

# Alvarado Independent School District



## Response to Intervention Guidance Document

**2018 – 2019**

**Mission Statement**

*Inspiring and Empowering Learners*

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“RTI challenges the basic premises of some educators by assuming that all students can learn, that all educators will take responsibility for all learners, and that schools will adjust their current environment and practices so that this can occur.”

*Buffum, A., Mattos, M. and Weber, C (2012)*

## Laws Supporting Response to Intervention (RtI)

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB 2001), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA 2015) has expanded accountability for school improvement and increased student progress, including those who struggle to master basic skills in reading and mathematics. The educational approach known as Response to Intervention (RtI) began to gain momentum in 2001, when the Learning Disabilities Summit, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, endorsed its use for identifying learning disabilities. The goal of RtI is to improve academic outcomes for all students by intervening early when any student shows signs of struggling in the general education setting. Researched based instructional and behavioral intervention strategies that are unique to the individual student are assigned and monitored for a duration set of time.

As of November 2017, Senate Bill (SB) 1153, 85th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, changed Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 26.0081 on RtI requirements. The changes now required the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to update the Student Handbook Statement to read:

A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time. If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than *15 school days* after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Changes also require school districts to provide parents with a letter outlining information whenever their child begins to receive intervention strategies. The letter must contain specific requirements of the multiple data sources used to identify the need of RtI intervention, explanation of the intervention and what skills or strategies will be implemented, the duration of the intervention, and progress reports of how their child is performing within the intervention.

### Defining “Response to Intervention”

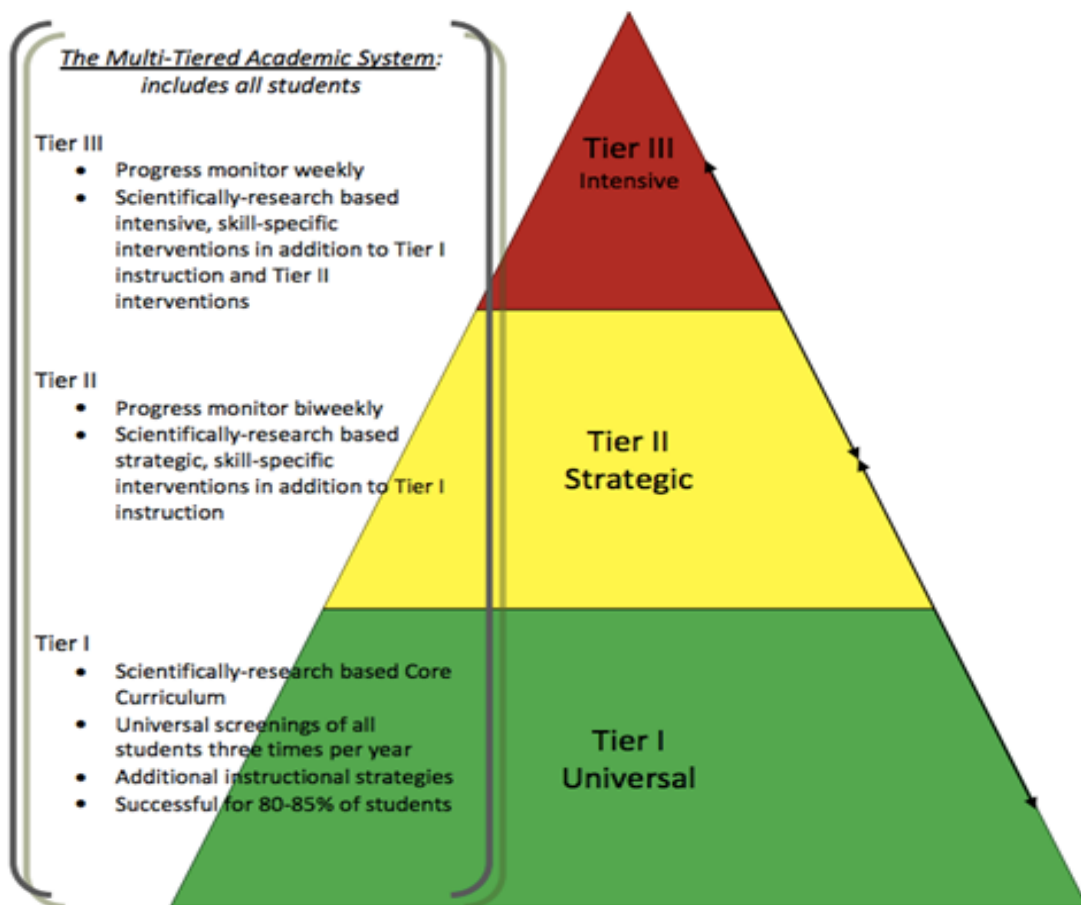
Response to Intervention, or RtI, is an approach to general education that is designed to support all students who struggle both academically and behaviorally. The primary focus of RtI is early intervention to prevent long-term academic failure. Struggling students are identified using data-based progress monitoring and are provided intensive instruction. The use of a scientifically validated curriculum, as well as instructional methods expected in an RtI model, leads to school improvement.

