



# Features of state response to intervention initiatives in Northeast and Islands Region states



Institute of Education Sciences  
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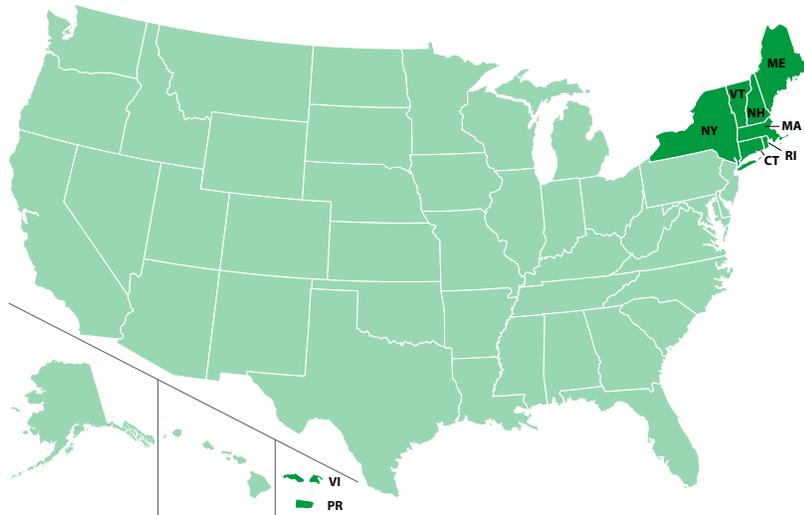
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# Features of state response to intervention initiatives in Northeast and Islands Region states

**This review of documents on response to intervention (RTI) available on state education agency web sites in the nine Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions concludes that RTI is supported in seven jurisdictions as an overall school instructional improvement approach or an approach to determining special education eligibility. It also finds that RTI documents in the seven jurisdictions address the core features of RTI as defined by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities.**

Response to intervention (RTI) is an approach to instruction, assessment, and intervention that enables early identification of students who are experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties (Mellard and Johnson 2008). The jurisdictions served by the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands expressed interest in a study of whether and how state education agencies are addressing RTI in state-level policy and guidance to local school districts. This report describes an analysis of documents related to RTI that are publicly available on state education agency web sites in the nine Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the Virgin Islands.

RTI was introduced into federal policy through the reauthorization of the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, P. L. 108-446) as a means of early identification and determination of special education eligibility under the category of specific learning disabilities (Fuchs et al. 2003). However, RTI is increasingly promoted as an overall approach to school improvement through general education (Batsche et al. 2005; Cummings et al. 2008). In this context, RTI is a comprehensive support system aimed at maximizing achievement of all students by closely monitoring student response to instruction and adjusting instructional approaches based on student progress data (Cummings et al. 2008; Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; Fuchs and Young 2006).

An RTI framework typically contains eight core features outlined by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities: high quality classroom instruction, research-based instruction, assessment of classroom performance, universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, research-based interventions, progress monitoring during interventions, and fidelity measures (Mellard 2004).

State education agencies across the country are adopting RTI policies, including revising their special education regulations to comply with IDEA 2004 (Ahearn 2008). While IDEA 2004

is clear that states must permit the use of RTI in determining special education eligibility, the statute and its regulations are silent on RTI implementation (Fuchs and Fuchs 2005; Zirkel and Krohn 2008). Thus, state and local education agencies considering RTI must make several key policy and implementation decisions.

This report addresses a single research question:

What are the features of state response to intervention initiatives as evidenced by publicly available information from state education agencies?

This knowledge may inform how each jurisdiction proceeds in the development of its policies, procedures, and practices.

The primary data collection strategy in this descriptive study was a systematic review of publicly available documents addressing RTI on state education agency web sites. Data were collected between July and September 2008. Documents were first classified with respect to document type (legislation, regulation, nonregulatory guidance, request for proposals or applications to become a pilot site, tool or form, technical assistance, meeting minutes, and other). Documents were then coded according to evidence of the core RTI features (Mellard 2004).

There is not one particular approach to or definition of RTI; the literature on RTI covers several core features that constitute an RTI framework (see, for example, Fuchs and Fuchs 2005; Newman-Gonchar, Clarke, and Gersten 2009; Mellard 2004; Mellard and Johnson 2008; National Association of State Directors

of Special Education 2006). The results of the web search and analysis of documents were captured in narrative descriptions of each jurisdiction's approach to RTI. Documents were also categorized by theme: use for determining eligibility for special education under a specific learning disability, use of a three-tiered model, requirement for a readiness self-assessment or plan, and mention of implementation of pilot sites.

The review finds that seven of nine jurisdictions—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont—have developed state documents on RTI that address core features of RTI identified in the literature (Mellard 2004). Six of these jurisdictions had documents addressing all eight core features (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, had and Vermont). And one state (Rhode Island<sup>1</sup>) had documents demonstrating evidence of all but one core feature (universal screening). These seven jurisdictions have documents that indicate that RTI may be used to determine eligibility for special education. As of July 2009 Connecticut requires use of RTI to determine eligibility for special education, and New York will do so by 2012. All seven also require or recommend a three-tiered model of intervention, five require or recommend use of a readiness self-assessment or plan (Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont), and four have appropriated funds for RTI pilot or demonstration sites (New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

There was no evidence of state education agency documents on RTI for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands, but this is not evidence that these two jurisdictions do not allow RTI.

Based on the review of state documents, the report concludes that RTI is supported in seven of nine jurisdictions as an overall school instructional improvement approach in general education or an approach to determining special education eligibility. RTI documents in the seven jurisdictions address the core features of RTI as defined by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities.

This study, conducted between July and September 2008, was limited to a scan of the publicly available RTI-related documents on state education agency web sites. Thus, the review captures only documents that were publicly available at that time and uncovered through a keyword search. It does not include documents developed by state education agencies that were not publicly available on their web sites or documents created by other agencies.

The study was not designed to explore the more nuanced and context-specific

implementation considerations and constraints that jurisdictions may face, nor was it intended to evaluate local district- or school-level implementation status or the effectiveness of RTI policies. The report examines only state-level evidence and distinguishes between the enactment of state regulations or guidance and local practice. Further study through interviews with key state and local policymakers and practitioners would provide a more comprehensive description of RTI implementation in the Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions.

**November 2009**

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Note

1. Rhode Island's self-assessment tool mentions the use of screening and benchmark assessments, but it does not specifically describe universal screening for both academic and behavioral indicators.

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## WHY THIS STUDY?

