Response to Intervention

June 2014

**Response to Intervention in Elementary-Middle Math**

**Highlights**

» RtI is a comprehensive early detection, prevention, and support system that identifies students who are potentially at risk and assists them before they fall behind.

» Instructional services are organized as tiers: Tier 1 provides high-quality core instruction for all students; Tier 2 focuses on supplemental small-group instruction for struggling students based on screening results or weak classroom progress; and Tier 3 delivers one-on-one tutoring focused on a few targeted skills to students who require more intensive intervention.

» RtI systems combine four key components: universal screening for early detection of difficulties, frequent progress monitoring, intensive and systematic instruction to build foundational skills, and differentiation based on data to meet the changing needs of students in all tiers.

» Schools that have implemented RtI frameworks report higher rates of proficiency in reading and math.
Welcome to the overview on Response to Intervention.

“Achievement in reading and mathematics is a national concern. It is critical to the future success of our students.”

“Schools must help all students develop the foundational skills they need to succeed in school and meet the literacy and mathematics demands of work and college.”

“Many of our students are not getting the help they need. As a result, they fall below the proficient level in reading comprehension on national assessments and do poorly on international comparisons of mathematics performance. We’re looking for a systemwide approach to getting targeted help to students before they start to fall behind.”

“Some districts and schools in my state have started to implement Response to Intervention frameworks, and they’re reporting success with higher rates of proficiency in reading and math.”

What is Response to Intervention, and how can it help improve instruction for students at your school?

Response to Intervention, or RtI, is a comprehensive early detection prevention and support system that identifies students who are potentially at risk and assists them before they fall behind. The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 108-446) allows states to use a process based on a student’s response to research-based interventions to determine if the child has a specific learning disability and provide additional supports. Although many states have already begun to implement RtI in the area of reading, RtI initiatives for mathematics are relatively new.
RtI is a coordinated, multi-tier intervention system that is grounded in high-quality instruction supplemented by intensive interventions for students who may struggle with reading and mathematics. In practice, by using RtI systems, districts have reduced inappropriate referrals to special education, especially of ethnic minority students, low-income students, and students who may have received inadequate instruction.

In RtI, instructional services are organized as tiers. Typically, RtI has three tiers, although some systems may have more.

**Tier 1** refers to high-quality core instruction for all students.

**Tier 2** provides supplemental small-group instruction focused on building foundational skills for students with learning needs either based on the results of screening or weak progress in the regular classroom.

**Tier 3** usually entails one-on-one tutoring on a few targeted skills for students who have not progressed after a reasonable amount of time in a Tier 2 intervention and require more intensive assistance.

RtI systems combine four key components to improve instruction for all students, with intensive interventions targeted at struggling students.

Those components are:

1. Universal screening for early detection of difficulties.
2. Frequent monitoring to determine whether students are making adequate progress in an intervention.
3. Intensive and systematic instruction to build foundational skills.
4. Ongoing analysis of student performance data to differentiate instruction to meet the changing needs of students in all tiers.

There are many ways to orchestrate RtI.

Two panels of nationally recognized experts were convened to review the research and provide guidance to schools and districts.

As a result, two practice guides were created offering findings and recommendations for implementing RtI: A guide to providing interventions for primary grade students struggling with reading, and a guide addressing interventions for assisting elementary and middle school students who struggle with mathematics.

To learn more about RtI in reading and mathematics, please visit ies.ed.gov to receive a free download of the practice guides.