



Rankin County School District

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

BRANDON FLORENCE McLAURIN NORTHWEST PELAHATCHIE PISGAH PUCKETT RICHLAND

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Optimizing Success for Every Child



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Incorporating the procedural requirements of:
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
Title II – Americans with Disabilities Act
Mississippi State Board of Education Policy



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Three Tier Instruction Manual

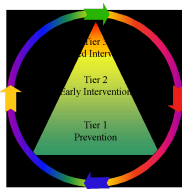
This manual is designed to assist schools in implementing the Tier 3 Instructional Model. The manual will define and discuss the essential elements needed for implementation of this process.

Introduction

RCSD MANUAL
RTI Defined
3 Tiers of Support
Implementation
Resources

The goal of the Three Tier Model is to provide evidence-based interventions that meet the specific academic and/or behavioral needs of a student. A team consisting of the classroom teacher, school intervention specialist, counselor, administrator, and other relevant educators utilize a structured process to identify the concern, analyze the concern, and develop a goal and intervention plan for the student. The on-going collection of data, known as progress monitoring, is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

Response to Intervention, (RTI) broadly speaking, is the practice of using evidence-based interventions matched to a student’s needs to make instructional decisions based on his or her progress toward an educational goal. The Mississippi Department of Education has identified Response to Intervention as one of the key priorities for the school year. RTI is incorporated at all three levels of the support system triangle. The three levels or tiers of the support triangle, as seen in Figure 1, represent the increased intensity of intervention needed to enable students to succeed.



“Successful implementation of quality classroom instruction for all students is crucial to the RTI process.”

- Dr. Kris Kaase, Former Deputy Superintendent
Mississippi Department of Education

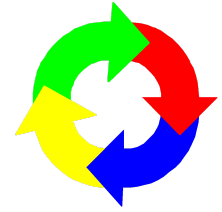
Why use Response to Intervention?

Response to Intervention (RTI) represents a philosophical shift in how schools will go about identifying and responding to students' academic/behavioral difficulties. RTI is a significant opportunity for educators to come together to resolve children's learning problems by focusing first on students' instructional needs and only secondarily on decisions regarding eligibility for special services. RTI requires educators to change how they view student difficulties and disabilities. RTI procedures turn attention away from identifying deficits within the student and toward evaluating student progress over time based on age-based comparisons and rates of learning.

RTI is intended to improve many of the problems associated with the "wait to fail" model. Under those procedures, many students do not receive intervention services until academic concerns become severe. Thus, the RTI process is preferable for the following reasons as it:

- Utilizes scientifically based research materials and methods;
- Uses teacher input in a problem-solving approach;
- Creates a record of instructional interventions to track student progress;
- Creates relationships between assessment procedures and instructional interventions;
- Links assessment and instruction to interventions;
- Implements MDE State Board Policy: IEI "Intervention Process";
- Provides emphasis on prevention and Early Intervening Services;
- Creates a timeline to provide assistance for at-risk students;
- Has been demonstrated to reduce over-identification of minority populations in special education; and
- Addresses the failure of traditional assumptions about treating the underlying cause of learning problems.

With the implementation of RTI, schools no longer have to wait until students fall far enough behind their peers before they receive the kind of instruction they need. At the same time, the process involves an intense case study of each child with repeated assessments over time, which should reduce decision errors when the data are applied correctly in making eligibility decisions. Finally, because assessments involve sensitive indicators of instructional effects, the results directly inform educators of strategies that work and do not work with a particular student.



What is the Practice of Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is the practice of: 1) providing *high quality instruction and interventions* matched to student need and 2) *monitoring progress* frequently to 3) *make decisions about changes in instruction* or goals and applying student response data to important educational decisions. (*National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., 2008*)

General Themes as Identified by the Mississippi Department of Education

1. RTI is a process to match the student's needs with educational strategies for success for all.
2. RTI will also provide a mechanism for educational staff with opportunities to learn new and different ways to provide services to children.
3. Finally, RTI is not a **unidirectional** but **bidirectional** process in that any student may move **throughout** the three tiers several times in his or her educational career. However, this is not any indication of a need for special education services.

1) "Providing High Quality Instruction Matched..."