Response to intervention (RTI) is an educational approach designed to provide effective, data-based interventions for struggling students (see box 1 for more detail). RTI was introduced into federal policy in the context of special education through the reauthorization of the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, P. L. 108-446) as a means of early identification of special education eligibility under the category of specific learning disabilities (Fuchs et al. 2003). However, RTI is increasingly being promoted as an overall approach to school improvement through general education (Batsche et al. 2005; Cummings et al. 2008). In this context, RTI is a multifaceted school improvement initiative aimed at maximizing achievement of all students by closely monitoring student response to instruction and adjusting instructional approaches based on student progress data (Cummings et al. 2008; Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; Fuchs and Young 2006). RTI integrates service delivery across general and special education to promote high quality instruction for all students while providing more intensive services for students demonstrating academic or behavioral difficulties (Cummings et al. 2008; Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; Fuchs and Young 2006; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). (See appendix A for a brief review of the literature on RTI.)

Prior to its reauthorization in 2004, IDEA specified that to be eligible for special education under the specific learning disability category, a child must demonstrate a “severe discrepancy” between academic achievement and intellectual ability (IQ). This approach was widely criticized due to variations in how “severe discrepancy” is defined and differences in the degree of discrepancy required and the IQ measures and assessments used (Fuchs and Fuchs 2006). With the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 and subsequent IDEA regulations, state education agencies are permitted to use a process “based on the child’s response to scientific, research-based intervention” to determine eligibility (Cummings et al. 2008; Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; Fuchs and Young 2006). IDEA regulations

## BOX 1

**What is response to intervention?**

Response to intervention (RTI) is an approach to instruction, assessment, and intervention that enables early identification of students with academic or behavioral difficulties (Mellard and Johnson 2008). According to the National Center on Response to Intervention, it “integrates assessment and intervention within a multilevel prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems” (Woodruff 2009). The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD) identifies eight core features of RTI: high quality classroom instruction, research-based instruction, assessment of classroom performance, universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, research-based interventions, progress monitoring during interventions, and fidelity measures (Mellard 2004).

There is no single approach to RTI; however, the literature documents several common components to the RTI framework (see, for example, Fuchs and Fuchs 2005; Newman-Gonchar, Clarke, and Gersten 2009; Mellard 2004; Mellard and Johnson 2008; and National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). The NRCLD core features were chosen as the framework for this analysis because they include components identified in other work and were the most comprehensive set of features identified in the literature review. Having multiple tiers is not considered a core feature by NRCLD but is recognized as a common attribute of RTI implementation as encompassed in the core feature “research-based intervention” (Mellard 2004).

RTI typically begins with teachers providing high quality, research-based instruction to all students

(frequently called the primary tier), monitoring student progress, and identifying at-risk students, or those who do not respond to general education instruction. These students receive additional research-based intervention (frequently called the secondary tier) and, based on individual responses, are returned to the regular classroom, receive more intensive research-based intervention in a tertiary tier, or are evaluated for special education (Fuchs and Young 2006; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006).

Progress monitoring or formative evaluation measures are used to continually assess changes in students’ learning and generate diagnostic information (Fuchs and Fuchs 2006). The number of tiers in RTI is left to state or local discretion. Interventions at higher tiers increase in intensity, duration, and frequency and are conducted by specialized instructors or with smaller groups of students (Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). RTI interventions focus primarily on reading and literacy.

The following are the core RTI features, as defined by the NRCLD (Mellard 2004):

*High quality classroom instruction.*

All students receive high quality education in a general education setting, before being identified for further assistance or support.

*Research-based instruction.* Teachers use research-based instructional practices and curricula that have been evaluated for validity and efficacy.

*Classroom performance.* Teachers use a variety of student assessments integrated into the general education curriculum.

*Universal screening.* School staff screen students on indicators of academic achievement and behavior to determine which students need further monitoring or intervention.

*Continuous progress monitoring.* Students’ classroom progress is monitored continuously, through benchmarks or other curriculum-based assessment models.

*Research-based interventions.* Interventions are implemented for students who have demonstrated a need through progress monitoring. Interventions matching students’ deficits and based in scientific research may involve different or more intensive classroom instruction. Interventions typically last 8–12 weeks.

*Progress monitoring during interventions.* School staff collect regular progress monitoring data to create a cumulative record of student responses to the intervention and to make any necessary modifications.

*Fidelity measures.* School staff collect fidelity measures, such as observational checklists of teaching behaviors, on those providing instruction. Fidelity measures provide information about whether the intervention is consistently implemented as intended.

**Note**

1. In addition to the core features, Mellard (2004) describes several common “attributes” of RTI implementation: multiple tiers of increasingly intense interventions; differentiated curriculum; instruction delivered by staff other than the regular classroom teacher; varied duration, frequency, and time of interventions; and flexibility to use either categorical (placement in special education) or noncategorical placement decisions. These are not explicitly included in this study’s framework because local education agencies or schools typically determine how these attributes are applied at the school level.

require state education agencies to adopt criteria for determining whether a student has a learning disability and specify that RTI may be one, but not the exclusive, criterion (U.S. Department of Education 2007).

While the construct of RTI comes from a special education orientation, it is also used as an approach to schoolwide reform within the context of general education (Batsche et al. 2005; Cummings et al. 2008), where it is seen as a means of improving instruction and providing early identification and intervention for any student experiencing academic or behavioral difficulty (Burns and VanDerHeyden 2006; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). Successful implementation of RTI requires a partnership between general and special education at the state and local levels (Batsche et al. 2005; Council for Exceptional Children 2007; Cummings et al. 2008; Kealy 2007).

### National interest in response to intervention

State education agencies across the country are adopting RTI policies, including revising their special education regulations to comply with IDEA 2004 on identification of students with specific learning disabilities. A recent survey by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education revealed that “virtually every state is taking a close look at this change in the law . . . and is taking steps to develop new state policies and procedures and deliver training as deemed necessary to implement these changes” (Ahearn 2008, p. 8). In addition, while IDEA 2004 is clear that states must permit the use of RTI in determining special education eligibility, the statute and its regulations are silent on RTI implementation (Fuchs and Fuchs 2005; Zirkel and Krohn 2008). Thus, state and local education agencies considering RTI must make several key policy and implementation decisions. For example, they must determine the process for screening and identifying students; the number, type, duration, and intensity of interventions; how to ensure fidelity of implementation; and the criteria for gauging

student response (Barnes and Harlacher 2008; Fuchs and Young 2006).

### Regional interest in response to intervention

Conversations with stakeholders in the Northeast and Islands Region demonstrate that state education agencies in all jurisdictions are interested in how other jurisdictions are supporting RTI initiatives and whether RTI is being used as an approach to overall school improvement or as a component of the special education identification process. This knowledge may inform how each jurisdiction proceeds in the development of its policies, procedures, and practices.

The Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands and its federally funded technical assistance partners (the New England Comprehensive Center and the Northeast Regional Resource Center) have conducted several activities to solicit state education agency needs related to RTI.<sup>1</sup> These include a focus group with state directors of special education in 2007 and a regional RTI roundtable in 2008. Queries to key individuals in the Northeast and Islands Region state education agencies elicited strong interest in a project that would give them a “snapshot” of RTI policy across jurisdictions.

