to instruction. (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Response to Intervention (RTI) - A three-tiered intervention system used to maximize student academic success and decrease behavior issues (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Special education- Specially designed instruction based on exceptional needs of students who are eligible for special education services. (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Project Overview

Chapter one introduces the background of the RTI project and discusses the statement of the problem. It also states the purpose, significance and limitations of the project and a glossary listing relevant terms for the project.

Chapter two contains the literature review. This is designed to demonstrate causal statements behind general research questions and problems that exist with the RTI program while demonstrating proficiency in RTI-related research. This chapter also reveals academic traditions that support the study by reviewing and critiquing previous RTI-related research in relation to the problem selected. It also demonstrates that the researcher identified some type of discrepancy in previous research and that the proposed study will fill the need established.

Chapter three of this project contains the background of the project, project procedure as well as the project development and its implementation.
Chapter four is the written description of the project. This manual includes a basic overview about planning, implementing and maintaining RTI.

Chapter five summarizes objectives and goals of the RTI project. This chapter also includes possible implications of implementing RTI and recommendations for making the most out of this manual.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background

For several decades, the "wait to fail" model of intervention has been in place for struggling learners. This model provides intervention services later in the child's academic career causing gaps in learning to be insurmountable obstacles for some to overcome. Over one-third of schools in the United States are using or preparing to use RTI as a means of replacing the "wait to fail" model in order to provide intervention services earlier in the child's academic career (Hoover, Baca, Wexler-Love, & Saenz, 2008).

Beginning in 2004, a national movement began designed to meet the needs of benchmark, struggling and at-risk learners earlier in the child’s academic career through the implementation and maintenance of Response to Intervention (RTI) (Hoover, Baca, Wexler-Love, & Saenz, 2008). This movement is necessary because in order to close the gaps between student performance, expectations and current skill levels, effective instructional methods and programs must be in place (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2009).

Many failures have taken place in other education movements and programs due to poor implementation and lack of communication amongst staff, students and their families. For RTI to be successful in addressing the various challenges that exist in the field of education, each component must be communicated and implemented with high integrity and fidelity. Fidelity is important not only at the school level but at the teacher
level as well ("Fidelity of Implementation," 2006). In essence, there must be teacher and staff buy in to achieve desired outcomes for students (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2009).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 recognized RTI as a way of identifying students with specific learning disabilities by delivering research-based instruction and administering frequent progress monitoring instruments to calculate student growth. Any information gained is used to make decisions about frequency and fidelity of interventions taking place. This information is also used to decide what, if any, teaching strategies need to be modified or adapted. The RTI model identifies students who may have learning disabilities earlier in their academic career, thus making the "wait to fail" programs no longer an option (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.). As of 2011, IDEA allows for districts to use up to 15% of IDEA funding to provide early interventions in the general education setting for students who have not been referred to special education ("Response to intervention guide: Research based educational and teaching products", n.d.).

RTI is included in IDEA because it helps to differentiate between children who have a specific learning disability (SLD) from other children who may be having difficulties that can be corrected using specific, scientific-based, general education interventions (Knudson, 2008).

Washington State House Bill (HB) 2136 was signed into law in 2007. The goal of this bill was to improve instruction for all students regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status (SES) or cultural background. This bill allowed school districts to apply for funding based on their ability to reduce the number of students eligible for
special education and related services. This law was also enacted to improve instruction by using high quality, general education research-based instructional programs in order to meet the needs of students while reducing the number of students referred to and placed in special education inappropriately (Boucher, n.d.).

Washington State also received the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) in 2007. This was a federally funded special education grant that focused on professional development and RTI implementation. The SPDG makes training services related to RTI available to all schools by providing comprehensive professional development to school district personnel. This includes online training, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) winter and summer classes, follow-up technical assistance as well as information about other state initiatives aimed at closing the achievement gap (Boucher, n.d.).

RTI is a flexible, yet effective program that involves three tiers of intervention. Tier one provides all students with high-quality, research-based core curriculum in the general education setting. The second tier involves students who do not respond to the core curriculum in the general education setting. This tier combines core curriculum in the general education classroom as well as small group intervention using best practices with varying levels of intensity and frequency depending on student response. By utilizing the small group method of instruction, students are able to learn within his or her capabilities through the guidance and facilitation of the teacher (Dunn, 2005). The third tier includes one-on-one intervention combined with tiers one and two teaching strategies. The third tier may also include a referral to special education depending on
levels of response to treatment. All three tiers of RTI include the continual monitoring of student progress (Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2007).

It is essential for the education system to be proactive in the delivery of high-quality instruction and research-based interventions. It is also important that students at risk are promptly identified and that collaboration between school staff, students and families takes place (Wedl, 2005). Collaboration is essential because it promotes new ways of thinking and builds positive relationships amongst staff and families (Galvin, 2007).

This intervention model measures student response to treatment as well as the amount of intervention that is needed to achieve that response (Duhon et al., 2009). This type of measurement is accomplished through frequent progress monitoring of students using resources such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels), Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM), Academic Improvement Monitoring System (AIMSweb) and other progress monitoring instruments (Dufrene et al., 2010). The expansion of RTI requires that a reasonable amount of academic supports are in place for struggling students (Dufrene et al., 2010).

