

**RICE CONSOLIDATED ISD
RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)
DISTRICT GUIDELINES 2009-2010**

DISTRICT GOAL:

Rice CISD is committed to have in effect policies and procedures designed to prevent appropriate over-identification or disproportionate representation by race or ethnicity of children with disabilities. The goal of RtI is to improve the academic performance of all students by intervening early when any student shows signs that he or she is struggling. Data is gathered and studied on each student so that instruction can be matched to the individual student and so that interventions that are researched-based focus on the unique needs of each struggling learner. The student's progress—that is, his or her response to the interventions-- is monitored and used in making decisions about the strategies to be implemented to support the student in improving academic performance.

WHAT IS “RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION”?

Response to Intervention provides a framework for effectively utilizing best instructional practices with a scientifically, research-based curriculum to address students' needs. RtI is not a new process. Parts of this system have been in place in the district for the past several years. The focus is on a shift of responsibility for struggling learners from special education to the general education classroom. RtI should be viewed as a seamless problem-solving process that enhances the learning of all children by using consultation and support among all educators. Special education teachers are available for consultation and support even before students are “labeled” for services. Parents become partners in intervention support. Students take ownership of their learning. Successful implementation of RtI involves four important components—universal screening; multiple tiers of instruction, intervention, and support; progress monitoring (data collection and assessment system used in decision making process); and ensuring fidelity to programs and processes.

CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

The core characteristics of the RtI model were described by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education in 2005. They include:

- All children can be taught using high-quality instruction in the general education setting.
- Interventions occur early when learning and behavior problems are small rather than to wait until larger deficits require more intense forms of intervention.
- Graduated levels of interventions, or tiers of interventions, are used to meet the instructional and behavioral needs of students. Tier 1 applies to all students. Tiers 2 and 3 apply to students who need greater levels of interventions. The multi-tier approach helps campus support teams tailor their instruction and services to struggling learners.
- The Problem Solving Method is found to be highly effective in helping to clearly define student needs and to match those needs to instructional strategies and interventions. This method uses the following questions whose answers are driven by data to make decisions concerning all students in all tiers:

1. Is there a problem? If so, what is it, and why is it happening?
 2. How can we use the curriculum to solve the problem?
 3. What interventions can we use to solve the problem? How can we implement them?
 4. Did the interventions work? Or do we need to try something else?
- Interventions and Curricula are researched-based and scientifically validated as required by NCLB and IDEA.
 - Student progress is monitored frequently by collecting data to determine the effectiveness of interventions that have been implemented.
 - All decisions are data-based and must be implemented with fidelity.
 - Data from assessments within each tier will drive decisions. Assessment tools are used for the screening of all students (Tier 1) to determine which students are not making the same academic and behavioral gains as their peers; Tiers 1 and 2 will use diagnostics to determine which students are unable to demonstrate essential academic and behavioral skills; and Tiers 2 and 3 will use assessments for progress monitoring to guide decision making about interventions.

DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS TO BE USED

Assessments are used for three different purposes: screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring. All students at each campus in the district will be screened to determine which students are not making the same academic and behavioral gains as their peers.

Assessments to be used may include:

1. Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)
2. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
3. STAR Reading and STAR Math
4. Released Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests
5. AimsWeb
6. mCLASS Reading
7. mCLASS Math
8. Test of Silent Reading Fluency
9. Test of Silent Contextual Reading Fluency
10. Monitoring Basic Skills Progress: Mathematics
11. Core Curriculum Assessments
12. TAKS scores
13. Iowa Tests of Basic Skills results
14. Grade Reports
15. Attendance
16. Disciplinary Actions

MULTI-TIERED INTERVENTION

Response to Intervention is a multi-tiered service delivery model.

TIER 1

Tier 1 focuses on the curriculum, instruction, and environment within the general education classroom. At the beginning of the school year, all students will be taught the

core curriculum with flexible groupings in the general education setting using differentiated instruction strategies including:

1. Cooperative Learning
2. Use of Learning Styles
3. Multiple Intelligences (Gardner)
4. Marzano's Strategies for Classroom Instruction
5. Environment conducive for all learners (classroom management, organization)
6. Scope and sequence of lessons differentiated to meet the needs of all learners
7. Student products are varied to aid in learning
8. Bloom's Taxonomy is reinforced
9. Other Tier 1 strategies identified by the district

The most common assessments used with Tier 1 students are the universal screening assessment and curriculum based assessments to be given three times during the year—beginning of year, middle of year, and end of year.

TIER 2

For those students who do not respond to Tier 1 instruction, the RtI campus team will determine interventions to be used with students. The interventions must be intensive, research-based strategies in addition to the Tier 1 supports. Students in Tier 2 (Approximately 20 % of students) will receive supplemental support at least twice a week for 30 minutes such as:

Paraprofessional works with small groups (3-5 students).

Teacher/paraprofessional works with small group before and after school.

Teacher/paraprofessional works with small group during PE when the requirement for 135 minutes/week has been met.

Teacher/paraprofessional works with small group during computer lab time.