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) both mandate that educators use evidence-based curricula and interventions. This ensures that students are immersed in curriculum and instruction that demonstrate effectiveness in the educational setting. Evidence-based, evidence-validated instruction gives educators the most productive opportunity to implement strategies that will be effective for the vast majority of students.

A universal screening instrument is used to identify each student's level of proficiency. The primary purpose of screening is to identify those students who are likely to have academic or behavioral problems within the school environment and who need appropriate preventative intervention. The screening process takes place at both the elementary and secondary levels. Screening data is analyzed to see if the school's current curriculum and instruction results in high levels of learning for at least 80% of the students. In other words, if 20% or more of students are not responsive to the general curriculum and instruction, identifying a large number of students in need of individual interventions is not warranted. Rather, in this case, the general education curriculum should be examined for possible enhancement.

In the Rankin County School District, schools will universally screen the student population to ensure that struggling students are identified for support and interventions, as needed. At the elementary level, a protocol of screening students has been developed which includes examining

student grade retention, performance on state mandated standardized tests, discipline records, reading, math, and language competency levels. For elementary schools, this protocol is implemented by utilizing the MSIS report, as required by MDE State Board of Education Policy 4300, and by conducting iReady/Star Early Literacy assessments. At the secondary level, a protocol of screening students has been developed which includes examining student grade retention, performance on state mandated standardized tests, discipline records, and previous academic or behavioral deficiencies. For secondary schools, this protocol is implemented by utilizing the MSIS report, as required by MDE State Board of Education Policy 4300, and by conducting a thorough review of student’s cumulative records and D/F reports sent to the District Office. Special attention should be paid to any student who will be or is taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II. Teachers should examine students’ prerequisite skills – iReady/Star Early Literacy scores, reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and mathematical computation. As the Mississippi Department of Education provides local school districts with more information, the aforementioned procedures may be modified.

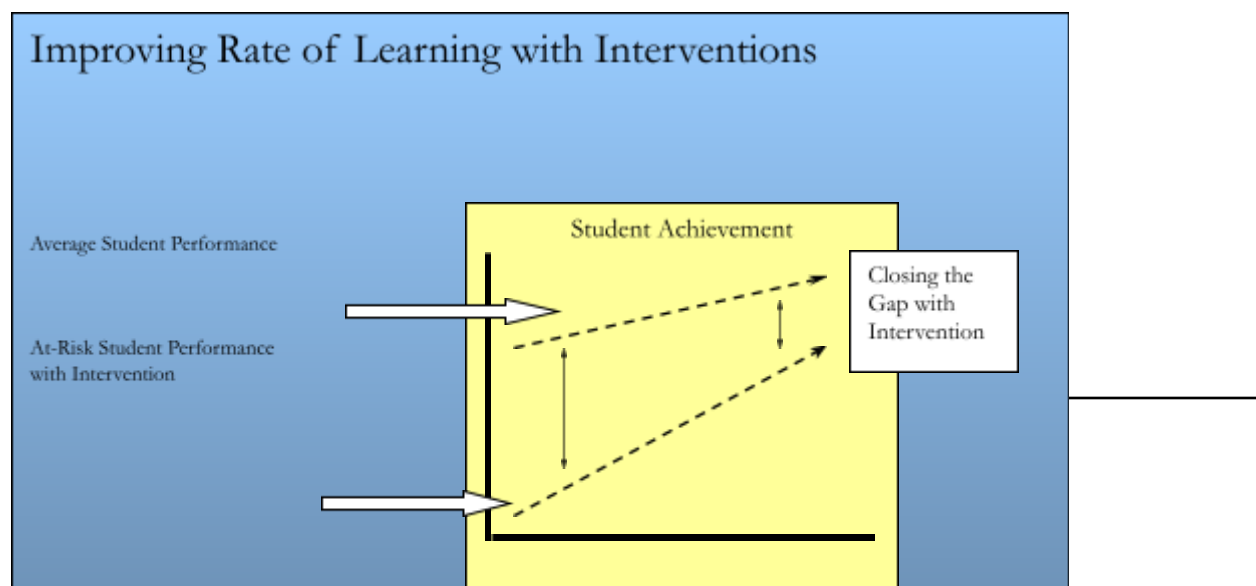
A way to enhance core programming and incorporate high quality instructional practices into the educational environment is to alter the variables educators can control. These variables are the curriculum, effective instructional strategies, and school and classroom environment.