With an RtI approach, the diverse needs of these students must be addressed through a tiered problem-solving system of timely interventions that increase in intensity and duration. **Tier 1** applies to all students, and **Tier 2 and 3** apply to students who need greater levels of intervention. The multi-tier approach helps campus support teams tailor their instruction and services to struggling learners. Support services require collaboration among campus personnel, such as; teachers, special education teachers, dyslexia specialist, counselors, diagnosticians, administrators, parents, students, and any other stakeholder that has legitimate

educational interest in the struggling learner.

Each of the three tiers in the RtI model represents particular methods of assessment, instructional strategies, and interventions targeted to the struggling learner's needs. This educational approach encourages data-based problem solving. The three key elements are as follows:

- High-quality instruction and research-based tiered interventions aligned with individual student need, and
- Frequent monitoring of student progress to enable results-based academic and/or behavioral decisions, and
- Use of student response data in making important educational decisions (such as those regarding placement, intervention, curriculum, and instructional goals and methodologies).



“In any assessment context,...we must start by understanding the information needs of the intended user, those needs will determine the form and frequency of assessment, as well as the level and type of detail required by the results”

*Buffum,A., Mattos, M. and Weber, C (2012)*

## The Major Components of RtI

**Data-based decision making**—Critical educational decisions are based on assessment results. Data are carefully analyzed to determine why academic or behavioral problems exist.

**Universal screening**—Universal screenings are assessments administered to all students to determine as early as possible which students are at-risk of not meeting academic benchmarks. These screenings are administered three times per year (beginning, middle, and end) in order to meet early intervention needs of all students.

**Tiered model of delivery**—The RtI process incorporates a tiered model of delivery of remedial instruction. The tiers reflect increasing intensification of remedial instruction through intervention programs, computerized or teacher delivered, to meet the individual needs of students.

**Progress monitoring**—Frequent measurement of student progress in a brief, repeatable, reliable, and scientifically valid way; usually performed at predetermined intervals to allow for timely modification of instructional design to suit the student’s needs.

**Fidelity of implementation**—The degree to which something is carried out as designed, intended, or planned.

## Characteristics of RtI

- RtI meets the goals of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA 2015) and Senate Bill (SB) 1153 by early identification of struggling learners and providing immediate intervention using scientific, research-based instruction and teaching methods in order to improve academic or behavior outcomes.
- RtI meets the educational needs of all students by providing direct, focused instruction to address specific academic and/or behavioral needs.
- RtI is a preventive approach used to intervene early when students show signs of not meeting grade-level standards.
- RtI generates high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student’s needs.
- RTI uses the student’s learning rate and level of performance to make educational decisions in Professional Learning Communities (PLC).
- RtI data is used at Student Support Team meetings (SST) when a student is not responding to Tier 3 intensive interventions.
- RtI provides data that is used in the identification of students with specific learning disabilities, as opposed to the traditional discrepancy model used to determine eligibility for special education services.

*“The fundamental purpose of response to intervention is to provide every child with the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels.”*

*Buffum, A., Mattos, M. and Weber, C (2012)*

# The Three Tiers of Rtl

## Tier 1

Tier 1 is the foundation of the Rtl instructional model. In this tier, all students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the general education setting. Teachers deliver high-quality core class instruction that is aligned with state standards and in which 80% or more of the students are successful.

Students in grades K–12 will be screened, at least three times a year with a valid and reliable reading and mathematics universal screener, to determine areas where intervention is needed. Students will be identified as “at risk” and assigned a Tier if they score below the district cut score on the universal screener. Teachers will differentiate instruction in grade-level classes and will monitor the progress of all students via documentation of universal screening, daily assignments, teacher observations, common TEKS based assessments (CTBA), and individual student results on state assessments.

