What is RtI?

RtI holds the promise of ensuring that all children have access to high quality instruction, and that struggling learners – including those with learning disabilities – are identified, supported, and served early and effectively.

~RtI Action Network, 2008

The RtI model is a three-tiered approach to providing quality instruction to meet the individual needs of all students. RtI involves the use of “data-based decision making” to effectively modify instruction and implement scientifically-based interventions. Students are able to move in and out of the individual tiers based on how well they respond.

The essential components of RtI include

· Multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction service delivery
· A problem-solving method designed to inform the development of interventions
· An integrated data collection/assessment system to inform decisions at each tier of service delivery

~Florida Problem Solving & Response to Intervention, 2008

Goals of RtI in Florida

- Modify instruction and implement scientifically-based interventions based on individual needs, with the ultimate goal being student success in the form of increased academic achievement and positive behavior as early as possible.
- Ensure that students’ difficulties are not due to lack of appropriate instruction.
- Identify student needs early, because the longer a child moves through the school system without the support he/she needs, the lower the probability is of correcting the deficit.
- Make informed decisions about what resources are needed to ensure student success by closely monitoring student progress based on up-to-date data.

The successful implementation of RtI principles encompasses general education first and special education application second.

~Florida RtI Update
Within an RtI Framework, instruction is determined by the needs of the students in the classroom. Data are collected at each tier to determine the “efficacy of the interventions” and make educated decisions about how to give the best support to the students, as well as determine which instructions and interventions are successful. Tier 1 is the core curriculum taught by the general education teacher. Tier 2 involves supplemental instruction, usually in small groups, focusing on 5 or fewer skills the students are struggling with. Tier 3 is extremely intense, individual instruction, that focuses on one specific skill. Students move freely in and out of each of the tiers based on how well they respond to instruction. 

~Florida Problem Solving & Response to Intervention, 2008

Why RtI?

- Too many students are misidentified as learning disabled requiring special education services. Minority students are the greatest percentage in special education.
- Typically, the student’s academic or behavior difficulties are the result of unknown barriers that can be overcome through Response to Intervention.
- One benefit of RtI is that it serves as a framework to more accurately determine which students respond to quality instruction through general education resources and which students need resources through IDEA to succeed.
- Children are unique, and we all learn in different ways. RtI helps schools meet the needs of an increasingly diverse society.

RtI is used for the purpose of revealing what works best for groups of students and individual students, regardless of placement.
### What Does the Law Say?

Both IDEA (2004) and NCLB emphasize using evidence-based interventions and systematically measuring each child’s response to these interventions that are carried out with a high degree of fidelity.

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<th>IDEA</th>
<th>NCLB</th>
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<td>• emphasizes accelerated achievement in both general and special education classrooms</td>
<td>• shifted its focus from the processes to the outcomes</td>
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<td>• general education has become the baseline criteria for what is occurring in special education.</td>
<td>• special attention to the acquisition of basic skills</td>
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<td>• more flexibility for highly effective special educators to work in the general education class-</td>
<td>• strong emphasis on reading, as possibly the most critical foundational skill</td>
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<td>• assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities</td>
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### RtI and the Problem-Solving Method

Educators have typically attributed a student’s challenges to learning and behavior, to problems within the child as opposed to external factors occurring in their environment. The Problem Solving Approach focuses equal attention on the learner, the environment, and the curriculum. It is used to make decisions within each tier.

Steps to the Problem Solving Approach

1. **Define**—Determine what the problem is.
2. **Analyze**—Analyze the problem using multiple sources of data to determine why this is happening.
3. **Implement**—Establish an achievable goal and develop a plan that should be implemented with a high degree of fidelity.
4. **Evaluate**—Evaluate the success of the intervention based on student data. There should be an increase in student performance and rate of progress, if not, what needs to be changed to better support the student?

Within an RtI framework, resources are allocated in direct proportion to student needs. This framework is depicted as a three-tier model that uses increasingly more intense instruction and interventions. Data collected at each tier are used to measure the efficacy of the interventions so that meaningful decisions can be made about which instruction and interventions should be maintained and layered.

#### Academic and Behavior Systems

**Tier 3: Intensive, Individualized Interventions & Supports.**

The most intense (increased time, narrowed focus, reduced group size) instruction and intervention based upon individual student need provided in addition to and aligned with Tier 1 & 2 academic and behavior instruction and supports.

**Tier 2: Targeted, Supplemental Interventions & Supports.**

More targeted instruction/intervention and supplemental support in addition to and aligned with the core academic and behavior curriculum.

**Tier 1: Core, Universal Instruction & Supports.**

General academic and behavior instruction and support provided to all students in all settings.
What is Necessary for RtI to Work?

- Multiple sources of data
- Staff professional development
- Resources allocated to match student need
- Problem-solving method teams
- Parents/Guardians actively involved with instructional decision making

RtI is NOT...

- Just a way of reducing the number of students receiving special education services
- Meant for only those students who qualify for services
- A system that each student passes through to get to special education
- Intended to focus on students below expected levels of proficiency

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 child response data to important educational decisions.

~NASDSE, 2006

References

Florida Department of Education and The University of Central Florida, (Summer 2007/Spring 2008). Response to Intervention/Pilot School District and RtI. Florida Rti Update. 1, [1-4] [1-6].