With RTI, progress monitoring must take place frequently in order to be most effective. The data gained from this allow staff to evaluate effectiveness of the treatment being provided (Wedl, 2005). Studies show that students who are frequently progress monitored in reading achieve higher grades and are more aware of their performance as well as what needs to be done in order to achieve set goals ("IRA," 2010).
Evidence has been obtained showing that RTI is being used in the place of I.Q. tests more often because RTI methods may be a more effective approach to identifying children who could be at risk for long-term reading difficulties (Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2007). Studies confirm that addressing reading ability early is vital. One nationally representative study of 1,779 fourth graders completed in 2005 asserts that 40% of students in the United States are not reading at grade level (Begeny, Krouse, Ross, & Mitchell, 2009).

Another difficulty in relation to the utilization of IQ tests to gauge ability is that IQ tests could have potential for bias. Some may view IQ testing as "over-representation" of certain groups such as minorities. This raises questions about the accuracy of these tests to decide placement (Wedl, 2005). One might say this is additional verification of the significance RTI has on the current education system.

Some may argue that RTI related services are far too expensive at an estimated $1,900.00 per student over the three tiers of intervention. This should be considered to be a worthwhile cost provided that special education services may not be necessary in the future if early intervention takes place. RTI is considered to be a more cost effective practice when comparing possible short term, early intervention services to long-term special education services (Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2007).

Whitten, E., Esteves, K. J., & Woodrow, A. (2009) state that RTI not only improves academic performance but also reduces the costs associated with addressing learning disabilities because it provides earlier intervention in hopes of fewer services being necessary in the future. By providing various levels of educational supports based
on individual need, future problems can be prevented or greatly reduced ("fldoe", n.d.). It is imperative for teachers to determine which strategies should be utilized for each student as well as when these strategies should be utilized (Marzano, 2007).

Teacher expertise is fundamental to instructional progress and student achievement. All students have the right to receive instruction from well prepared, highly skilled educators who strive to keep up to date on effective teaching strategies ("IRA," 2010).

Though more research needs to be completed, overall, previously stated evidence shows the RTI model to be an effective tool in improving academic performance amongst elementary students (Fox, Carta, Strain, Dunlap, & Hemmeter, 2009).

Benefits of RTI

Though RTI is fairly new and more research needs to be completed, evidence supporting RTI appears to be very strong. As revealed, many studies (Hughes & Dexter, n.d.; Shapiro & Clemens, 2009; Vellutino et al., 2007; Wedl, 2005) show that RTI is a worthwhile venture for educators, students and staff.

(Vellutino, F. R., Scanlon, D. M., Zhang, H., & Schatschneider, C., 2007) showed proven benefits for implementing RTI in kindergarten. At-risk kindergarteners from 28 classrooms in nine schools from five different school districts located in lower-middle to middle class neighborhoods within the Albany, New York area were selected for RTI services. This study showed substantial gains in early literacy skills amongst kindergartners who received intervention services. The 117 students who were still
available were tracked through the end of third grade. By the conclusion of this study, all of the 117 students were self-sufficient readers with no additional services needed.

(Shapiro & Clemens, 2009) completed a study that showed positive movement within the tiers of RTI. The data in this study gained throughout a full school year showed that 36% of students either moved from tier three to tier two or from tier two to tier one. Though more research is needed to examine movement between tiers, the results appear to be promising.

Problems Associated With RTI

Provided that RTI is fairly new, there are various research problems involved with it at this point. One problem is that since RTI focuses on early intervention, there is not much research completed about intervention success rates when students are serviced later in his or her academic career. In part, that is why this project focuses primarily on grades kindergarten through the fourth grade.

Another problem due to the RTI model being a somewhat new approach to learning, some educators are reluctant to learn more about its' components and benefits because it may seem overwhelming and unfamiliar in the beginning (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2009).

In addition, sometimes after a child exits RTI, he or she may regress and need to re-enter the program for further support or may not exit the program at all. A study in 2005 showed that eleven of the 45 second grade students taking part in the study showed progress but not enough to exit the program (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003).
Another study completed in 2009 showed that three out of 35 second grade students from a small rural Midwestern school taking part in math RTI regressed to baseline once placed back in the general education room (Duohon, Mesmer, Atkins, Greguson, & Olinger, 2009).

Student Needs and Issues in Relation to RTI

There are many student needs in relation to RTI that educators need to be aware of. RTI is an intervention model that promotes student growth regardless of race, gender, SES status or cultural background. Identifying struggling students early is the first step and a fundamental element of RTI. This type of universal screening also includes deciphering if other issues such as poverty, abuse, English being his or her second language, and/or perceived or undiscovered disability may be contributing factors to the lack of student achievement (Logsdon, n.d.).

Rather than assuming a student who struggles in the areas of reading and language has permanent learning deficits, RTI places importance on providing intervention services early in the child's academic career ("IRA," 2010). Identifying various environmental factors that exist is essential to understanding the backgrounds of children being served.

One specific program recommended to expand reading comprehension is McRat (Multicultural Reading and Thinking). This program uses inference, comparison, analysis and evaluation strategies to learn about other cultures (Whitten et al., 2009).

The RTI program focuses on the diverse needs and struggles of all children through specialized, individual intervention strategies (Klotz & Canter, n.d.). When
teaching strategies and assessment tools are insensitive to cultural and language differences, incorrect judgments and evaluations can take place ("IRA," 2010). In essence, RTI intends to rectify misappropriated representation of English Language Learners and minorities ("IRA," 2010).