### Research question and approach

This study responds to those requests for information by addressing the following research question:

What are the features of state response to intervention initiatives as evidenced by publicly available information from state education agencies?

To answer this question, the research team reviewed the publicly available documents relating

**State education agencies in the Northeast and Islands Region are interested in how other jurisdictions are supporting RTI initiatives and whether RTI is being used as an approach to overall school improvement or as a component of the special education identification process**

to RTI on state education agency web sites (see box 2 and appendix B for details of study data and methods). The study is intended to inform some of the critical decisions Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions might need to make as they adopt an RTI approach.

## FINDINGS: AN OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

This section documents the results of a search of state education agency web sites in Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions for publicly available information related to RTI. The review finds that

### BOX 2

#### Study methodology

The primary data collection strategy in this descriptive study was a systematic review of publicly available documents addressing response to intervention (RTI). Using a keyword list developed from both academic research (Mellard 2004) and legislation (IDEA 2004), researchers systematically searched state education agency web sites across the nine Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions (the keywords were translated into Spanish for the Puerto Rico search; see appendix B for more detail on the study methodology). Documents were downloaded between July and September 2008 and coded using a document summary form. Several key works in the literature on RTI (Fuchs and Fuchs 2006; Mellard 2004; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006) were consulted in classifying, coding, describing, and categorizing the information in state documents.

The analysis consisted of four activities: classifying documents by document type, coding documents by the eight core features of RTI, developing a summary description of the RTI initiatives in each jurisdiction, and categorizing documents by themes derived from literature and analysis of state education agency RTI

initiatives. Two researchers independently classified each document by type, coded for key features, and categorized documents by themes. Any coding discrepancies were resolved through blind review, followed by discussion until interrater agreement was achieved.

#### *Classification of document types.*

Documents were classified by type: legislation, regulation, nonregulatory guidance, request for proposals or applications for pilot sites, tool or form, technical assistance, meeting minutes, and other (box B3 in appendix B explains the document types). These types, representing how state education agencies influence or direct action at the local level, are consistent with those used in a similar study by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (Harr-Robins, Shambaugh, and Parrish 2009).

#### *Coding of documents for core features.*

Documents were coded by core RTI features addressed: high quality classroom instruction, research-based instruction, classroom performance, universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, research-based interventions, progress monitoring during interventions, and fidelity measures. Researchers looked for language that matched the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities's (NRCLD) description.

#### *Summaries of each jurisdiction.*

Documents were reviewed to assess whether the state education agency was using RTI in overall school improvement through general education or as a component of the special education identification process. The summaries report the state education agency definition of RTI, describe any use of tiers and tools and technical assistance, and note the existence of state education agency-funded or -initiated pilot sites.

#### *Categorization of documents by theme.*

Researchers identified four themes as indicators of major distinctions in state-level approaches and used the themes in categorizing the documents on RTI: use for determining eligibility for special education under a specific learning disability, use of a three-tiered model, requirement for a readiness self-assessment or plan, and mention of implementation of pilot sites. These themes were chosen to describe characteristics of state education agency approaches mentioned in the literature (Zirkel and Krohn 2008; Ahearn 2008; Batsche et al. 2005; Council for Exceptional Children 2007; Mellard 2004; Kealy 2007) but not already captured under the coding for NRCLD core features or because of the frequency with which they were identified in state documents.

seven of nine jurisdictions in the region have developed state documents on RTI that address core features of RTI identified in the literature (Mellard 2004). These seven jurisdictions—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont—use or promote RTI as an approach to supporting struggling students in general education or to determine eligibility for special education at the local level. As of July 2009, Connecticut requires use of RTI to determine eligibility for special education under the specific learning disability category, and New York will do so by 2012. The document review could not shed light on the extent of RTI use at the local level in the seven jurisdictions. While there was no evidence of RTI policies or procedures on the public state education agency web sites for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands, that is not evidence that these two jurisdictions do not allow RTI.

Of the seven states that support RTI initiatives, all require or recommend a three-tiered model of intervention, five require or recommend use of a readiness self-assessment or plan (Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont), and four have appropriated funds for RTI pilot or demonstration sites (New Hampshire,

New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

Types of documents

The most commonly found document types were nonregulatory guidance (six states), followed by regulations (four states) (table 1). (See appendix C for a complete list of the publicly available documents found on state education agency web sites.) Three state education agencies provided tools or forms, and two provided technical assistance documents. Meeting minutes and requests for proposals or applications to become a pilot site were each found on one web site. None of the state education agencies provided RTI-related legislation as a publicly accessible document.

**Seven of nine jurisdictions in the region—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont—have developed state documents on RTI that address core features of RTI identified in the literature**

Core response to intervention features in reviewed documents

The documents on state education agency web sites were reviewed for references to core RTI features

TABLE 1  
**Number of Northeast and Islands Region state education agency documents, by document type, 2008**

State education agency	Legislation	Regulation	Non-regulatory guidance	Requests for proposals or applications to become a pilot site	Tool or form	Technical assistance document	Meeting minutes	Other
Connecticut	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	
Maine	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	
Massachusetts	0	0	2 <sup>a</sup>	0	4	4 <sup>a</sup>	0	
New Hampshire	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	State Equity Plan
New York	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Rhode Island	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	
Vermont	0	1	3	0	5	0	1	
Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

a. One document refers to a package of material on determination of specific learning disability eligibility.

Source: Authors' analysis of documents from state education agency web site search; see text for details.

(table 2). Six of the seven jurisdictions with RTI documents (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont) have posted documents addressing all eight of the core RTI features, and the seventh state (Rhode Island) includes all but one (universal screening). Rhode Island's self-assessment tool mentioned the use of screening and benchmark assessments, but did not specifically describe universal screening for both academics and behavioral indicators. These findings indicate that the jurisdictions are attending to the core features of RTI.

### State education agency response to intervention initiatives

Researchers identified four themes as indicators of distinctions in state education agency RTI initiatives. They then categorized documents according to whether the state education agency required RTI as a component of the special education eligibility process (Ahearn 2008; Zirkel and Krohn 2008), whether the state education agency was using or encouraging a three-tiered RTI model (Mellard 2004), whether a self-assessment or local plan was required before implementing RTI at the local level, and whether the state

education agency supported or funded RTI pilot sites (table 3).