Curriculum - *What is taught:* For students who are achieving below grade level, curricular modifications could be made. These adjustments may include providing modified strategies on grade level or repeated exposure to the curriculum using alternative media.

Instruction - *How the curriculum is taught:* Teachers should make instructional decisions about how to communicate educational expectations to the student, how to activate student’s prior knowledge, which materials to use, and how to give information to the student so that they learn at a higher rate. Teachers should provide differentiated instruction to meet each student’s learning styles and needs.

Environment - *Where the instruction takes place:* All aspects of the physical arrangement of the classroom, classroom rules, behavior management plans, daily routines, and peer influences can be factors to a student’s rate of learning. Important characteristics may include a calm and organized environment, a predictable daily/weekly schedule, modeling and practicing behavior expectations, self-monitoring behavior charts, and providing a 4-to-1 ratio of positive to negative feedback experiences to the students.

2. “Monitoring progress frequently...”



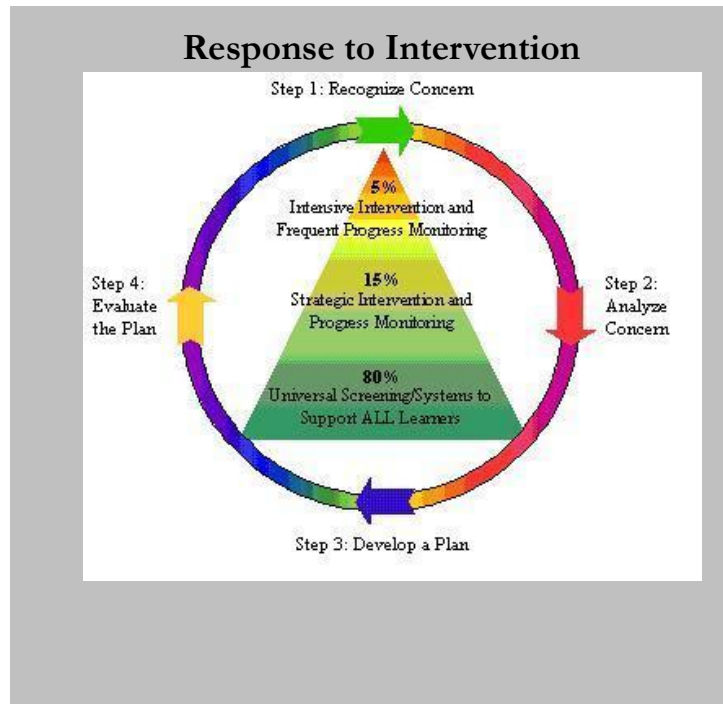
The chart shows the discrepancies or significant differences between the average student performance and the performance of students at-risk of not attaining proficiency. Without intervention, the rate of learning for the at-risk student will become more and more significant, that is the gap will widen from the rate of the proficient group. With evidence-based interventions, the gap between the rates of learning will be narrowed as depicted in Figure 2. These interventions have empirical support in the fields of education and psychology. Progress monitoring of the intervention will measure the rate of progress and growth toward proficiency.

3. “Make Decisions about Changes in Instruction...”

Data is collected and analyzed at the school-wide, classroom, and individual level to make informed decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and environment. Some key sources of information may include universal screener or progress monitoring data. For example, universal tools can assist in the identification of students at-risk and in need of specific interventions. Curriculum based measurements offer educators a reliable progress monitoring tool. When coupled with student grades, portfolios, and work samples, they can provide a thorough method for monitoring student progress.

The Three Tiers of Support

A triangle forms a good visual representation of the RTI model. The whole triangle is representative of the entire student body. The circle around the triangle represents RTI and the four-step data-based decision model. Within the triangle, the three tiers of school support structures needed for students are depicted.



3 Tier 3, or the top of the triangle, represents the intensive support system needed for students requiring intense intervention.

2 The middle of the triangle, Tier 2, represents the support systems of targeted intervention and strategic instruction that are in place for students exhibiting some risk.

1 The lower portion of the triangle, Tier 1, represents the proactive instructional support systems in place that promote healthy development for ALL students to prevent any learning difficulties.

The following explanations represent the intensity of support structures and progress monitoring needed at each tier of the triangle.