**Socio Economic Status (SES)**

Economic status has played a part in student success for many years. SES sets the stage for student progress and success. The higher the SES, the more likely a student is to take the steps necessary to attain a college degree. It is important for educators to understand the relevance this has on student learning (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).

In order for a child to qualify for free or reduced lunches, the combined family income must be 130% or less than the poverty level figures listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services poverty level tables (Boucher, n.d.).

According to E.D. Hirsch, children entering school who live in enriched homes where parents are well-educated do better in school than children who live in poverty (Dunn, 2005). It appears there are definite achievement gaps between children being raised in poverty versus children living in homes where higher income is evident.

RTI intends to close achievement gaps by connecting effective teaching strategies to student achievement through individualized instruction aimed at meeting the academic needs of each student (California Department of Education, 2010).
Ethnicity

Understanding ethnicity and disproportionality amongst students is another factor when taking into account the needs of all children. Disproportionality includes over and under representation of students; in other words, representation that is not comparative. This is when students are grouped by various factors such as: gender, socio economic status, academic success, culture, beliefs or other aspects that may possibly cause partiality. Disproportionality patterns have remained virtually the same for approximately forty years. This is a challenge that RTI attempts to address these issues in part by having high expectations for *all* students (Hosp, n.d.).

For culturally and linguistically diverse students to experience optimal success, teachers and support staff must be well-prepared to teach in an assortment of settings. A profound knowledge and understanding of cultural and linguistic differences are critical in addressing language and literacy problems that are common in diverse student population. To be most effective, instruction at all three tiers of RTI must be culturally responsive and relevant ("IRA," 2010).

Chronic Absenteeism

Absenteeism is a chronic problem in the education system that has negative effects on student learning. Students may miss school due to illness, appointments, chronic illness or family problems. Chronic absenteeism can leave students behind academically and socially (Williams, n.d.).

Students who are absent lose valuable instruction time and take additional interventions necessary to catch up that could be used for students with better attendance.
Students who have chronic absenteeism issues are more likely to drop out of school due to lagging behind (Williams, n.d.).

**At Risk Students**

The Response to Intervention program is essential for students at risk for academic failure. When educators have a program such as RTI in place, it allows them to intervene at the first sign of academic trouble to help children experience academic success (Whitten et al., 2009). The targeted instruction and additional time characteristic to RTI has been shown to increase student learning (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2010).

**Professional Learning Communities (PLC)**

Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) are collaborative, student focused school communities that share teaching and learning strategies aimed at improving instruction, collaboration and empowerment amongst students and staff (Carlson & Golden, n.d.).

Some topics that should be discussed during these interactions are: the type of data being collected, why and how much data are being collected; services being delivered in the general education setting as well as the strategies being used to increase student success ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010).

One goal of PLC's is to increase the coherence of instruction. This is parallel to RTI because it requires a shared vision and common goals for instruction and assessment. Common to PLC's, RTI also requires active participation and collaboration of teachers, specialists, special educators, as well as school psychologists and school administrators ("IRA," 2010).
The RTI model requires that general and special education teachers work together to collect data and analyze information necessary to make decisions that are most beneficial to students (Hoover et al., 2008).

**Parental Participation**

Parental participation is a key component to the success of RTI. Studies show that family is one of the single most important factors in ensuring a child's academic achievement (Skow & Brown, 2009). It is essential for educators to encourage parental involvement through meetings and other means of communication ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010). Parents are also valuable resources when attempting to identify contributing factors such as emotional/behavioral concerns, possible disabilities, and environmental situations that may affect student learning (Bureau of exceptional education and student services, 2006).

Communication between staff, children and parents is necessary to gain the best possible outcomes for students. This is a research-based strategy that has proven effective when communicating information about students and has a positive impact (RTI Action Network Website, n.d.). Furthermore, when the relationship between the teacher and student is a positive one, everything else in the classroom appears to be enhanced (Marzano, 2007).

Yet another distinguishing characteristic common to all tiers of RTI include collaboration and coordination amongst family, state, district, students and educators. This ensures that input is received and utilized from everyone involved with the student ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010). As discussed by philosopher, William Heard
Kilpatrick, it is important for students to understand that the teacher is their advocate in learning. Building a reciprocal, trusting relationship between the student, family and teacher shows the child that teachers are there to support students (Dunn, 2005).

Children enter school with various challenges and educators must be prepared for that and be creative in working through and rising above them (Ryan & Cooper, 2007).

As stated by E.D. Hirsch, “equality can only exist if everyone has an equal chance to learn when they arrive at school” (Dunn, 2005, p.225). The principles of RTI are aligned with the belief that all children must have equal opportunity to learn and experience success.

Associated with the fundamentals of RTI, famous philosopher, Aristotle, believed that everything is made up of universal (humanness, commonalities) and distinguishing qualities such as: eye color, height, weight, gender, and other traits that make one person unique from another. Another philosopher, Mortimer Adler is also known for his belief that education systems should provide equal learning opportunities for everyone (Dunn, 2005). In essence, this is a reminder that every child is different and enters the classroom with his or her own unique qualities and situations.

