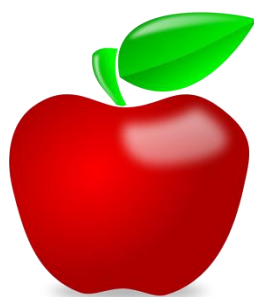


Jasper City Schools

PST FRAMEWORK & PROCEDURES MANUAL



August 2017

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

Purpose

Response to Instruction (RtI) refers to an instructional framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, gifted, supplemental, and special education services by providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that are matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. In Jasper City Schools, RtI combines core instruction, assessment, and intervention within a multi-tiered system to increase student achievement and reduce behavior problems. The core principles upon which the RtI process for JCS is built are as follows:

- Students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in their general education setting by qualified staff.
- Use of a multi-tiered model of service delivery facilitates differentiated instruction and early intervening services for struggling learners.
- Movement between tiers should be guided by a data-driven decision-making process.
- Universal screening and progress monitoring are the basis for instructional decisions.

Description of Tiered Instruction

In terms of the multi-tiered model for service delivery, JCS implements the 3-tier model where students progress through a continuum of services focusing on providing quality core instruction in Tier I, targeted interventions in Tier II, and intensive interventions in Tier III. Each of these tiers may include both academic and behavioral programs and interventions. The expectation in this tiered approach is that all teachers in grades PreK through twelve will provide high quality, research-based core instruction that follows best practice and the Alabama Quality Teaching Standards. When student performance data indicate that the core instructional program is not effective in supporting students in reaching desired levels of success, early intervention strategies (Tier II) will be implemented in an effort to prevent the need for longer term, more intensive interventions (Tier III). A problem-solving process will be used to assist the classroom teacher in designing and selecting strategies for improving student academic and/or behavior performance. The purpose of the problem-solving process is to identify and implement academic and behavior intervention strategies that have a high probability of success. Teams should refer to the *PST Flowchart*, which clarifies procedures and decision points within each tier.

Tier I – the core instructional program all students receive. These core instructional and behavioral support programs are research-based and implemented with all students. Sound methodologies, including the use of formative assessment practices and differentiated instruction, offer the best opportunity for all students to succeed in the core academic program. Students who fall short of grade level benchmarks may be referred to the PST for Tier II

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

interventions. If 20% or more students are not achieving academic standards or behavioral expectations, then consider core curriculum needs, instructional support, and emphasis on well-delivered, scientific, research-based instruction.

Tier II – designed for students who are not adequately progressing in Tier I instruction. These interventions provide additional attention, focus, and support, and are typically delivered by the classroom teacher in the general education classroom. Tier II interventions should begin after students are identified through screening or benchmark assessments, followed by regular monitoring by the PST team. Tier II instruction is aligned with the Tier I core program and includes more opportunities for modeling, examples, corrective feedback, and student practice. Students who continue to fall short of grade level benchmarks may require Tier III interventions.

Tier III – designed for students who are not responding to Tier II instruction and interventions. These interventions are intended for students with significant deficits or underachievement. Tier III interventions are ideally provided by a specialized teacher, paraprofessional, or general education teacher who is highly trained in the program/specialty used. Materials and strategies include specialized, evidence-based interventions determined by the needs of the students and implemented with fidelity. Instruction includes more opportunities for modeling, examples, corrective feedback, and student feedback. Students who continue to fall short of benchmarks despite intensive Tier III intervention may be considered for Special Education referral.

PST Functions & Duties

Team Members and Responsibilities

The Problem Solving Team (PST) will be the primary decision-making unit at the school level. This team will meet on regularly scheduled intervals to review student data and document progress. Recommendations for student inclusion into Tier II and Tier III interventions will be based on an analysis of the student's profile by this team. The members of each PST are determined by the school but include, at a minimum, the school principal or assistant principal, an academic teacher from each grade level, a special education teacher, an intervention teacher (if applicable), and a student support staff member (i.e. counselor, etc.). In general, the PST as a group works to ensure the following responsibilities are met:

- Academic and behavior screening data are gathered and utilized, as well as other important information to determine student needs for interventions and to verify the effectiveness of the school's Tier I instruction.
- Tiers of scientific, research-based instruction and intervention are provided with consistency.
- Decisions to move students through the tiers are made with consistency based on the school system's established criteria.