Tier 1: Proactive Classroom Instruction and Accommodations/Modifications

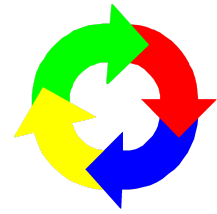
- Support structures are in place for ALL students.
- High quality curriculum and instruction is present for ALL students in core instructional skill areas, coupled with behavioral supports and effective classroom management.
- At least 80% of the students demonstrate responsiveness to school-wide instructional and behavioral practices.
- Universal screening and benchmarking assessment is in place for ALL students.
- Students are identified as “at-risk” and early assistance is given.
- Students in need of support are provided accommodations.
- Instruction and assessments (re-teach and re-test) are modified in an effort to scaffold the level of teacher support needed for student success.

Tier 2: Focused, Supplemental Intervention

- Based on the results of Tier 1 and universal screening data, students identified as “at risk” for academic failure receive academic and/or behavioral interventions for the timeframe specified by the intervention, 3-5 days a week.
- Interventions are prescribed, evidence-based and research-proven.
- Support structures are, typically, for about 10-15% of the student population who are identified at-risk.
- The classroom teacher provides quality instruction, and schedules time and support resources for the intervention to take place. The administrator monitors that the intervention is implemented with integrity and fidelity each 8 weeks.
- Reliable formative assessments, Tier logs, and progress monitoring drive instruction for students receiving interventions are utilized. PM is performed and recorded every other week.

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

- Support structures are in place for about 1-5% of the student population with significant needs requiring intensive academic or behavioral interventions.
- Intensive small group or one-on-one instructional programs for at-risk students are conducted for the timeframe specified by the intervention five times a week.
- Interventions are prescribed, evidence-based and research-proven.
- Weekly progress monitoring guides instruction.



RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION GENERAL FRAMEWORK

Mississippi's model for RTI is a comprehensive, problem-solving, and multi-tiered intervention strategy to enable early identification and intervention for **ALL** students who may be at academic or behavioral risk. The multiple tiers provide increasingly intense student-focused interventions. RTI should be applied to decisions and result in a well-integrated system of instruction with interventions guided by student outcome data. It is a systematic determination of how students respond to curricula and instructional procedures that are:

- Demonstrated in applied research as highly robust in producing improved outcomes for all students;
- Viewed as an educational initiative encompassing general education, remedial education, and special education; and
- Viewed as a school-wide process that requires, as its core, universal screening of all students, the provision of effective instruction in a scientifically based research (SBR) core curriculum, and the provision of immediate interventions based on student needs.

The Mississippi Department of Education is moving forward to support schools in their use of RTI to improve student performance. The hallmarks of Mississippi's Three-Tiered RTI process include the following:

Tier 1 Quality Instruction which describes the school-wide efforts and practices that are available to all students.

Tier I has 14 essential elements including:

- 1) universal screening of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension, if applicable
- 2) universal screening of counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematical fluency, and mathematical reasoning, if applicable
- 3) universal screening for students who will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II
- 4) universal screening of behavior,
- 5) instructional delivery supported by scientifically based research,
- 6) differentiated instruction,
- 7) curricula & instructional materials aligned to state standards,
- 8) classroom and behavior management,
- 9) system of behavioral support (school and district level),
- 10) instructional leadership,
- 11) system of instructional support,

- 12) system of classroom observations to determine integrity of implementation,
- 13) follow-up procedures in place for instructional staff who have not met minimal instructional and behavioral criteria, and
- 14) parental/family and community involvement

Students who are successful at Tier 1 are making expected progress in the general education curriculum and are demonstrating behavioral expectations and social competence. With Tier 1 school-wide practices in place, data should indicate when and where a student is experiencing difficulty.

Tier 2 Strategic, Targeted Intervention is designed for those students who are not progressing or responding to Tier 1 efforts as expected. In these cases, instruction and/or behavior management within the general classroom setting may not be sufficient for these students such that additional targeted interventions and/or supplemental instruction may be necessary.