RTI was built on the premise that all children can learn and that by delivering quality assessments, teaching strategies and research based core curriculum earlier in the child’s academic career can bring about greater long-term success. This model also emphasizes the importance of positive classroom relationships and teamwork amongst staff members (Whitten, Esteves, & Woodrow, 2009).
Curriculum

Curriculum is another essential component of RTI. Delivering effective classroom curriculum and instructional strategies are important characteristics of effective teaching (Marzano, 2007). Aspects of RTI coincide with John Dewey’s belief system in relation to student – centered curriculum because interventions are based on what each student needs in order to experience success (NYSED, 2010). Dewey believed curriculum should be designed to meet the needs of *all* students (Dunn, 2005). Dewey was instrumental in advocating the “thinking outside the box” type of teaching strategies that are characteristic to RTI.

Having similar beliefs to Dewey, philosopher Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) also believed in the importance of having a child-centered curriculum in place for students. Froebel’s methods had a profound effect on students and experienced great success when he designed a curriculum that encompassed specific needs of children (Dunn, 2005). It is important that educators are not *just* teaching strict, “one size fits all” curricula. It is possible for educators to teach required curriculum that allows students to gain the tools they need to become good citizens and productive members of society (Ryan & Cooper, 2007). It is important for teachers to instruct students how to think, not what to think. In essence, students need to be given the opportunity to build and construct his or her own knowledge (Dunn, 2005).

One belief of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) common to RTI is that curriculum and instruction should match the needs and
interest of each child's developmental level (Dunn, 2005, p. 173). It is difficult to expect children to be successful at certain skills if he or she is not developmentally prepared.

Delivering quality curriculum using effective teaching strategies in the general education classroom are important aspects to helping children achieve academic success (Marzano, 2007).

**Summary**

For a number of decades, struggling learners have faced many obstacles. The "wait to fail" model of intervention has been one of those obstacles because it waits until the child is failing before intervention services are provided. The later the services are provided, the larger the gaps in learning become (Boucher, n.d.).

The implementation of RTI intends to address these learning gaps by providing all students with high quality, research-based core curriculum and small group differentiated instruction earlier in the child's academic career than when the "wait to fail" model was in place (Boucher, n.d.).
CHAPTER III

PROJECT PROCEDURE

Background of the Project

This project was completed because there is a national movement aimed at providing early intervention services to students. A number of educators believe that late intervention is partially due to the strict, extensive referral process in place that educators must endure to get students the special education services they need. RTI is designed to provide intervention services much earlier with fewer steps included in the process (Howard, 2009). With RTI, early intervention is used as a means of future prevention (Plumley, 2009).

When properly utilized, RTI can reduce the number of students referred for special education services, identify disabilities earlier in a child’s life and reduce the impact a disability may have on a child’s progress and success (Council for exceptional children [cec], n.d.).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 authorized the use of RTI in schools nationwide to insure that all students receive research-based instruction and frequent progress monitoring to measure growth. This information is then used to make decisions in terms of frequency and intensity of intervention delivery as well as modifications that may be necessary. RTI is a more practical way of identifying students who may have a learning disability much sooner than in the historical “wait to fail” programs and builds upon framework of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.).
The general consensus of RTI is that students who do not respond to these tiers of intervention are possibly at risk for having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) (Duhon, Mesmer, Atkins, Greguson, & Olinger, 2009). This intervention model serves as an integrated approach to student learning that includes general, corrective and special education (Hightree-Sitzmann et al., n.d.)

Though IDEA states that children in kindergarten through 12th grade are eligible for early intervention services (Boucher, n.d.), this project focuses primarily on grades kindergarten through the fourth grade.

Since RTI is a relatively new approach to student learning, there are many unanswered questions that recent research studies are attempting to explore and gain new knowledge of (Duhon et al., 2009).

This project is essential because it contains a brief, easy to read, yet effective overview of RTI. One goal in creating this project is to bring educators important information that can be used to understand, implement and maintain RTI.

Project Procedure

The procedure for completing this project was a lengthy process of data collection and studying of materials located. In order to collect as much information as possible it was necessary to utilize sources such as online webinars, internet sites, scholarly journal articles, data reports, case studies and books. In designing this RTI project, it was essential to incorporate the best resources and information in an easy to follow, understandable way.
Project Development

This manual provides a basic overview of strategies and tools necessary to implement and maintain the RTI model within the Highland School District. It contains an overview of the purpose of RTI, studies relative to RTI, regulations and funding information intended to make the RTI model as successful as possible. It also includes implementation strategies as well as information about reading, math and writing interventions that will be helpful in providing students with research based teaching methods. Since RTI is based on continual progress monitoring of students, it also includes valuable information about monitoring tools. This project also contains miscellaneous forms, sample schedules, reference websites as well as a questions and answers section.

The intention of this project is to provide a wealth of information in an easy to read, precise manner. This project will also contain websites and other resources for readers who need additional information.
CHAPTER IV
WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The manual starts by introducing the purpose and benefits of the RTI manual. It includes a glossary of terms relative to RTI as well as a brief overview of each of the three tiers of intervention.

The manual also contains a “getting started” section that includes information about how to plan effective meetings, encouraging positive collaboration, scheduling intervention services and recommendations about the duration and frequency of interventions taking place.

Educators may also find the section that contains examples of academic intervention schedules to be helpful. These examples are included to show educators what some of the other schools are using that are effective for students and teachers.

The RTI manual also includes information about progress monitoring. There is a brief overview of what progress monitoring entails as well as various online resources that can be used to locate additional information.

Various websites were included with brief annotations about their content. By including information about each website, manual users will be able to quickly locate information essential to what he or she is looking for.