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

- Screening data and additional assessment data are used in selecting specific interventions to meet individual student intervention needs.
- An intervention plan, which includes appropriate and measurable intervention goals, is established for each student based on the intervention strategy used.
- Appropriate progress monitoring tools are selected to measure the student's response to the intervention.
- Student progress monitoring is conducted on a schedule specified by the school or school system.
- Parents of students receiving intervention are provided with proper notifications and regular data-based intervention progress reports.
- As students transition out of interventions as a result of academic or behavior gains, their progress continues to be monitored for a reasonable period to ensure a smooth transition into tiers of reduced instructional or behavioral support.

Teams should refer to the *PST Roles and Assignment* chart, which further clarifies the duties and responsibilities of each PST member. A *PST Meeting Sign-In & Minutes* form must be signed by all team members with minutes documented at each PST meeting. A copy of this form must be sent to the Central Office monthly.

Intervention Folders

One of the primary responsibilities of the PST is the collection of appropriate forms and documentation of student data. The work of the team should be documented by materials included in an Intervention Folder for each student. This folder should include, at a minimum, the documents listed below for all students in Tiers II and III.

- *PST Referral Parent Notification*
- *PST Progress Monitoring Parent Notification*
- *PST Student Intervention Plan (SIP)*
- *PST Referral Form – Academic or Behavior*
- *Vision/Hearing Screening Consent Form* (and screening results)
- *Administrative Walkthrough* forms
- *PST Transition Report* (completed at end of school year for transitioning students)

Parent Notification

An important part of the tiered instruction framework is the manner in which the PST communicates with and reports to parents/guardians about the progress of their student. All schools in the district will provide notification to parents/guardians when a student is in need of tiered intervention support by the PST. In addition to this *PST Referral Parent Notification* letter, PSTs must provide progress monitoring updates to parents throughout the intervention process. The *PST Progress Monitoring Parent Notification* letter must be sent at least every 4 ½ weeks (to correspond with grade reporting intervals). If the parent does not return a letter, you should keep on file at least 2 documented attempts to notify parents of referral or progress monitoring.

Referral to Special Education

If, after documented Tier II and III interventions have proven unsuccessful, the PST may consider a referral to special education for evaluation. A copy of the student's Intervention Folder should be given to the special education case manager, along with a completed classroom observation in the area of difficulty. The PST continues documenting the Tier III intervention process while special education conducts the evaluation. If the child qualifies for special education, the student then exits PST and the tracking log is completed. If the student does not qualify for special education services, PST resumes the intervention process.

Tracking Log and Annual Reporting

Each PST must maintain a tracking log to document each student referred to the team for instructional or behavioral interventions. The *PST Tracking Log* was deliberately constructed to not only document individual student's general information, but to also assist the PST when it is time to complete the Jasper City Schools *PST Annual Report*. This report is submitted at the end of each school year to the JCS central office.

Administrative Walkthrough

A critical component of any successful intervention plan is the fidelity with which it is delivered. The PST administrative walkthrough is a means of accountability and helps generate constructive communication regarding instruction and intervention delivery, behavior management, and the classroom environment. Principals or Assistant Principals are required to complete the *PST Tier II Walkthrough* or *PST Tier III Walkthrough* form on each student at least once per intervention period and address areas of strength/need with the classroom teacher. A copy of each walkthrough should be kept in the Intervention Folder as documentation.

Transition Report

It is possible for students to be in the middle of an intervention period when they transition out of a particular school (i.e. withdrawal from school, transition to next grade-appropriate school for the following year). The *PST Transition Report* must be completed on every transitioning student who is on the tracking log and currently receiving tiered instruction. A copy of this Transition Report should be sent to the new school to inform them of the student's Rtl status and intervention plan.

Tiered Support Components

Universal Screening

Universal screening is a process to identify students with deficits who may benefit from academic or behavioral interventions. The universal screening process generates objective information on student performance levels to support data-based decision making regarding the need for tiered intervention and support. Universal screening is accomplished through the use of specific assessment tools designed to screen the entire school population or through a multiple criterion approach that considers students' performance data from courses taken, state assessment information, and

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

other curriculum-based measures as appropriate for the student. Each school in the JCS system should consider their specific needs and choose their own universal screening procedures.

Progress Monitoring

Teachers collect progress monitoring data on referred students and provide this data to the PST via the grade-level representative. The PST monitors student progress to determine the degree to which the student has moved toward adequate achievement of grade-level standards, behavioral/social expectations, or individualized goals.