There are 12 essential elements for Tier 2, which include:

- 1) log of lessons & progress monitoring of the target area(s),
- 2) documentation of progress in target area(s) through a graphical display,
- 3) appropriate decision-making,
- 4) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension,
- 5) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematical fluency, and mathematical reasoning,
- 6) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research for students who will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II,
- 7) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by evidenced based research in behavioral/emotional/social area(s),
- 8) documentation of intervention implementation with integrity;
- 9) system of instructional support,
- 10) system of behavioral support (school and district level),
- 11) instructional leadership, and
- 12) parental/family and community involvement

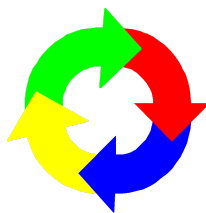
Tier 3 Intensive Interventions are the academic and behavioral strategies, methodologies, and practices designed for students who are having significant difficulties with the established grade-level standards in the general education curriculum or who demonstrate significant difficulties with behavioral and social competence. Tier 3 interventions are more intensive than those in Tier 2 and are

introduced when data suggest that a student has failed to make progress or respond to the interventions in Tier 2 or the rate of progress or growth and level is such that the student is unlikely to close the performance gap. *Students can move straight to Tier 3 if the school can demonstrate through data that the student's current level of performance in academics or behavior is highly discrepant from peers.* State Board Policy 4300 states specifically which students should be referred to the Teacher Support Team

There are 14 essential elements for Tier 3, which include:

- 1) Teacher Support Team, TST process,
- 2) progress monitoring of the target area(s),
- 3) lesson logs, documentation of progress in target area(s) through a graphical display;
- 4) appropriate decision-making,
- 5) intensive intervention and systematic explicit instruction supported by evidenced based research in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension,
- 6) intensive intervention and systematic explicit instruction supported by scientifically based research in counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematical fluency, and mathematical reasoning,
- 7) intensive intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research for students who will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II,
- 8) intensive intervention and supplemental instruction supported by evidence-based research in behavioral/emotional area(s),
- 9) documentation of intervention implementation with integrity,
- 10) system of instructional support,
- 11) system of behavioral support (school and district level),
- 12) instructional leadership,
- 13) parental/family and community involvement, and
- 14) Teacher Support Team outcomes

As noted above, Tier 3 provides the more intensive interventions needed by some students to make progress academically or to demonstrate social competence in the general education setting. However, Tier 3 also represents the stage in the RTI process where educators begin to make decisions that may lead to further evaluation and identification for specialized services for individual students through Special Education.



Tier 1: Quality Classroom Instruction

A part of Tier 1, highly qualified educational staff use scientifically based curriculum and instructional practices that are guided by trained leadership. In addition, all students receive **Academic** as well as **Behavioral** assessment of student progress **three times per year** so that a determination of how to differentiate instruction can be made. Students who are successful at Tier 1 are making expected progress in the general education curriculum and are demonstrating social competence. With Tier 1 school-wide practices in place, data should indicate when and where a student is experiencing difficulty.

Core Components of Tier 1

1. Screening data are collected to determine which students, by grade, have not achieved benchmark skills. The key purpose of the Tier 1 process is to identify students who have not developed the essential skills required for success in their current instructional setting. Data should be collected for the whole class at least three times per year to establish benchmarks and local norms for the school and the district. Elementary schools will use information from the MSIS report and iReady/Star Early Literacy universal screener. Secondary schools will use information from Benchmark assessments, MSIS report, the Middle School Success Predictor, and the High School Graduation Predictor Screener in combination with a review of student academic and behavioral prerequisite skills needed for success.
2. The task set forth in Tier 1 is to upgrade the general instruction in a manner that effectively addresses students' deficits in a whole group setting; thereby aiding in the evaluation of the district's curriculum selection.
3. Steps for successful implementation of a Tier 1 process include the following:
 - a. The process is institutionalized for assessing entire grade levels by trained leadership understanding and ensuring integrity of the instructional components.
 - b. Data is collected three times a year and presented in a user-friendly manner and preferably in a graphical context.
 - c. Students are identified using benchmark scores, and measurable goals are established for the class and students' deficits within the classroom.

- d. The teacher utilizes standardized intervention protocols or engages in problem-solving strategies to address the needs of the students and formulates these in relation to the instruction provided for the entire class.
- e. Teachers, psychologists, principal or others conduct observations to ensure the integrity of instruction, curriculum delivery, and differentiation of instruction in the classroom.
- f. Observations should be conducted of every classroom teacher using the RCSD Tier 1 Classroom Observation Form. Observations are to be conducted when a student is at-risk behaviorally or academically in the area to determine if the elements of Tier 1 are appropriately in place.
- g. Teachers implement the strategies/interventions in the classroom.