Students may be pulled to work with ARI or AMI teacher. (K-2)

Students attend Reading and/or Math Enrichment classes. (Grades 3-5)

Some of the identified research-based programs to be used with students include:

1. Study Island
2. Grand Central Station
3. Accelerated Reader
4. Accelerated Math
5. PLATO
6. Kamico
7. TAKS Coach
8. Curriculum Associates
9. Compass
10. Rosetta Stone
11. Princeton Review
12. Reading First
13. A+
14. STAR Math
15. STAR Reading
16. Earobics

17. Vocabulary A-Z
18. Reading A-Z
19. Lexia
20. English in a Flash
21. Math Facts in a Flash
22. Wilson Reading Language System
23. Scottish Rite Literacy Program for Secondary Students
24. Sharon Wells Math
25. Pearlized Math

Teachers will assess students in Tier 2 on a weekly basis to monitor progress for a predetermined amount of time (Nine to 12 weeks).

TIER 3

Approximately 5% of students will show continued difficulty and a lack of progress, even with Tier 2 interventions. These students will then be provided Tier 3 interventions along with Tier 1 interventions. Tier 3 is simply an increase in the intensity of intervention and the frequency of curriculum-based measurements. Students in Tier 3 will receive supplemental support four times a week for 20-30 minutes in smaller groups. (1 to 3 students) Students in Tier 3 are not automatically referred for special education services. Data that is continued to be collected for the first 6 to 8 weeks of Tier 3 interventions can help the RtI team determine whether the student demonstrates progress or whether the student may need a comprehensive assessment to determine special education eligibility.

CAMPUS RtI TEAMS

Each campus in the district will identify a Response to Intervention Team. The team is student-centered and facilitates a process that results in the implementation of targeted strategies, accommodations, and services that will enable students to be successful in school. Members of the team will be multi-disciplinary and carry a high degree of credibility with other staff on the campus. Core members include the principal, general education teacher, special education teacher, counselor, referring teacher, and the parent of the student. Additional members invited as needed could include reading specialist, nurse, assistant principal, special program teachers, and specialists from the Special Education Coop. Identified roles of the team include the Chairperson (usually the campus principal), Timekeeper (keeps all members on focus and redirects back to topic if discussion strays), Case Manager (has responsibility to ensure documentation and monitoring the process) and the Document facilitator (takes meeting minutes and notes, fills out required forms, and organizes all RtI team documents). Types of data collection include:

Universal screening results and documentation

- Classroom observations
- Review of records
- Documentation of level of curriculum taught and interventions
- Parent notification of concern

RtI Referral

- Parent notification of RtI meeting
- Teacher/Staff notification of RtI meeting

- Problem identification form
- Student information form
- Documentation of classroom observations
- Intervention plan
- Progress monitoring
- Progress reports

Documentation of progress monitoring

- Description of interventions
- Student work samples
- Follow-up documentation of fidelity
- Data for formal request for multidisciplinary assessment: health history, progress reports, and campus RtI team reports (minutes and notes)

The team has the responsibility to review any problems (academic/developmental, behavioral, social/emotional, environmental/cultural) interfering with the student's academic performance in school, to brainstorm solutions, to make recommendations to meet the student's needs, and to monitor/review the results of the recommendations. The chairperson of the RtI team is responsible for checking with the case managers to make sure all forms are completed at the specified time in the process. The RtI team follows a formal problem solving model during the meetings. Background information and baseline data will be collected on the students to be used at the initial Intervention Team meeting. Members of the team will work together to ensure:

- 1) School wide resources that can be used as interventions have been inventoried.
- 2) The team sets clear, objective measurable goals for student progress.
- 3) Activities for interventions are "scientifically based".
- 4) Methods of assessment to track student progress are given at least once a week during the interventions.
- 5) The referring teacher's efforts in implementing the interventions have been documented.
- 6) Follow-up meetings with the referring teacher are held to review student progress and to judge whether the intervention was effective.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE RtI PROCESS

It is the responsibility of the district and campuses to ensure that parents understand the RtI process. Parents are able to provide critical data regarding the student; therefore they should be involved in the RtI process as early as possible. Parents should also be informed about the student's progress, or lack thereof, in a systemic manner via parent conferences, etc. to share information regarding the types of interventions provided and the results. If a referral is needed, parents will be more likely to understand how lack of response to intervention was determined. Since RtI is imbedded in the general education curriculum for all students, written consent is not necessary prior to administering schoolwide screenings or targeted assessments. However, when a student fails to respond to interventions and the decision is made to evaluate a student for special education eligibility, written consent must be obtained in accordance with special education procedures.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In order for RtI to be successful, all staff must understand the district's philosophy regarding the RtI process and the rationale behind it. All staff should be instructed on the national and state policies driving RtI and the theory and models of RtI. Staff development should also focus on specific skill strategies in the content areas as well as on differentiating instruction. Teachers need instruction, modeling, and feedback on how to increase academic instruction through flexible grouping, scheduling, and accommodations of different learning styles. Training on helping students to develop intrinsic motivation may be included.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Activities used in the RtI process can be funded by the following federal and state programs already in place for the district:

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs

Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund

Title VI, Part B: Rural, Low Income Schools Program: (REAP)

Accelerated Reading Initiative

Accelerated Math Initiative

Optional Extended Year

Special Education Funds: Up to 15% of IDEA-B funds for the fiscal year to develop and implement coordinated, early intervening services for students in K-12 (with a particular emphasis on students in K-3) who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment.

State Compensatory Funds: Each school district shall use the student performance data from the basic skills assessments and achievement tests administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 to design and implement appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instructional services for students in the district schools that enable the students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term.