The last section of this manual is the reference section. This section includes sources used to create the manual and may also be utilized by educators who would like to locate additional information about RTI.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summary

Prior to 2004, the education system had a "wait to fail" system in place for students. The adoption of Response to Intervention (RTI) was designed to change that by providing intervention services using a three-tiered model to deliver individualized intervention services early in a child's academic career rather than waiting until after the child experienced academic failure. By providing students with this three-tiered intervention program, students may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.).

The objective of this project was to provide educators for grades K-4 with a manual of tips, tools, resources and strategies about successfully implementing and maintaining the RTI program while familiarizing educators about RTI. This includes relative websites, and information pertaining to reading, writing, math and various progress monitoring tools that can be used to meet the needs of students who are struggling academically.

The premise of Response to Intervention (RTI) is that all children can learn. This program stresses the importance of doing everything possible to help students be academically successful. The most effective way to meet the growing needs of each student is done by using research-based teaching skills, strategies and curriculum in each of the three tiers of intervention.
Response to Intervention (RTI) uses a flexible three-tiered program that is designed to deliver individualized intervention services early in a child's academic career rather than waiting for the child to experience failure.

By providing students with this three-tiered intervention program, students may also be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.).

The goal of this project is to provide educators for grades K-5 with a manual of tips, tools, resources and strategies that can be used to successfully implement and maintain the RTI program.

Implications

There are several implications related to developing this manual. First, teachers and administrators will have the opportunity to learn more about RTI and have additional resources that can be used for further reference.

Another implication is that if RTI is not properly implemented and maintained, it will be difficult to experience the full potential this plan has to offer. This could be a problem provided RTI contains many components and steps, educators may find the process to be overwhelming and unfamiliar in the beginning. This has caused some educators to be reluctant about learning more about RTI and what it has to offer (Brown-Chidsey et al., 2009).

An additional implication is the need for collaboration. The RTI model requires collaboration amongst staff and parents. If some staff members do not work well
together, there could be difficulties with the overall implementation and maintenance of RTI (Whitten et al., 2009).

**Recommendations**

The information and resources in this manual may be utilized by any teachers or administrators who are looking for essential information that can be beneficial in the implementation and maintenance RTI.

This manual contains tips and tools that can assist educators by having multiple resources in one location. It is a succinct, concise overview of valuable websites, forms and information about the basics of RTI.

Effective, research-based teaching is essential in order to achieve optimal achievement for all students. If this is not the set protocol for every teacher, successful interventions in each tier will be less likely. In essence, every teacher and administrators must be "on board" to experience the most academic gains.

Another recommendation is locating additional research. Being that RTI is a fairly new means of providing intervention services, there are very few longitudinal studies available. As time goes on, there will be additional studies and data compiled to better assess the benefits and drawbacks of RTI.
References


36


Florida problem solving and response to intervention . (n.d.). Retrieved from
http://search.fldoe.org/default.asp?cx=012683245092260330905%3Aalo4lmikgz4
&cof=FORID%3A11&q=rti#971

intervention and the pyramid model (Educational Standards). Retrieved from
IDEAS that work:
http://www.hcesc.org/resources/Response%20To%20Intervention/rti_pyramid_web.pdf

Considerations for practitioners. Retrieved from

of a response to intervention (RTI) reform effort in an urban elementary school: A
Retrieved from http://dps.sagepub.com/content/21/1/47

(Educational Standards). Retrieved from ESU: http://www.esul.org


implementation of response to intervention (RTI) research summary (Educational


Logsdon, A. (n.d.). *Top 8 Tips to Recognize Early Signs of Learning Disabilities*

Recognizing early signs of learning disabilities and developmental delays.


University of the State of New York - New York State Education Department. (2010, November 9). *Minimum requirements of a response to intervention program (rti)* (Educational Standards). Retrieved from University of the State of New York - New York State Education Department:


Appendix One
Response to Intervention
RTI
Instruction Manual

By: Michelle Huguenin
Table of Contents

Appendix One .............................................................................................................44
Cover Page ..................................................................................................................45
Table of Contents .......................................................................................................46
Introduction ..................................................................................................................47
Glossary of Terms ........................................................................................................48
RTI Overview ...............................................................................................................51
Getting Started ............................................................................................................57
Examples of Intervention Schedules ...........................................................................60
Intervention Delivery ...................................................................................................63
Progress Monitoring ....................................................................................................65
Online Resources .........................................................................................................67
References ...................................................................................................................74
Introduction

As the education system evolves, educators have the opportunity to learn more about research-based teaching skills and strategies that are most effective in meeting the growing needs of each individual student. It is crucial that student needs are met in order for every child to experience academic success.

This manual entails basic information about Response to Intervention (RTI) as well as many resources available aimed at assisting educators and administrators in the setting up and maintaining of the RTI model.

RTI is a three-tiered program that delivers deliberate, individualized intervention services early in a child's academic career. This is important because prior to the introduction of RTI in 2004, the education system had a "wait to fail" system in place for students. The "wait to fail" system did not identify students until he or she experienced academic failure (Boucher, n.d.). The overall objective of this manual is to provide educators for grades K-4 with tips, tools, resources and strategies about successfully implementing and maintaining the RTI program.
Glossary of Terms
Glossary of Terms

The vocabulary listed below may be utilized as a reference to better understand the terminology being used in this project.

**Academic Improvement Monitoring System (AIMSweb)** - A benchmark and progress monitoring system based on repeated, constant student evaluation. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management system that compares student, school and school district information to national norms (http://www.aimsweb.com/).