## Tier 2

The campus PLC team will increase support to Tier 2 for students who are not making academic progress at Tier 1, typically 15–20% of all students. Students are identified for individualized instruction delivered by computer-assisted learning (IStation, Reading Plus, and IXL Math) in addition to core class instruction.

Students who are performing at Tier 2 will receive strategic instruction as follows:

<b>Grades</b>	<b>Tier 2 intervention delivery</b>
K-6	Minimum of 30 minutes, 3 times a week, for a 6-week period, total of 90 minutes of computer instruction. If a student is Tier 2 reading and math, they will receive a total of 180 minutes per week of computer intervention time.
7-8	Minimum of 40 minutes, twice a week, for a 6-week period, total of 80 minutes of computer instruction. If a student is Tier 2 reading and math, they will receive a total of 160 minutes per week of computer intervention time.
9-12	Minimum of 20 minutes, 3 times a week, for a semester. If a student is Tier 2 reading and math, they will receive a total of 60 minutes every two weeks of computer intervention time.

### Tier 3 (Intensive)

Students who have not responded adequately to classroom instruction, Tier 1 and computer intervention in Tiers 2 will move to Tier 3 and receive intensified, comprehensive small group instructional intervention, in addition to their grade-level curriculum. Tier 3 typically addresses the needs of approximately 5% of all students. Tier 3 lessons, will be used during this intensified level of intervention time. These lessons are designed to supplement and enhance Tier 1 instruction.

Grades	Tier 3 intervention delivery
K-6	Tier 2 intervention plus an additional 30 minutes of teacher led instructional lessons/strategies in a small group or one-on-one. If a student is Tier 3 reading and math, they will receive a combination of teacher led instruction per week.
7-8	Tier 2 intervention plus 40 minutes of teacher led instructional lessons/strategies in a small group or one-on-one. If a student is Tier 3 reading and math, they will receive a combination of teacher led instruction per week.
9-12	Minimum of 20 minutes, 3 days a week, for a semester. If a student is Tier 3 reading and math, they will receive teacher delivered instruction for total of 60 minutes every two weeks of intervention time.

#### Interventions should be:

- Timely – as soon as student shows a need
- Targeted – directly aligned with student need and content standards
- Directive – mandatory during the school day

Tiers are not destinations.

Tiers are not labels.

Tiers describe level of instructional support.

Tiers define a school’s collective response on behalf of students.

*“RTI is the work that schools do to provide timely, targeted, and certain access to the additional time and support that students need in order to master key learning targets and essential standards”*

*Buffum, A., Mattos, M. and Weber, C (2012)*

# Alvarado ISD

## Response to Intervention

### Researched-Based Instructional Resources

Universal Screeners	Math- Universal Screener	Grade	Universal Screener	Reading- Universal Screener	Grade
	IXL	K-10		Renaissance STAR	K-12
Tier 2 Math Intervention	Computerized Instruction	Grade	Tier 2 Reading Intervention	Computerized Instruction	Grade
	IXL	K-10		Station	K-6
	Math Facts in a Flash	K-3		Reading Plus	7-12
	Khan Academy	4-8		Lexia Core 5	K-3
Tier 3 Math Intervention	Small Group- Teacher Directed lessons	K-12	Tier 3 Reading Intervention	Small Group- Teacher Directed lessons	K-12
	Tutoring	K-12		Tutoring	K-12

## Sources of Rtl Data

- Universal Screener (Renaissance STAR and IXL)
- Progress Monitor Data (IStation, STAR Plus, and IXL)
- K-3 Standards-Based Report Card
- 4-12 Report Card
- High School Credits Earned
- Attendance
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments
- CTBA
- Previous Year's STAAR or EOC Scores (if applicable)
- TELPAS
- IEP Report
- Behavior Records
- Health Records
- Retention Records