*Required for determining eligibility under specific learning disability, 2008/09.* Seven of nine jurisdictions (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont) had documents indicating that RTI may be used for determining whether a student has a specific learning disability and is eligible for special education. This measure is consistent with the changes in IDEA 2004 (section 300.307-300.311). These states permit local school districts to use a "severe discrepancy" between achievement and intellectual ability or to determine that a student has not made sufficient progress (has not responded to instruction) after successively intensive levels of interventions as a criterion in determining eligibility for special education. Connecticut replaced the "severe discrepancy" criterion with the state's RTI model of scientific research-based intervention on July 1, 2009. By July 1, 2012, New York will require that all school districts use RTI to determine whether students in grades K–4 have a specific learning disability in reading.

*Three-tiered model.* The seven state education agencies with publicly available documentation on

TABLE 2

### References to core response to intervention features in Northeast and Islands Region state education agency documents, 2008

State education agency	Number of documents	High quality classroom instruction	Research-based instruction	Classroom performance	Universal screening	Continuous progress monitoring	Research-based interventions	Progress monitoring during interventions	Fidelity measures
Connecticut	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
Maine	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1
Massachusetts	10	6	6	5	4	8	9	8	3
New Hampshire	4	2	3	1	2	1	3	1	1
New York	7	4	5	4	4	6	4	6	3
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rhode Island	2	2	1	1	0 <sup>a</sup>	2	2	1	2
Vermont	10	5	8	6	9	8	8	7	5
Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

a. Rhode Island's self-assessment tool notes the use of "benchmark and screening assessments" but does not describe the process of "universal screening."

Source: Authors' analysis of documents from state education agency web site search; see text for details.

TABLE 3

**Summary of Northeast and Islands Region state education agencies' response to intervention initiatives, by theme, 2008**

State education agency	Required for determination of specific learning disability, 2008/09	Three-tiered model	Readiness self-assessment or plan required for local education agencies	State education agency–funded or –initiated pilot sites
Connecticut	Local discretion at time of study; required since July 2009	Yes	No evidence in documents	No evidence in documents
Maine	Local discretion	Recommended	Recommended	No evidence in documents
Massachusetts	Local discretion	Yes	No evidence in documents	No evidence in documents
New Hampshire	Local discretion	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	Local discretion, required after July 2012 for grades K–4	Local discretion	Yes	Yes
Puerto Rico	No documents found	No documents found	No documents found	No documents found
Rhode Island	Local discretion	Yes	Recommended	Yes <sup>a</sup>
Vermont	Local discretion	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virgin Islands	No documents found	No documents found	No documents found	No documents found

a. Evidence comes from the Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project web site ([www.ritap.org](http://www.ritap.org)), referenced on the state education agency web site.

Source: Authors' analysis of documents from state education agency web site search; see text for details.

RTI recommend or use a multitiered model similar to the primary, secondary, and tertiary tiers described in the literature (Mellard et al. 2004; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). Documents retrieved from both Maine and New York state education agency web sites describe a tiered system of interventions but do not specify the number of tiers. New York uses the term “levels of targeted intervention” to describe the tiered intervention process but leaves the exact number of tiers to local discretion. Maine’s self-assessment suggests three tiers as part of a range of research-based instructional interventions.

In Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, tier I emphasizes high quality, research-based instruction in a general education setting for all students. Tier II encompasses students requiring additional support. The most intensive, focused interventions are implemented in tier III, with students who have

not responded to intervention in tier II and who continue to demonstrate the strongest learning needs.

*Readiness self-assessment or plan for local education agencies required.* Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont require or recommend that local education agencies conduct a school readiness assessment before they implement RTI. In these self-assessments, local education agencies rate their current status across such areas as use of a multitiered problem-solving process, data collection and assessment, leadership and collaborative decisionmaking, professional development for staff, and willingness and commitment by teachers and administration.

New York and Vermont require or recommend that local education agencies create a plan before adopting an RTI model. New York requires each school district to develop a plan and policies to address low performance by students that may

**Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont require or recommend that local education agencies conduct a school readiness assessment before they implement RTI**

include an RTI process, though the state education agency web site does not offer any forms for doing so. New York guidance documents indicate that schools may select and define the specific components of their RTI programs. In Vermont local education agencies must draft sample plans outlining the core features of the Vermont RTI model.

*State education agency–funded or –initiated pilot sites.* New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont have selected or are planning to select RTI demonstration sites or pilot schools. Selected schools receive technical assistance or funding to develop and implement a comprehensive RTI approach. In New Hampshire and Rhode Island, these pilot sites will also serve as professional development models.

#### Descriptions of state response to intervention initiatives

This section provides a state-specific, narrative description of the features of state RTI initiatives within each jurisdiction, as evidenced by publicly available information from state education agency web sites. Based on information collected, the state education agency descriptions provide each jurisdiction’s definition of RTI and a description of the RTI initiative, specifying its use in general and special education and the tiered model of interventions. The summary also describes tools and technical assistance provided by the jurisdiction and notes whether there are any state education agency–funded or –initiated RTI pilot sites, based on the documents reviewed.

*Connecticut.* Connecticut defines RTI as “scientific research-based intervention . . . to emphasize the central role of general education in the intervention process and the importance of educational practices that are scientific and research-based” (Connecticut State Department of Education 2008, p. 2). The three-tiered model includes the core general education curriculum and social-behavioral

supports (tier I), more intensive instruction and progress monitoring (tier II), and individualized support (tier III). Until July 2009, Connecticut allowed districts to use either RTI or a severe discrepancy model to determine whether a child was eligible for special education. In July 2009, scientific research-based intervention became the primary identification procedure for eligibility, and the state no longer permits use of the severe discrepancy model. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included information about technical assistance and professional development in scientific research-based intervention for local school districts. There was no evidence of state education agency–funded or –initiated pilot sites in Connecticut.

*Maine.* Maine uses RTI as part of its “pre-referral problem-solving process,” defined as a “set of scientifically based, systematic procedures used to examine the ongoing achievement of all children using data” (Maine Department of Education 2008, p. 12). Although Maine did not outline its tiered model in documents available on its state education agency web site, a document recommended for Maine schools and districts to use in assessing their readiness to implement RTI refers to three tiers in a context of research-based instructional interventions. RTI is one component of the special education eligibility process for the disability categories of autism, emotional disturbance, other health impairment, speech or language impairment, or specific learning disability. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included several self-assessments developed by other states (for example, Colorado, Florida, and Pennsylvania) for use by districts and schools to determine their readiness to adopt an RTI model. There was no evidence of state education agency–funded or –initiated pilot sites.

*Massachusetts.* Massachusetts defines an RTI model as having “different levels of intensity or services,” with most models containing three or four tiers that include “continuous progress monitoring” and use of data “to inform instructional decision-making” (Massachusetts Department

of Education 2008, p. 31). RTI is promoted as a three-tiered approach for improving instruction and support for the lowest performing general education students through the state's Reading First Plan. The three-tiered process involves high quality classroom instruction for all students (tier I), supplemental intervention and progress monitoring (tier II), and intensive instruction and more frequent progress monitoring (tier III). Additionally, RTI is one method for identifying a specific learning disability for determining eligibility for special education. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included a comprehensive set of required forms and technical assistance documents for local education agency use in determining eligibility for special education, including monitoring tools and a professional development module with a presentation, facilitator's guide, and handouts. There was no evidence of state education agency-funded or -initiated pilot sites.