**Baseline** - a set of critical observations or data used for comparison or a control (dictionary.com)

**Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM)** – Screening tools used to measure subject areas such as fluency, writing and math. These align with school district standardized goals (Wright, n.d.).

**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels)** – A comprehensive, scientifically-based formative assessment system used to identify students who may need additional academic support (Hoffinan, Jenkins, & Dunlap, 2009).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** - The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that children with disabilities will have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). IDEA focuses on improving learning for children with disabilities (http://www.k12.wa.us/).
Individualized Educational Program (IEP) - A document describing personalized special education programs developed by the IEP team to address a student's exceptional needs. This document provides the foundation necessary to provide a quality education for each child with a disability (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Intelligence quotient (I.Q.) - A test designed to determine the mental capacity of an individual (dictionary.com).

Intervention - Instructional strategies used to improve student progress (Lay, 2009).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) - Requires all states to establish academic standards as well as a state-wide testing system that meets federal requirements (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Progress monitoring - Used to evaluate, measure and assess how students are responding to instruction. (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Response to Intervention (RTI) - A three-tiered intervention system used to maximize student academic success and decrease behavior issues (http://www.k12.wa.us/).

Special education - Specially designed instruction based on exceptional needs of students who are eligible for special education services. (http://www.k12.wa.us/).
RTI Overview
RTI Overview

Why RTI?

There is a national movement aimed at providing early intervention programs such as Response to Intervention (RTI) to students. The concept of providing RTI services in the areas of reading and math earlier rather than later in a child’s career is showing great gains in student achievement (Boucher, n.d.).

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a three-tiered model designed to provide early intervention to students who may be in danger of being referred for special education services in the future if early services are not provided (Boucher, n.d.). This model also emphasizes the importance of positive classroom relationships and teamwork amongst staff (Whitten, Esteves, & Woodrow, 2009).

Prior to 2004, the education system has had a “wait to fail” system in place for students (Boucher, n.d.). RTI is a model designed to change this by providing intervention before the child experiences academic failure. By providing students with this three-tiered intervention program, students may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future.

Studies show that when children receive early academic intervention, he or she may be less likely to be referred for special education services in the future (Boucher, n.d.). One study completed in a Minnesota school district showed a decrease of special education referrals from 4.4% to 2.5% after implementing RTI (Wedl, 2005).
Research shows that most struggling readers who receive early intervention are able to read at grade level by the conclusion of tier one intervention services (Brown-Chidsey, Bronaugh, & McGraw, 2009). Essentially, all students can learn and should be given ample opportunity to do so.

RTI consists of three different tiers. Tier one of RTI provides all students with high-quality, research-based core curriculum that is aligned with state standards. Delivery of tier one instruction takes place in the general education classroom. The first RTI tier also includes universal screening of every student in hopes of identifying those who may need early intervention ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010).

The second tier of intervention includes students who are not responding to the core curriculum being provided within the general education setting. Tier two of RTI consists of a combination of high quality, research-based core curriculum in the general education classroom as well as small group interventions. These small group interventions vary in intensity level and frequency based on student response and specific needs (National Center on Response to Intervention, n.d.). By utilizing the small group method of instruction, students are able to learn within his or her capabilities through the guidance and facilitation of the teacher (Dunn, 2005, p. 233).

The third tier includes a combination of one-on-one intervention as well as tiers one and two of RTI. Tier three is the most intense level of intervention. Depending on the student’s level of response to treatment, this tier and may lead to a referral for special education. ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010).
Each of the three tiers of RTI includes continuous monitoring of student progress to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as needed (Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, & Schatschneider, 2007). Universal screening and frequent progress monitoring are required components of the RTI process.

Prior to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 (Boucher, n.d.), educators routinely waited until students were in second or third grade to refer children with learning disabilities for special education services. This “wait to fail method” resulted in approximately 74% of students who did not receive early intervention services to have reading difficulties as far as the ninth grade and beyond ("Response to intervention", 2007).

IDEA (2004) authorized the use of RTI in schools nationwide to insure that all students receive research- based instruction and frequent progress monitoring to measure growth. This information is used to make decisions in terms of frequency and intensity of intervention delivery as well as modifications that may be necessary. RTI is also a more practical way of identifying students who may have a learning disability earlier than in the historical “wait to fail” programs and builds upon framework of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.).

RTI is included in IDEA because it helps to differentiate between children who actually have a specific learning disability (SLD) from children who may be having difficulties that can be resolved with specific, scientific-based, general education interventions (Knudson, 2008). RTI involves measuring the student’s response to treatment as well as the amount of intervention necessary to produce that response.
(Duhon et al., 2009). This is accomplished through frequent progress monitoring of students using resources such as Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) and AIMSweb (Academic Improvement Monitoring System). The expansion of RTI requires that a reasonable variety and amount of academic supports be in place for struggling students (Dufrene et al., 2010).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 recognized RTI as a way of identifying students with specific learning disabilities by delivering research-based instruction and administering frequent progress monitoring instruments to calculate student growth. Any information gained is used to make decisions about frequency and fidelity of interventions taking place. This information is also used to decide what, if any, teaching strategies need to be modified. The RTI model identifies students who may have learning disabilities sooner thus making “wait to fail” programs no longer an option (Hightree-Sitzmann, Hightree, & Moritz, n.d.). Currently, IDEA allows for districts to use up to 15% of IDEA funding to provide early interventions in the general education setting for students who have not been referred to special education ("Response to intervention guide: Research based educational and teaching products", n.d.).