# District RtI Decision-Making Guide

<p><b>Tier 1:</b>  <b>Reading universal screening: Beginning of Year, Middle of Year, and End of Year</b>            Reading Renaissance for grades K-12  <b>Math universal screening: Beginning of Year, Middle of Year, and End of Year</b>            IXL Math</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Principal/administrator chairs a meeting with the campus PLC team. Data is analyzed to identify data trends for students whose scores fall below the cut score. PLC team consults with teachers regarding curriculum and instructional practices.</li> <li>● Teachers implement core curriculum and classroom interventions.  <b>Decision point: Any time.</b> Identify students who continue to score below the cut score on core curriculum assessments. Present data at PLC meetings to discuss possible move to Tier 2.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 2: 4 or 6 week Duration</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule computer-assisted learning, to be delivered in a 30 or 40 minute session, <b>2 or 3 times per week (60 or 90 minutes, depending on grade)</b>. If the student is in Tier 2 for both reading and math, total computer instruction time is 120 or 180 minutes.</li> <li>● Discuss intervention effectiveness and problem-solve, as needed, in PLC.</li> <li>● Increase progress monitoring to once a month.  <b>Decision point: week 4-6.</b> Reconvene the PLC team and analyze the data collected. If the learning rate has increased, continue the intervention or exit to Tier 1. If not, begin Tier 3 intervention.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 3: Intensive interventions: 3 week Duration</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase intensity of intervention to a 30-45 minute session in addition to Tier 2.</li> <li>● IStation Tier 3 lessons will be used for small group instruction as outlined in the program.</li> <li>● Discuss intervention effectiveness and problem-solve, as needed, in PLC.</li> <li>● Group size is 3 - 5 (all grade levels).</li> <li>● <b>Increase progress monitoring to 2 times per month.</b>  <b>Decision point: week 2.</b> If the learning rate has increased, continue the intervention or exit to Tier 2. If the learning rate has not increased, discuss alternative supports at PLC meeting or refer to campus administrator for Student Support Team (SST) meeting.</li> </ul>

Pre-kindergarten - twelfth grade are on the continuum of service delivery for RTI. RTI is a process used by educators to help students who are struggling with a skill or lesson. Every teacher (PK-12) will use interventions (a set of teaching procedures) with any student to help them succeed in the classroom.

RtI is not designed to be a pre-referral to Special Education. Moving a student into Tier 3 does not automatically generate a referral for a multidisciplinary assessment. However, if a student continues to show a significant lack of progress in learning rate despite all of the Tier 2 and 3 interventions, and the fidelity of the intervention plan has been documented, then that would indicate that a referral to Special Education for further assessments needs to be considered.

## District Non-negotiables

- The district will have a Rtl team that monitors the Rtl process.
- Each campus will have a designated Rtl representative that will monitor the progress of the Rtl and facilitate SST meetings.
- Universal screenings will be administered, at least, three times a year (Beginning, Middle, and End of Year) to all students in grades K–12, according to the district schedule.
- Interventions will be implemented with fidelity.
- PLC meetings will be held with documented meeting minutes to discuss the identification and intervention placement of Rtl students.
- Data will be collected, by teachers and administrators, and reviewed at regularly scheduled meetings to ensure fidelity of Rtl model and/or to tweak student intervention plan.
- Student intervention plans will be reviewed every 6 weeks.
- IStation lessons will be used for Tier 3 reading students, in small group instruction.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the purpose of the Rtl team?

The purpose of a Rtl team is to collaboratively disaggregate student data according to the Rtl model adopted by the district. The purpose of the team is to make data-based decisions regarding students who are experiencing difficulties in academic and/or behavioral domains. The team will develop an intervention plan to promote improvement in the student's academic performance and/or classroom behavior and will provide the teacher with support to implement the interventions. Teachers will be provided support and resources needed to implement interventions at each of the three Rtl tiers.

### Who is on the Rtl team?

Each campus will have a Professional Learning Team (PLC) that will meet regularly at specified dates and times. The team is accountable for the Rtl process and is multidisciplinary, including an administrator, a counselor, a diagnostician, a classroom teacher or teachers, and anyone else with educational interest of students being discussed.

**Campus Administrator**—Participation by an administrator is key to the PLC team's effectiveness. The administrator's responsibilities include the following:

- Examining existing data, such as grades, attendance records, cumulative folder, and discipline folder; maintaining documentation of student progress
- Consulting with the school nurse and other staff for feedback
- Maintaining communication between the team members, the principal, teachers, and parents (include students at the secondary level)
- Approve and attend additional meetings when deemed necessary (student Support Team – SST meetings)
- Ensuring that the Rtl process is monitored and evaluated for effectiveness
- Participating in a district-wide Rtl planning committee

**Teacher**— The Teacher gathers information, organizes the presentation of data for PLC meeting, manages data reports on interventions, and plots student progress. All students identified within the Rtl process need to be monitored so that the intervention outcome can be measured (This monitoring is the responsibility of the assigned Campus Administrator).