Data is essential to the decision-making process to determine the success of interventions. Progress monitoring for students in Tier II should be conducted at least two times per month (every other week). Students receiving Tier III interventions should be progress monitored on a weekly basis.

Duration of Instructional Support

The length of time a student spends engaged in Tier II and Tier III interventions will be dependent upon the success being demonstrated by the student in that particular intervention. Considerations will be as follows:

- The initial implementation of tiered intervention should be a term of 4-8 weeks. This time may be modified by the PST based on student progress data.
- If, after a minimum period of 8-12 weeks, the student is not making expected gains as determined by the PST, the student may be referred to the next tier. In some circumstances, if an intervention shows no sign of impacting student performance in a positive way in 4 weeks, that intervention may be abandoned or intensified or the student may be transitioned to a different tier. In either case, an appropriate and significant collection of data must be present to support the decision to move to the next tier.
- If, after a minimum period of 8-12 weeks, the student shows significant gains as determined by the PST, the student may be referred to a lower tier. In some circumstances, a shorter time frame may be used to transition to a lower tier based on an appropriate and significant collection of data to support that decision.
- If students are referred for evaluation under IDEA and found ineligible, then tiered instruction will continue as determined by the PST.
- If a student with an IEP is no longer eligible for special education services, the IEP team, in collaboration with the PST, will determine if the student transitions to Tier II or Tier III interventions.
- A student who is in Tier III at the end of a school year should strongly be considered for intervention at the start of the next school year. During transition years, schools will communicate information about Tier II and Tier III students to the school that students will attend the following year using the *PST Transition Report* form.

Best Practice Recommendations

Tiered Instruction

The following recommendations are not requirements for the PST at individual schools. However, they can provide support in defining instructional decision making.

- Tier II interventions are typically delivered inside the regular classroom concurrently with Tier I instruction.
- Tier II interventions are typically provided in 3-5 sessions per week in time intervals of 30 minutes per session.
- Tier III interventions are typically delivered in individual or small group sessions, outside of the regular classroom setting, ideally by a staff member who has received specialized training.
- Tier III interventions are typically provided in 4-5 sessions per week in time intervals of 30-60 minutes per session.

Intervention vs. Accommodation

Quality, research-based interventions will be delivered to students in a comprehensive fashion in order to address the specific gap that has been identified. It is important that educators and the PST recognize the difference between interventions and accommodations and focus their work on the development of scientifically-sound, research-based intervention plans and not merely accommodations.

- Interventions are designed to improve student skills.
 - ✓ The student who struggles with reading may become more proficient in reading as the result of effective reading interventions (i.e. systematic, sequential multisyllabic word phonics exercises which emphasize segmenting and blending syllables; systematic practice in chunking text to facilitate reading with proper inflection and rhythm; structured practice in summarizing text and identifying main ideas and details; utilizing Venn diagrams or other graphic organizers to compare and contrast aspects of vocabulary terms which are essential for text comprehension; etc.).
 - ✓ The student who struggles with math may become more proficient in math as the result of effective math interventions (i.e. structured daily practice in building fluent retrieval of basic arithmetic facts; guided practice in working with visual representations of mathematical ideas; daily guided practice in identifying common underlying structures in word problems; verbalization of thought processes during problem solving exercises; etc).
 - ✓ The student with behavioral difficulties may decrease inappropriate behaviors as the result of effective behavior interventions (i.e. implementation of a behavior plan or behavior contract; role-play and practice in using refocusing and self-control skills; participation in an anti-bullying curriculum; etc).

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

- Accommodations do not meet the scientific, research-based intervention requirements included in current laws and regulations and should not be considered by the PST. Accommodations are designed to “level the playing field” and are not designed to improve student skills. For example, giving a student a lesser number of options on a multiple choice test is a viable accommodation, but it does nothing to help improve that student’s skill. While accommodations do not improve student skills and are not considered to represent scientific, research-based interventions, any teacher may elect to employ accommodations when accommodations seem to be appropriate for use with any student.
 - ✓ A student may make a better grade on a reading assignment because accommodations were implemented by the teacher (i.e. text was shortened, text was read to the student, extra time was allowed for the student to complete the reading assignment, etc.).
 - ✓ A student may make a better grade on a math test because accommodations were implemented by the teacher (i.e. fewer math problems were presented to the student; extra time was allowed for the student to complete the math assignment; etc.).