*New Hampshire.* New Hampshire defines RTI as “the process by which individual student instruction and student academic performance is evaluated using research-based models of instruction prior to identifying a child with a learning disability” (New Hampshire State Board of Education 2008, p. 35). The RTI model includes effective literacy instruction and positive behavioral interventions and supports in a three-tiered model that requires high quality curricula and instruction for all students (tier I), focused interventions for students who need support (tier II), and individualized instruction or a referral for special education (tier III). State regulations permit the use of RTI for specific learning disability eligibility. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included a family guide introducing RTI to parents and offering professional development and technical assistance to local education agencies on RTI. The New Hampshire RESPONDS initiative will fund five RTI “demonstration sites” on model RTI practices.

*New York.* New York defines RTI as “a multitiered, problem-solving approach that identifies general

education students struggling in academic and behavioral areas early and provides them with systematically applied strategies and targeted instruction at varying levels of intervention” (DeLorenzo and Stevens 2008, p. 1). New York's RTI model includes varied levels of targeted intervention, but the criteria for the types and levels of intervention, data collection, and progress monitoring are determined at the district level. The state education agency permits use of either RTI or a discrepancy model for identifying students for special education under a specific learning disability. After July 2012, however, all districts will be required to use RTI in grades K–4. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included technical assistance documents supporting RTI as a strategy for addressing early reading intervention and disproportionate representation of minority students in special education. New York intends to establish an in-state RTI technical assistance center. Reading First grants are used to support literacy interventions, and Contracts for Excellence funds support local pilot RTI programs.

*Puerto Rico.* A comprehensive Internet search in English and Spanish of the Puerto Rico Department of Education web site did not yield any results related to RTI.

*Rhode Island.* Rhode Island defines RTI as an “expanding circle of support” that includes successive interventions implemented by a widening array of specialists and support personnel (Hauerwas and Woolman 2006, p. 1). The Rhode Island Department of Education, together with the Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project (RITAP), adapted the state's “problem-solving process” as its RTI model. Beginning in 2005, personal literacy plans were mandated for all students in grades K–5 reading below grade level and students in grades 6–10 reading three or more years below grade level. Personal literacy plans contain three tiers of expanding or contracting

**Evidence of state education agency funded or -initiated pilot sites was found in New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont**

levels of intervention and literacy assistance, beginning with support from content-area teachers (tier 1), targeted intervention (tier 2), and intensive intervention (tier 3). State guidance specifies a preference for an RTI approach but permits the use of the severe discrepancy approach as one means of determining eligibility for special education. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included a link to the RITAP web site, which provides technical assistance and professional development documents. Since 2004, Rhode Island has sponsored four RTI pilot schools under the Planning Learning with Unified Supports Schools project.

*Vermont.* Vermont defines RTI as “a multi-tiered decisionmaking approach that addresses academic difficulties of ALL students. It is an integrated school improvement model that is standards-driven, proactive, and incorporates both prevention and intervention” (Vermont Department of Education 2007, p. 1). Vermont uses the term “responsiveness to instruction” rather than “response to intervention” to describe its three-tier RTI model. All students receive a research-based core curriculum that incorporates progress monitoring and assessment (tier I). At-risk students receive a targeted level of intervention (tier II), and a more intensive level of intervention is provided to students based on a comprehensive evaluation (tier III). Vermont

regulations permit the use of either a discrepancy model or a “problem-solving, response to instruction model” to identify students with a specific learning disability. Other documentation on the state education agency web site included guidance for schools interested in implementing RTI, readiness self-assessment tools, implementation checklists, and information about scientifically based literacy instruction. In 2006, the state education agency selected four schools to serve as RTI pilot sites.

*Virgin Islands.* A comprehensive search of the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education web site did not yield any results related to RTI.

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## STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to a scan of the publicly available RTI-related documents on state education agency web sites. Thus, the review captures only documents that were publicly available and uncovered through a keyword search. It does not include documents developed by the state education agency but not publicly available on the web sites or documents created by other agencies (for example, the National Center on Learning Disabilities or the Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project) and posted on the state education agency site. Furthermore, the study includes only documents that were posted from July to September 2008. Since the study period, documents may have been added or removed from state education agency web sites. (Appendix C has been updated to identify documents that were no longer available at the time of preparation of this report.)

Finally, the study was not designed to explore the more nuanced and context-specific implementation considerations and constraints that jurisdictions may face, nor was it intended to evaluate local district- or school-level implementation status or the effectiveness of RTI policies. The report examines only state-level evidence and distinguishes between the enactment of state regulations or guidance and local practice. Therefore, the findings should not be interpreted to mean that state education agency policy is being fully implemented or appropriately applied at the local level.

**The study was not designed to explore the more nuanced and context specific implementation considerations and constraints that jurisdictions may face, nor was it intended to evaluate local district- or school level implementation status or the effectiveness of RTI policies**

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## CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

This study reviewed documents on response to intervention available on state education agency web sites in the nine Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions. It finds that RTI is supported in

seven of the jurisdictions as an overall school instructional improvement approach or an approach to determining special education eligibility. It also finds that RTI documents in the same seven jurisdictions address the core features of RTI as defined by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities.

Given the information provided in this report, and the limitations of the study, the research team believes that RTI implementation and impact in the Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions warrants further attention. A National Center for Education Evaluation–funded impact evaluation of RTI, expected to present its findings in 2012, should provide evidence of the impacts of different RTI strategies on student outcomes, including academic achievement and identification for special education, as well as how impacts vary by student group (U.S. Department of Education 2009). Another approach could focus on RTI implementation. Interviews with key state and local policymakers would provide information on how states are encouraging and supporting RTI for general and special education and on the implementation challenges, barriers,

and lessons. Case studies of districts implementing RTI in states with advanced documentation of RTI would shed light on which components are being used and how. Such findings could provide a baseline portrait for later studies. Further study of local and school-level RTI implementation in the region would provide a more comprehensive and nuanced picture.

Future research should also examine the effect of RTI on outcomes at both the school and district levels, including early identification of reading and other academic difficulties, student response to instruction, reduction in inappropriate referrals to and placement in special education, and ongoing collaboration between general and special education at the local level. Finally, further research is needed to examine the successes and challenges of implementing various forms of RTI at the local district or school levels.