- The teacher\* is responsible for the following:
  - \*Elementary and Intermediate – Content Teacher
  - \*Junior High and High School – Intervention Teacher (FLEX or Pow Wow)
- Gather and examine existing data, such as grades, attendance records, cumulative folder, and discipline folder; maintaining documentation of student progress to determine the outcome of the Rtl plan
- Create a *Student Tier Report* for the campus PLC team, highlighting the effectiveness of the instructional support plan for individual students, as well as the overall student process
- Maintain communication between the team members, the principal, teachers, and parents (include students at the secondary level)
- Schedule and attend additional meetings when deemed necessary (student Support Team – SST meetings)
- Monitor the intervention process as indicated in the Rtl Guidance Document

### **Who conducts the campus-wide screening process?**

The campus PLC team is responsible for overseeing the universal screening process. Universal screenings will be conducted on every student. The classroom teacher or other school personnel conduct the screenings and report the results to the campus PLC team. Careful documentation of screening results is important for accurate identification of students' needs. If the results of universal screening suggest that an individual student is performing below standards, then interventions by the classroom teacher need to be developed and implemented at Tier 1. District-approved interventions are used to prevent students from failing to meet academic and/or behavioral expectations and thus requiring more intensive interventions. The goal of district-approved interventions is to proactively teach and support desired academic and social behavior for all students. Confidentiality must be safeguarded, although district-approved screening records should be accessible to teachers and staff who work with a student. *Note: Universal screening is not considered to be an individual evaluation and therefore does not require prior parental notice or consent.*

### **What happens during Tier 1?**

- All students are provided high-quality core instructional and behavioral supports in the general education setting.
- Universal screenings of mathematics and reading are administered to all students by a team of school personnel and/or the classroom teacher to determine each student's level of proficiency.
- A team approach is used to analyze and screen data to identify any problem areas in the curriculum, instruction, the environment, or learners.
- Using the problem-solving model, the PLC team defines the problem in concrete,

measurable terms.

- Differentiated instruction is used within the classroom, and student response to the instruction is monitored.
- Adjustments in instructional strategies for all students in the classroom are reflected through whole-group and small-group differentiated instruction.
- Identified students are provided interventions based on data from ongoing assessments.
- Identified students receive interventions usually in small, teacher-led. The intervention occurs during the regular school day in the general education classroom with a review of student progress every 6 weeks.
- Campus administrators monitor the fidelity and integrity of classroom instruction and interventions.

### **What critical areas need to be addressed in Tier 1 classroom interventions?**

The Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and SB 1153 require the use of interventions and instruction based on scientific research. Both acts require effective reading and mathematics instruction that results in improved student performance and a reduction in the number of students needing special education services. Essential components for reading are phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, phonics instruction, and fluency, and those for mathematics are mathematics calculation and problem solving.

### **What happens during Tier 2?**

- Tier 2 instruction/interventions are delivered inside the classroom or in a pull-out setting outside the classroom to students who are not achieving state and grade-level standards through core instruction and district-approved Tier 1 interventions.
- Identified students are provided with research-based interventions based on data from ongoing assessments.
- Computerized reading and/or mathematics software provides individualized instruction, based on student data and observations.
- Students with similar instructional needs are grouped together, limiting the size of the group according to the intensity of instruction needed.
- Identified students in grades K–10 receive interventions in small groups during the regular school day for a six-week period.
- Campus administrators monitor the fidelity and integrity of classroom instruction and interventions.
- Instruction is adjusted, based on each student’s response to the provided intervention.
- Interventions and student progress are documented in the Tier 2 intervention plan.
- A progress-monitoring tool is used to identify which students continue to need assistance and to determine the specific kinds of skill deficits that must be addressed.
- The collaborative PLC team analyzes assessment data, determines the progress that has or has not been made, develops individualized interventions, monitors interventions, and identifies students who need further support provided at Tier 3.

### **What happens during Tier 3?**

- Individualized instruction is provided in addition to core instruction in the general education

classroom.