RTI is included in IDEA because it helps to differentiate between children who have a specific learning disability (SLD) from other children who may be having difficulties that can be corrected using specific, scientific-based, general education interventions (Knudson, 2008).

Washington State House Bill (HB) 2136 was signed into law in 2007. The goal of this bill was to improve instruction for all students regardless of race, gender,
socioeconomic status (SES) or cultural background. This bill allowed school districts to apply for funding based on their ability to reduce the number of students eligible for special education and related services. This law was also enacted to improve instruction by using high quality, general education research-based instructional programs in order to meet the needs of students while reducing the number of students referred to and placed in special education inappropriately (Boucher, n.d.).

Washington State also received the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) in 2007. This was a federally funded special education grant that focused on professional development and RTI implementation. The SPDG makes training services related to RTI available to all schools by providing comprehensive professional development to school district personnel. This includes online training, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) winter and summer classes, follow-up technical assistance as well as information about other state initiatives aimed at closing the achievement gap (Boucher, n.d.).

Yet another distinguishing characteristic common to all tiers of RTI include collaboration and coordination amongst family, state, district, students and educators. This ensures that input is received and utilized from everyone involved with the student ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010). As discussed by philosopher, William Heard Kilpatrick, it is important for students to understand that the teacher is their advocate in learning. Building a reciprocal, trusting relationship between the student, family and teacher shows the child that teachers are there to support students (Dunn, 2005).
Getting Started
Getting Started

Research what needs to be done before adopting RTI

Researching RTI prior to implementation is essential. Research is important because educators and administrators must have a clear understanding about RTI and how it is best implemented and maintained to reduce reluctance amongst staff (National Center on Response to Intervention, n.d.).

The research process includes:

- Organizing a team of individuals authorized to make decisions
- Identifying individual needs of the school
- Collecting information about the various elements of RTI
- Working with staff and the community to gain the support required to adopt RTI
- Organizing, developing and managing culturally and linguistically responsive materials for RTI
- Communicating with staff and families about RTI; be open to suggestions. Some topics that should be discussed during these interactions are: the type of data being collected, why and how much data are being collected; services being delivered in the general education setting as well as the strategies being used to increase student success ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010).

Planning for RTI

The planning process includes method and procedure development to better ensure the successful implementation of RTI. If the planning process is not effectively
carried out, administrators and teachers can become discouraged and be less committed to the program (National Center on Response to Intervention, n.d.).

The planning process should include:

- Clear definitions of the leaders and their roles in the spectrum of RTI
- Professional development opportunities for school staff
- Funding and staff resources necessary to support RTI
- Ensuring that assessment and curriculum materials are evidence-based
- Ensuring that teaching materials are culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Ensuring that screening and progress monitoring tools are brief, reliable, and applicable to what is being monitored
- Designing a program evaluation method that works for individual schools
- Modifying the framework and goals of RTI as necessary

Scheduling

Building an intervention schedule can be a challenge. Please see the following examples of intervention schedules that have been utilized. Be flexible and take into account recess, lunch and other preset times in classroom schedules
Examples of Intervention Schedules
Intervention Schedule
School year: 2011-2012

First Grade Reading

**Monday:**
- Sound spelling cards / Body coding
- Read Naturally – Cold read
- PALS
- Open Court - Preteach
- Frequency Words
- Vocab
- Phoneme Fluency / Grapheme Fluency

**Tuesday:**
- Sound spelling cards / Body coding
- PALS
- Frequency Words
- Read Naturally – Review
- Open Court - Review
- Vocab
- Phoneme Fluency / Grapheme Fluency

**Wednesday:**
- Sound spelling cards / Body coding
- PALS
- Frequency Words
- Read Naturally – Review / Words / Comprehension
- Open Court – Review / Word wall
- Vocab
- Phoneme Fluency / Grapheme Fluency

**Thursday:**
- Sound spelling cards / Body coding
- PALS
- Frequency Words – Testing and new words
- Read Naturally – Review
- Read Naturally – Hot read
- Open Court – Review / Word wall
- Vocab
- Phoneme Fluency / Grapheme Fluency
Intervention Schedule
School year: 2011-2012
Fourth Grade Math

Monday:
Flashcards – Multiplication
Vocab – Unit specific
   Week One: Story problems / Prime #’s
   Week Two: Story problems / Pictograph / bar graph / Symmetry lines
   Week Three: Story problems / area / Place value / < > = / Least to greatest

Tuesday:
Flashcards – Multiplication
Vocab – Unit specific
   Week One: Story problems / Prime #’s / quadrilateral / parallelogram
   Week Two: Story problems / Pictograph / bar graph / Symmetry lines / area
   Week Three: Story problems / area / Place value / $ / Least to greatest

Wednesday:
Flashcards – Multiplication
Vocab – Unit specific
   Week One: Story problems / Prime #’s / quadrilateral / parallelogram / Pictograph
   Week Two: Story problems / Pictograph / bar graph / Symmetry / area / place value
   Week Three: Story problems / area / Place value / $ / Least to greatest

Thursday:
Flashcards – Multiplication
Vocab – Unit specific
   Week One: Story problems / Prime #’s / quadrilateral / parallelogram / Pictograph
   Week Two: Story problems / Pictograph / bar graph / Symmetry / area / place value
   Week Three: Story problems / area / Place value / $ / Estimate
Intervention Delivery
**Intervention Delivery**

**Duration**

Students must be given a sufficient amount of time to show growth within the second and third tier of intervention. Each student should be given a minimum of 6-8 weeks of instruction within these tiers before assumptions are made about a potential learning disability (Wright, n.d.).