**Case studies of districts implementing RTI in states with advanced documentation of RTI would shed light on which components are being used and how and could provide a baseline portrait for later studies**

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## APPENDIX A

### A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

The rationale for the practice of response to intervention (RTI) is based on research on how effective intervention increases the probability of positive individual student response to instruction (Foorman, Breier, and Fletcher 2003; Good, Simmons, and Kame'enui 2001; U.S. Department of Education 2001). Schools are using RTI to inform overall instructional quality and instructional decision-making (Mellard et al. 2004), to assist with early identification of learning difficulties, and to plan early interventions that address learning problems before a referral to special education (see, for example, Vaughn and Fuchs 2003; Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, and Hickman 2003). Possible benefits of an RTI approach include:

- Fewer inappropriate referrals to special education because a more valid method for identifying students as disabled is used, particularly in specific learning disabilities (Donovan and Cross 2002; Heller, Holtzman, and Messick 1982).
- Earlier intervention with more students who are at risk of school failure (Fuchs and Fuchs 2005).
- Reduced inappropriate identification or overidentification of children from minority groups in special education (Donovan and Cross 2002; Kamps and Greenwood 2005; Kamps et al. 2003).
- More and ongoing collaboration between general and special education (Gersten et al. 2008).

To date, there are few studies that measure the impact of RTI models empirically, longitudinally, or on a large scale. In one exception, VanDerHeyden, Witt, and Gilbertson (2007) conducted a multiyear study of five elementary schools in one district of a southwestern state that sequentially implemented an RTI model called System to Enhance Educational Performance (STEEP). The researchers introduced and evaluated the effect of STEEP across multiple baseline conditions, comparing data on the number of students evaluated for special education services and subsequently identified as eligible with a specific learning disability. Because of sequential implementation, where one school began STEEP in each of the five study years, the research team could report on the number of students evaluated and identified with a specific learning disability, both before and after STEEP was implemented, for five study schools and time periods. STEEP consistently resulted in statistically significant decreases in both referrals for evaluation and identification of students as having a specific learning disability. The STEEP study, however, did not involve random assignment conditions.

The National Center for Education Evaluation has funded a randomized controlled trial of the impact of RTI in about 150 elementary schools, with results expected in 2012 (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance 2009). The study focuses on evidence of RTI initiatives at the state education agency level, but other research has studied the impact of RTI implementation in local school districts—for example, Tilly (2002) on the Heartland, Iowa, RTI model; Marston et al. (2003) on Minneapolis Public Schools; and VanDerHeyden, Witt, and Gilbertson (2007) on the STEEP model.

## APPENDIX B METHODOLOGY

The central methodology of this study involved researchers classifying, coding, categorizing, and summarizing documents available on state education agency web sites to answer the research question, “What are the features of state RTI initiatives as evidenced by publicly available information from state education agencies?” The documents analyzed were selected to provide more information about response to intervention (RTI) programs, goals, activities, and models in each jurisdiction (Patton 1990).

### Document search and review

The team used RTI-related keywords from academic research (Mellard 2004) and legislation (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004) to locate publicly available documents on state education agency web sites in the nine Northeast and Islands Region jurisdictions: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the Virgin Islands (table B1). The keywords

were translated into Spanish to perform the search for Puerto Rico.

Over July 16–September 12, 2008, researchers downloaded all documents identified via keyword search and available to the public on state education agency web sites. A complete list of the documents, categorized by jurisdiction, is listed in appendix C.

Two researchers independently read each document to capture the document type, core features mentioned, and information about the RTI model. A document summary form was used to record the context, summary, and coding for each publicly available document (box B1) (Miles and Huberman 1994).<sup>2</sup> First, documents were classified by type: legislation; regulation; nonregulatory guidance; request for proposals or applications to become a pilot site; technical assistance; tool or form, including presentations; meeting minutes; and other (box B2). These categories represent the various ways that states and state education agencies can influence or direct action at the local level and are consistent with those used in a similar study by Harr-Robins, Shambaugh, and Parrish (2009).

TABLE B1

### Search keywords used to locate study documents

English	Spanish (used for Puerto Rico only)
Response to Intervention	Receptividad a la intervención
Responsiveness to Intervention	Receptividad a la intervención
Response to Instruction	Receptividad a la instrucción
Responsiveness to Instruction	Receptividad a la instrucción
RTI	(No direct translation)
Early intervening services (EIS)	Servicios de intervención temprana
Multi-tiered early intervention	Intervención temprana ó inicial de gradas múltiples
Tier model	Modelo de gradas
Problem-solving model (PSM)	Modelo de resolución de problemas
Standard treatment protocol (STP)	Protocolo de tratamiento estándar
Universal screening	Examen universal
Continuous progress monitoring	Monitoreo continuo de progreso
Student progress monitoring	Monitoreo de progreso del estudiante
Research-based interventions	Intervenciones basadas en la investigación

Source: Authors' compilation.

BOX B1

**State web site document review: summary sheet**

Note: Complete for each document. There may be several summary sheets for multiple documents in each state


Identify document type (check):

<input type="checkbox"/> Non-regulatory guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> Task force meeting minutes
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislation	<input type="checkbox"/> Tool and/or form
<input type="checkbox"/> Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Graphic
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> FAQ/QandA
<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> RFP
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):	

Brief summary of intended audience (if stated) and contents: [text]

Does it provide information on the **RTI model components** (how many tiers, area of focus, recommended interventions, how to initiate the process)? If so, summarize briefly: [text]

**Identify and briefly describe the features or components of RTI model**

Component/feature	Brief description
<input type="checkbox"/> High quality classroom instruction	
<input type="checkbox"/> Research-based instruction	
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom performance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Universal screening	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continuous progress monitoring	
<input type="checkbox"/> Research-based interventions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring during interventions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fidelity measures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Others (describe)	

Does it provide **research-based evidence** on interventions to be used at each tier, or does it provide guidance what constitutes “research-based” interventions? If so, summarize briefly: [text]

Does it recommend or mandate (specify which) the **types of data** to be collected for monitoring student progress and decision making at the local level? If so, summarize briefly: [text]

Does it recommend or mandate (specify which) the **types of data** to be collected for evaluating the effectiveness of the RTI model? If so, summarize briefly: [text]

If it is a **tool and/or form**, please describe its purpose (e.g., school readiness assessment; template for designing intervention plan, application to implement RTI). Is it mandatory? [text]

Does it provide guidance on how RTI is used to **determine eligibility** for specific learning disability? If so, summarize briefly: [text]

Please describe other information provided: [text]

BOX B2

**Definitions of document types**

*Legislation.* A law enacted by the state legislature.

*Regulation.* The rules established to operationalize or implement an enacted law; usually subject to public comment.

*Nonregulatory guidance.* A practice or action recommended by the state but not binding or required.

*Request for proposals or applications to become a pilot site.* A request for proposals for a state education agency–funded or –sanctioned program that is implementing RTI at the local level and serving as a potential model for future development.