- Multiple interventions and services are delivered by specially trained staff.
- The student-teacher ratio is reduced.
- The intensity and frequency of support services are adjusted as students achieve targeted skills. Students continue to move fluidly between and among the tiers.
- Instructional time is increased.
- Student progress is tracked biweekly, using progress-monitoring tools to determine intervention effectiveness and the students' response to the intervention(s).
- Campus administrators monitor the fidelity and integrity of classroom instruction and interventions.

## Common RtI Abbreviations and Terms

<b>CBM</b>	Curriculum-based measurement
<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
<b>IEP</b>	Individualized education plan
<b>LD</b>	Learning disability
<b>NCLB</b>	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
<b>PBS</b>	Positive behavior support
<b>RtI</b>	Response to Intervention

**academic engagement time** The amount of time a student is actively participating in instruction (excluding transition times).

**aimline** A visual representation (line) on a progress-monitoring graph that connects the baseline data point to the outcome goal.

**baseline data point** An initial score that indicates a student's skill level before intervention; the starting point in curriculum-based measurement of the student's response to the intervention.

**behavior action plan** A plan designed by the campus RtI team to teach appropriate behavior strategies and responses to students.

**benchmark** An assessment of group performance against a standard at defined points in time to measure progress toward meeting the standard.

**case facilitator** An RtI committee member assigned to consult with staff regarding a student's needs and interventions.

**clinical utility** The capacity to make a decision possible, based upon the data presented.

**common assessments** Assessments created by a team of educators for identifying students who need additional time and support and for designing instructional strategies to promote skill acquisition.

**core curriculum** Instructional content that specifies skills aligned with grade-level state standards that must be addressed.

**curriculum-based measurement (CBM)** Any set of assessment procedures that uses direct observation and recording of a student's performance in a local curriculum to gather information for making instructional decisions.

**cut score** Within RtI, a preset score against which assessment results can be compared to help RtI teams identify struggling learners.

**data-based decision making** The process of analyzing assessment data to determine why a student's academic or behavioral problem exists and then deciding on a research-based strategy to address the specific problem.

**differentiation of instruction** An approach to teaching and learning in which students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and demonstrating their understanding; requires teachers to be flexible in adjusting their methods and the curriculum to suit students, rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum.

**fidelity** The degree to which something is carried out as designed, intended, and planned.

**fluency** An acceptable level of mastery of a skill.

**formative assessment** A dynamic aspect of the instructional process that provides

information for making timely adjustments to enhance learning; considered integral to developing the delivery of instruction by evaluating the delivery and relevance of the curriculum.

**functional behavioral assessment** A collection of information about events that predict and maintain a student's problem behavior; used to construct a behavior action plan.

**instructional level** A level of the curriculum that is challenging to a student, but not so challenging that the student is frustrated.

**intervention** Any process that is intended to increase learning or modify a student's behavior.

**lack of progress** A student's failure to demonstrate expected learning rates relative to the baseline data point after an RtI intervention plan has been implemented with fidelity.

**learning rate** The pace of a student's skill acquisition; one of the elements used for making decisions in RtI.

**multigate system** A system that uses multiple steps and indicators for identifying students who are at risk for emotional and behavior problems.

**norm-referenced assessment** A measure of performance in terms of an individual's standing in some known group, such as all of a district's students at a particular grade level.

**outcome goal** The targeted goal of an intervention plan.

**probes** In terms of progress monitoring and curriculum-based measurement, refers to brief repeated assessments of an academic skill.

**progress monitoring** Frequent measurement of student progress in a brief, repeatable, reliable, and scientifically valid way; usually performed at predetermined intervals to allow for timely modification of instructional design to suit the student's needs.

**research-based strategies** Instructional designs and recommendations that have been demonstrated through formal scientific research to improve learning.

**RtI model** A conception of the process known as Response to Intervention for delivering research-based instruction and interventions to facilitate student learning.

**RtI standard protocol** A method of problem solving that provides structure for choosing appropriate standard interventions to address the most common student weaknesses.

**summative assessment** Assessment that is used to give a grade to a student; a measure of cumulative student learning, such as an end-of-semester exam or a state-mandated test.

**three-data-point decision rule** A decision-making rule within the RtI problem-solving process that analyzes three consecutive progress-monitoring data points against the expected goal (must have a minimum of nine data points).

**universal screening** A type of assessment administered to all students to determine, as early as possible, which students are likely to experience difficulty learning, due to a lack of foundational skills. Universal screenings are used as predictors of success within a grade level and are administered three times per year in order to meet early-intervention needs of all students.

## Resources

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