Behavioral Interventions

Behavior can have a significant impact on the ability of students to make adequate progress in the academic curriculum. The Rtl framework includes the delivery of interventions for student behavior as an essential component. JCS does not recommend any specific behavior program but recommends processes that are tailored to meet the specific needs of each student who demonstrates a need for intervention in this area.

The list below is not exhaustive but reflects some general processes that may be used at each Tier to address behavioral concerns:

<u>Tier II</u>	<u>Tier III</u>
Classroom Observation	FBA & BIP (revise earlier version if needed)
Indiv. Report Card w/ Rewards	Individual Counseling
Group Counseling w/ School Counselor	Frequent Progress Monitoring
FBA & BIP	Structured Social/Behavioral Programming
Check-in/Check-out System	

Keep in mind that these processes are student specific and may or may not be appropriate for any individual student. Additionally, more than one intervention may be tried in order to find an approach that decreases inappropriate behaviors and/or increases appropriate behaviors. Teams may also choose to increase the frequency or intensity of the same intervention if data indicates the need. It is essential that the PST select an intervention for any student whose behavior is impeding his/her progress or the ability of those around him/her to learn. As with any other aspect of Rtl, data collection is an essential part of the intervention.

Guiding Questions: How to Navigate the RtI Process

Tier I <i>(classroom teacher)</i>	Problem Identification/Analysis	Guiding Questions
	Review any group universal screening data (DIBELS, STAR, grades, office discipline referrals, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was instruction provided as intended? Are 20% or more students not achieving academic standards or behavioral expectations? If so, consider core curriculum needs, instructional support, and emphasis on well-delivered, scientific, research-based instruction.
	Identify students in need of Tier II intervention – the decision to provide additional support is based on a review of all pertinent data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a significant gap between the student’s performance and peer/subgroup performance? What are student’s current grades? What has changed academically or behaviorally during the implementation of the Tier I intervention? Should student be referred for Tier II intervention? Were at least four data points (weeks) collected?
	Complete Referral paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the referring concern? Is it measurable, observable, and reportable? Is the student’s performance significantly below that of grade-level peers? What is the benchmark/expected level of performance? What is the student’s current level of performance (student is reading 30 wpm which is half of what is expected at this grade level)?
	Document parent contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is parent aware of student difficulty? Have you documented parent meetings, notes home, phone calls, etc.?
Tier II <i>(PST)</i>	Problem Identification/Analysis	Guiding Questions
	Notify parent of PST Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has parent signed and returned <i>PST Referral Parent Notification</i>? If parent does not return form, document at least TWO attempts to notify.
	Add student to Tracking Log	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Tier II students must be entered on Tracking Log.
	PST reviews Referral Folder and updated universal screening data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all previously collected data in Tier I Has student made gains or continues to fall behind? What are the student’s current grades?
	Continue SIP documentation and Data Graph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are a sufficient number of data points (weeks) collected? Are interventions in area for which data is available? Are dates and status of progress monitoring documented on SIP? Are team recommendations based on progress monitoring data? (see Decision Guidelines below) Does the Data Graph show student progress toward Performance Goal?
	Determine if intervention plan is working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the rate improved? Has the performance goal been met? Does intervention durations, frequency, or group size need to change? Is intervention targeting the right skill? Is correct assessment tool used for progress monitoring? Does intervention need to change?
	Inform parent of progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is parent aware of student progress? Has parent received <i>PST Progress Monitoring Parent Notification</i>? If parent does not return form, document at least TWO attempts to notify.
Tier III <i>(PST)</i>	Problem Identification/Analysis	Guiding Question
	Review tiered intervention(s) using SIP and Data Graph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were a sufficient number of data points collected? (Tier II-III interventions should be implemented for a minimum of 8-12 weeks.) Was goal clearly related to benchmarks? Were interventions developed in areas for which data is available? Were frequency, focus & progress monitoring dates documented on SIP?

(portions adapted from AL Dyslexia Resource Guide, Alabama Reading Initiative, Auburn City Schools, RTI & DI pamphlet by Helene Hanson, and InterventionCentral.org)

	Determine if intervention plan is working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has rate improved? Has goal been met?• Does intervention durations, frequency, or group size need to change?• Is intervention targeting the right skill?• Is correct assessment tool used for progress monitoring?• Does intervention need to change?
--	---	---