The intent of this process is to develop teachers' skills to differentiate instruction for students and succeed with whole class instruction.

Essential Elements of Tier 1

At Tier 1, the MDE has identified 14 essential elements that have been developed to provide guidelines for school districts so that effective Tier 1 strategies and practices are implemented. These elements are: 1) universal screening of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension, if applicable; 2) universal screening of counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematical fluency, and mathematical reasoning, if applicable; 3) universal screening for students will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II; 4) universal screening of behavior; 5) instructional delivery supported by scientifically based research; 6) differentiated instruction; 7) curricula & instructional materials aligned to state standards; 8) classroom and behavior management; 9) system of behavioral support (school and district level); 10) instructional leadership; 11) system of instructional support; 12) system of classroom observations to determine integrity of implementation; 13) follow-up procedures in place for instructional staff who have not met minimal instructional and behavioral criteria; and 14) parental/family and community involvement.

Universal Screening

Universal screening provides a process whereby struggling students are identified and given intervention. Universal screening must be conducted within **the first 30 days** of school to immediately identify those students at risk for school failure. Screening data should be collected for the whole class at least three times per year to establish benchmarks and local norms for the school and the district. Through universal screening, it is possible to examine the number of students in a classroom that are

demonstrating a skill deficit. Consequently, universal screening provides information to evaluate the efficacy of general instruction in the classroom. This would substantiate whether poor instruction and/or core curriculum or educational disadvantage are the culprit of an academic problem.

Grade Levels	Screening Protocol	Implementation	Students Involved
Elementary	*Grade retentions *Standardized test performance *Discipline records *Reading Competency *Math Competency *Language Competency	*MSIS Report * School D&F Reports *iStation (Pre-K-K) *iReady (1-3) *Standards Check(2 nd) *Benchmark (3-6) DTST-Fall/Spring *3 rd Grade Reading assessment, GATE, *MAAP (3-6)	All students in grades K-6
Secondary	*Grade retentions *Standardized test performance *Discipline records *Previous academic deficiencies *Previous behavioral deficiencies	*MSIS Report *Benchmark assessment 7 th -8 th & MAAP/SATP *Review of Cum Records *School D/F Report *(AMOS) *DTST-Fall	Students in grades 7 th -8 th Students taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and/or English II exams.

*As the Mississippi Department of Education provides local school districts with more information, the aforementioned procedures may be modified.

Effective Curriculum and Instruction

The school or district must demonstrate that the appropriate curriculum is in place and delivered with integrity. Additionally, effective classroom instruction consists of classroom management, high student engagement, successful academic experiences, high teacher expectations, high proportion of whole-class teaching, a culture conducive to learning, equal access for all students, and effective questioning

strategies by teachers. Teachers should design the engaged time students have with materials in order to produce successful experiences. For example, changing the materials to a more instructionally appropriate level for a struggling student may create outcomes that are more successful. Teachers will be in need of support in all areas of effective instruction.

Differentiated Instruction

The purpose of differentiated instruction is to react responsively to student differences. These differences include: background knowledge, language, readiness and preferences in learning. The process of differentiated instruction allows educators to provide appropriate instruction for students within the same classroom and meeting the needs of the individual student.

Process

The process used within the classroom is a key element of differentiated instruction. Within the classroom, flexible grouping provides students opportunities to work together and interact with peers. Grouping may be whole-class, small group, or in pairs. These groups are not fixed and may be adjusted by the educational staff based upon student need and project purpose.

Strategies

Strategies associated with differentiated instruction have been shown to have perceived effectiveness with classroom teachers. Teachers have indicated that strategies, such as grouping techniques, utilization of different materials, reinforcing academic attempts, and giving optional oral or written instruction may be effective in the classroom. These strategies, however, differed in perceived use in the classroom. Teachers also indicated that strategies, such as giving systematic feedback, modeling difficult tasks, and using different grouping techniques were more likely to be used within the classroom (Wertheim, 1996). Tomlinson has identified multiple strategies to utilize within the classroom to differentiate readiness and interest. Readiness may be differentiated by incorporating strategies such as tiered assignments, alternative assignments, alternative assessments, learning centers, and anchoring.