**Frequency**

Tier two of RTI should take place no less than 3-5 times per week for a minimum of thirty minutes each (Wright, n.d.).

Tier three is the most intense level of intervention. Tier three services should take place five days per week for 30 minutes or more at a time (Wright, n.d.). Depending on the student’s level of response to treatment, data gained from this tier may lead to a referral for special education ("Response to intervention (RTI)", 2010).
Progress Monitoring
Progress Monitoring

Universal screening and frequent progress monitoring are required components of the RTI process. RTI involves measuring each student's response to treatment as well as the amount of intervention necessary to generate that response (Duhon et al., 2009).

There is several research based progress monitoring tools available for educators to utilize. Some of these resources are: Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) and AIMSweb (Academic Improvement Monitoring System).

**Academic Improvement Monitoring System (AIMSweb)** - http://www.aimsweb.com/ - A benchmark and progress monitoring system based on repeated, constant student evaluation. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management system that compares student, school and school district information to national norms.

**Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM)** – http://cbmnow.com/ Screening tools used to measure subject areas such as fluency, writing and math. These align with school district standardized goals (Wright, n.d.).

**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels)** dibels.uoregon.edu and https://dibels.org/dibels.html

– A comprehensive, scientifically-based formative assessment system used to identify students who may need additional academic support (Hoffman, Jenkins, & Dunlap, 2009).
Online Resources
Open Court

http://www.opencourtresources.com/

This website includes resources, teacher-created materials and information about coordinating Open Court lessons to Response to Intervention for preschool through sixth grade.

PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening)

http://pals.virginia.edu/

This website includes resources, research-based information about the PALS program as well as information about Response to Intervention.

Read Naturally

http://www.readnaturally.com/

This website includes information about the Read Naturally program as well as information about Response to Intervention. It also includes how to videos for teachers and parents who would like to learn more about teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring.

Read Well

http://readwellteachwell.com/
This website includes information about the Read Well program, RTI as well as a calendar of dates for Read Well seminars.

Soar to Success

http://www.hmhschool.com/store/ProductCatalogController?cmd=Browse&subcmd=LoadDetail&ID=1007200000088113&level1Code=8&frontOrBack=F&sortEntriesBy=SEQ&division=S01

This website includes information about the Soar to Success reading program. It includes an online catalog of products available from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Signs for Sounds

http://www.readnaturally.com/products/signs4sounds.htm

This website includes information about the Signs for Sounds program. This program teaches children how to break down each sound he or she hears in a word. This program also focuses on high frequency words in the student activities.

Math

Math Expressions

http://www.eduplace.com/kids/mthexp/g1/emanip.html

This website includes information about the math. It includes interactive math games for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and printable worksheets for teachers.
Writing

Lee's Summit School District

http://its.leesummit.k12.mo.us/writing.htm

This website contains interactive links for students and printable worksheets, tips, tools and strategies for intervention and general education activities.

Miscellaneous

Education Place

http://www.eduplace.com/

This website includes information about the math, science, reading writing and history. It includes interactive math games for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and printable worksheets for teachers and students.

What Works Clearinghouse

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/

This website contains links to articles that include information about evidence based teaching practices, interventions and various studies useful for planning classroom activities relative to RTI.
National Center for Learning Disabilities

http://www.ld.org

This website contains information about learning disabilities (LD) designed to inform parents and educators about ways to support children who have learning disabilities through RTI and other resources.

National Education Association

http://www.nea.org

This website provides information about the implementation and maintenance of the Response to Intervention program.

Teacher.net

http://www.teachers.net

This website includes information about RTI as well as lesson plans and classroom projects.

Teacher Planet

http://www.teacherplanet.com

Includes lesson plans, subject-related worksheets as well as information about grants available to receive additional teaching curriculum and supplies.
National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/

This website includes information about providing RTI services to English Language Learners.

Council for Exceptional Children

http://www.cec.sped.org

This website contains up to date information about instructional strategies, legislation relative to education and evidence based practices that can be utilized in the classroom.

Special Education Resources on the Internet

http://seriweb.com

This website provided links aimed at helping educators locate additional information about special education resources.

LD Online

http://www.ldonline.org

This website provides specific information about learning disabilities. It is user friendly for educators, parents and students.

Bloom’s Taxonomy

http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm

This website gives a brief overview Bloom’s Taxonomy for educators wanting to learn more about learning styles.
Gardner's Multiple Intelligence

http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html

This website contains definitions for Gardner's Multiple Intelligences.

Teacherpayteachers

http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/

This website has free registration and over 20,000 free lesson plans, intervention related materials and handouts for math, writing and reading for kindergarten through 12th grade.
References


Retrieved from bullittschools.org


http://nichcy.org/schools-administrators/rti


Response to intervention guide: Research based educational and teaching products. (n.d.).

Retrieved from http://www.mentoringminds.com


Wright, J. (n.d.). *RTI on a shoestring: Reading fluency, classwide behavior management, student RTI graphs.* Retrieved April 14, 2011, from

http://www.interventioncentral.org