*Technical assistance.* A broad range of documents developed by the SEA to guide practice at the local level, including, for example,

PowerPoint presentations and training materials.

*Tool or form.* A document that the state or others have developed to support RTI implementation.

*Meeting minutes.* The written record of a meeting.

*Other.* Policy documents that do not fall into any of the categories above (such as a state Equity Plan).

Second, researchers coded documents by the RTI core features described by Mellard (2004). These included high quality classroom instruction, research-based instruction, classroom performance, universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, research-based interventions, progress monitoring during interventions, and fidelity measures. The taxonomy emerged from the work of the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, a five-year national center funded by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (Mellard 2004). The researchers acknowledge that some aspects of RTI fall outside Mellard’s taxonomy, but the taxonomy is comprehensive and encompasses most of the key features of RTI found in other work (see, for example, Fuchs and Fuchs 2005; Newman-Gonchar, Clarke, and Gersten 2009; Mellard and Johnson 2008; National Association of State Directors of Special Education 2006). A recent Issues & Answers Brief by Sawyer, Holland, and Detgen (2008) also uses the Mellard (2004) core features to define RTI.

When the research team located documents that included aspects of RTI that fell outside of the taxonomy, these features were coded as “other.” For example, reports, papers or briefings mentioning “parental involvement” were coded as “other” but are not captured in the tables and text of this report. Additionally, the following information was recorded from documents in order to obtain

a comprehensive picture of state education agency use of the RTI features:

- Stated purpose or goal of the RTI model or approach.
- Number of tiers in the RTI model or approach.
- Statewide or limited implementation.
- Frequency of student assessment, monitoring, and intervention.
- Use of research in determining models or interventions.
- Use of RTI for identification of specific learning disabilities.
- Use of RTI as a method of reducing disparities in special education placement.
- Use of RTI in particular subject matters (such as reading).
- Professional development opportunities.

Third, researchers categorized each document according to one of four themes identified as indicators of distinctions in state-level approaches to RTI implementation based on the literature and a review of state education agency documents:

- Whether the state education agency permitted or required RTI for specific learning disability eligibility. In a survey of state statutes Zirkel and Krohn (2008) categorize state education agency approaches to specific learning disability identification in terms of whether the state is requiring or permitting the use of RTI. Ahearn (2008) reviews state policies in terms of state education agency regulatory actions and revisions in specific learning disability eligibility requirements.
- Whether the state education agency mentioned a three-tiered model. Mellard (2004) describes RTI attributes in terms of multiple tiers of increasingly intense research-based student interventions, typically using a three-tiered approach.
- Whether the state education agency required a readiness self-assessment or plan. A common theme was the requirement for a school district to conduct and submit a systematic self-assessment of the degree to which the district was prepared to implement state-required RTI components.
- Whether RTI pilot sites were mentioned. Pilot sites were required as a means to implement RTI on a small scale at the local level with a selected number of districts. A pilot site was defined for the purposes of this project as a state education agency-funded or –sanctioned program that is implementing RTI at the local level and serving as a potential model for future development.

These themes were chosen to describe characteristics of state education agency approaches because they appeared frequently in state documents or because they were mentioned in the literature (Zirkel and Krohn 2008; Ahearn 2008; Batsche et al. 2005; Council for Exceptional Children 2007; Mellard 2004; Kealy 2007) but not captured under the coding for National Research Center on Learning Disabilities core features.

Fourth, researchers summarized the documents, noting the details of each jurisdiction's RTI documents.

### Limitations

Although the scan of state education agency web sites for publicly available documents describing RTI implementation was comprehensive, there are several limitations inherent in the research design. First, states may have publicly available documents related to RTI that were not found using the list of keywords. Each keyword and phrase in box B1 was used in the search, and a comprehensive list of all discovered documents was created and cross-checked by a researcher using multiple combinations of the search terms. Documents that did not contain any of the keywords were not captured for the study. Some documents that contained a keyword were eliminated after close reading of the text allowed researchers to determine they were not related to RTI. Documents that were created by agencies other than the state education agency (for example, guidance from the National Center on Learning Disabilities) were also eliminated from consideration.

Second, it is important to note that this study includes information on state education agency RTI initiatives based only on the documents found on each jurisdiction's public department of education web site. Jurisdictions may be developing tools, guidance, or other materials related to RTI, but documents not available between July and September 2008 were not captured in this study. Moreover, documents that were previously available may have been removed from state education agency web sites. Appendix C indicates which documents were no longer available at the time of publication.

Finally, this study is not intended to evaluate the local implementation status or overall effectiveness of RTI policies in the region. The study was not designed to obtain an accurate estimate of the degree to which districts have implemented RTI at

the local or school level. While at the minimum, the data reveal how state education agency officials are using the core features of RTI in drafting information such as nonregulatory guidance and

technical assistance, this report does not evaluate how local districts or schools have attempted to use those features in structuring or implementing their RTI models or programs.

## APPENDIX C EXPANDED TABLES OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

### Connecticut

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Nonregulatory guidance	2007	Model Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual	<a href="http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PolicyProceduresManual.pdf">www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PolicyProceduresManual.pdf</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	February 2008	Using Scientific Research-Based Interventions: Improving Education for All Students – Connecticut’s Framework for RTI (Executive Summary)	<a href="http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/Pressroom/RTI_Executive_Summary.pdf">www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/Pressroom/RTI_Executive_Summary.pdf</a>

### Maine

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Regulation	May 16, 2008	Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age Twenty, Final Adoption	Web site link no longer active. There is a new version of the Maine Unified Special Education Regulation Birth to Age 20, that was adopted under “Emergency Adoption” June 22, 2009.
Tool or form	No date	District and School RTI Readiness Checklist	<a href="http://www.maine.gov/education/rti/district_school_readiness_checklist.rtf">www.maine.gov/education/rti/district_school_readiness_checklist.rtf</a>

## Massachusetts

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
PowerPoint	2003–08	Reading First 2003–2008 Professional Development The Highlights	Web site link no longer active.
PowerPoint	Spring 2005	IDEA 2004 P.L. 108–446 (former P.L. 105–17) Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/plenarysession.ppt">www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/plenarysession.ppt</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	December 20, 2006	Ready to Achieve Mass. PreK–12 Literacy Plan: Report and Recommendations for the Literacy Task Force	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/literacy/nga/tfreport.doc">www.doe.mass.edu/literacy/nga/tfreport.doc</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	December 2007	Memorandum on Specific Learning Disability – Eligibility Process/Forms <sup>a</sup>	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/">www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/</a>
Professional development module	December 2007	Specific Learning Disabilities: Eligibility Determination under IDEA 2004	Web site link no longer active.
Tool or form	May 2005	Section 614: Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Plans, and Educational Placements Specific Learning Disability	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/sld_law.pdf">www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/sld_law.pdf</a>
PowerPoint	No date	Response-to-Intervention and the Three-Tiered Model—Reading First	Web site link no longer active.
Tool or form	No date	Monitoring Tool for the Massachusetts Reading First Plan	Web site link no longer active.
Tool or form	2007–2008	Second Visit Monitoring Tool for the Massachusetts Reading First Plan	Web site link no longer active.
Tool or form	January 2007	Year Three Monitoring Tool for the Massachusetts Reading First Plan	Web site link no longer active.

a. Web site refers to a series of documents.

## New Hampshire

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Regulation	June 30, 2008	New Hampshire Rules for the Education of Students with Disabilities	<a href="http://www.ed.state.nh.us/EDUCATION/doe/organization/Instruction/documents/NHRuleswAmendmentJune102009June302008.pdf">www.ed.state.nh.us/EDUCATION/doe/organization/Instruction/documents/NHRuleswAmendmentJune102009June302008.pdf</a>
Request for proposals	March 6, 2008	Request for Applications – NH RESPONDS Professional Development for Excellence in Education DEMONSTRATION SITES	Web site link is no longer active because the grants have been awarded. Information about the program can be found at <a href="http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/SpecialEd/DemonstrationSite.htm">www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/SpecialEd/DemonstrationSite.htm</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	No date	A Family Guide to Response to Intervention (Rtl)	<a href="http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/SpecialEd/documents/FinalFamilyRtlGuide.pdf">www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/instruction/SpecialEd/documents/FinalFamilyRtlGuide.pdf</a>
Other (State Equity Plan)	January 30, 2007	New Hampshire's Equity Plan	<a href="http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/NCLB/documents/NHEquityPlan.pdf">www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/NCLB/documents/NHEquityPlan.pdf</a>

### New York

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Nonregulatory guidance	April 2008	Implementation of Response to Intervention Programs	<a href="http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/RTIfinal.pdf">www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/RTIfinal.pdf</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	March 2007	Recommendations for the Reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act	Web site link no longer active.
Nonregulatory guidance	December 20, 2004	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act	<a href="http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/idea/regents.htm">www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/idea/regents.htm</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	April 22, 2008	Quality Indicator Review and Resource Guides for Literacy	<a href="http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/literacyQI.htm">www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/literacyQI.htm</a>
PowerPoint	Fall 2007	Referrals, Evaluations and Eligibility Determinations	<a href="http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/referrals-evals-eligibility.ppt">www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/referrals-evals-eligibility.ppt</a>
PowerPoint	July, 2007	Implementing IDEA 2004: 2007 Changes to NYS' Special Education Laws and Regulations	<a href="http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/2007LawRegChanges.ppt">www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/2007LawRegChanges.ppt</a>
PowerPoint	No date	Reading First and Scientifically Based Reading Research	<a href="http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/readfirst/presentations/readingfirstnovember03tasessions.PPT">www.emsc.nysed.gov/readfirst/presentations/readingfirstnovember03tasessions.PPT</a>

### Rhode Island

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Nonregulatory guidance	June 2006	Interim Guidance Regarding Service Delivery and Learning Disability Identification	<a href="http://www.ritap.org/rti/content/interim%20guidance.pdf">www.ritap.org/rti/content/interim%20guidance.pdf</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	June 2005	PLP Expanding Circle of Support System <sup>a</sup>	<a href="http://www.ritap.org/rti/content/PLPGuidance.pdf">www.ritap.org/rti/content/PLPGuidance.pdf</a>
Regulations	2008	Regulations of the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities	<a href="http://www.ride.ri.gov/Special_Populations/State_federal_regulations/special_education_regulations_2008.pdf">www.ride.ri.gov/Special_Populations/State_federal_regulations/special_education_regulations_2008.pdf</a>
Tool or form	August 22, 2005	Team Review of Referral and Evaluation Report <sup>a</sup>	<a href="http://www.ritap.org/rti/content/ld%20report%20format.rtf">www.ritap.org/rti/content/ld%20report%20format.rtf</a>
Tool or form	2005	Moving towards a Problem-Solving Approach that uses Response to Intervention Data Self Assessment and Planning Tool (self-assessment inventory.pdf) <sup>a</sup>	<a href="http://www.ritap.org/rti/content/self-assessment%20inventory.pdf">www.ritap.org/rti/content/self-assessment%20inventory.pdf</a>

a. Retrieved from the Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project website ([www.ritap.org](http://www.ritap.org)) and not reflected in the count of documents in tables 1 and 2.

### Puerto Rico

No publicly available documents were located during the study time frame.

## Vermont

Type of document	Date	Title	Link
Nonregulatory guidance	May 27, 2008	Field Memo: FM#08-07: Specific Learning Disabilities Determination	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/policy/field_memo/FM_08-07_specific_disabilities.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/policy/field_memo/FM_08-07_specific_disabilities.pdf</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	February 6, 2006	Memorandum, Field Memo: FM#06-01: IDEIA Focus Topic: Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities using Responsiveness to Intervention (RtI)	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_memo.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_memo.pdf</a>
Nonregulatory guidance	November 9, 2006	Student Support Team: Specific Learning Disabilities and Reading Fluency as a Basic Skill Area	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/data_reports_pubs/learning_disabilities_matrix_1106.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/data_reports_pubs/learning_disabilities_matrix_1106.pdf</a>
Regulation	September 17, 2007	Vermont Department of Education Special Education Regulations and Other Pertinent Regulations	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/laws/sped_guide_07_0917.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/laws/sped_guide_07_0917.pdf</a>
Task force minutes	No date	Responsiveness to Instruction Topic Group Report	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_report.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_report.pdf</a>
Tool or form	September 19, 2008	Responsiveness to Instruction Readiness Forms	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_sped/forms.html#rti">http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_sped/forms.html#rti</a>
Tool or form	September 19, 2008 (updated)	A Student Support Method to Attain School Quality Standards Using RtI as a Decision-Making Tool	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_sped/forms.html">http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_sped/forms.html</a>
Tool or form	September 19, 2008 (updated)	Worksheet for Documentation of LEA Responsiveness to Instruction Plan	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_documentation_form.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_documentation_form.pdf</a>
Tool or form	September 17, 2007 (updated September 19, 2008)	Documentation of Responsiveness to Instruction Implementation Plan Guidance (9/17/07)	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_implementation_guidance.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_implementation_guidance.pdf</a>
Tool or form	No date	Responsiveness to Instruction: A Self-Assessment Tool	<a href="http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_tool_1007.pdf">http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_sped/forms/rti/rti_tool_1007.pdf</a>

## Virgin Islands

No publicly available documents were located during the study time frame.

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**NOTES**

1. These activities were not formal data collection activities but rather activities conducted to gauge regional interest in RTI issues.
2. The form was a modified version of that used by Harr-Robins, Shambaugh, and Parrish (2009).

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