Differentiated Instruction Strategies

Strategy for Differentiation	Primarily Used to Differentiate	Example
Tiered Assignments	Readiness	Give assignments for various ability levels.
Tiered Products	Readiness, Interest	Assess projects for various ability levels.
Drilled-focused Cooperative Tasks	Low-end Readiness	Use flash cards to instruct and obtain mastery
Thought/Production Focused Cooperative Tasks	Interest	Allow higher-level students to decipher through a difficult dilemma.
Alternative Assessments	Readiness	Allow student to write a poem rather than take a test on the poem's components.
Graduated Rubrics	Readiness	Develop a plan with a student to reach a particular academic goal by a specified time.
Choice Boards	Readiness, Interest	Give the students a choice between three activities.
Learning Centers	Readiness	Have students do math drills at one center, graph at another, and work on an assignment at another.
Anchoring	Readiness	Allow students to read, write in journals, manage a portfolio, and practice while others are still working on their assignments.

Assessment

The products or outcomes involved in differentiated instruction are key elements in evaluating the process. Within the classroom, initial and ongoing assessments are needed to evaluate the students' readiness and growth. The teacher should utilize interesting and engaging tasks that will challenge the student. Measures to assess student performance may be differentiated based on instruction and allow students to demonstrate mastery of the task in varied ways.

Classroom Management

Classroom management plays vital roles in overall school discipline by creating a school climate and enabling enhanced student achievement. Effective classroom management establishes a learning environment that enables academic and other activities to run and transition smoothly. It also establishes and maintains clear expectations and consequences for behavior, as well as learning goals. Stages of effective classroom management have been identified as the first day, the first few weeks, and throughout the year, and include setting, instructing, rehearsing, and maintaining clear rules, expectations, and consequences.

Behavioral Support

Systems of school-wide positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS) have been utilized in many elementary and middle schools to aid in the reduction of discipline problems as well as to promote positive behaviors and positive school environments. A vital part of classroom and behavior management at Tier 1 is ensuring that a system of behavioral support is implemented at both the school and district level. To meet this element, each school must have a school-wide behavioral support plan that addresses the elements of positive behavior interventions and support.

Instructional Leadership and Support

As the instructional leader, principals have the capacity to create organizational structures that support positive change and a culture of collaboration. Administrators have a tremendous impact on collaborative problem-solving teams. District leadership should provide coordination and implementation between the three tiers of support for teachers. Trained leadership is noted by research as an essential feature throughout the RTI process. Administrators must evaluate teacher classroom instruction, with follow-up discussions, to ensure student performance is positively impacted.

Integrity

The federal regulations require that integrity be demonstrated within all tiers. Integrity, as related to RTI, is defined as assuring that the prescribed instruction or intervention is implemented in the way in which it was designed and intended. Therefore, for Tier 1, school districts must demonstrate that there is effective instruction in place, including differentiated instruction, evidenced based curriculum, and universal screening.

Parental Support

To meet this element, schools should ensure that parental involvement is linked to improving measured student achievement and behavior (e.g., state test scores, universal screening data, and office discipline referrals). Schools should implement a reliable and valid measure of parental/family involvement collected at least once a year; an evidence-based parental involvement component that supports improved student achievement (e.g., notes sent home, tutoring, PTO, homework center, intervention at family level, parent meeting sign-in sheet, school adopters); opportunities for family learning and development (e.g., good nutrition); non-academic activities/gatherings for families; multiple avenues to communicate with parents (e.g., website updates, newsletter, homework hotline, teacher web pages, email); use of parental/family involvement measures to refine the school improvement plan; and parental/community involvement in PBIS efforts.

Tier 2: Focused Supplemental Instruction

For fifteen to thirty percent of students, focused instruction within the regular classroom setting may not be enough. These students require supplemental instruction in the area of academic or behavioral concern within the standard classroom instruction. Supplemental instruction in Tier 2 is designed to meet the needs of these students by providing additional individual instruction, small group instruction, and/or technology assisted instruction to support and reinforce skills being taught by the classroom teacher or appropriate behavioral standards. The responsibility of the outcome and implementation of Tier 2 instruction lies within the **general education teacher**.

Tier 2 Focused, Supplemental Instruction is designed for those students who are not progressing or responding to Tier 1 efforts as expected. In these cases, instruction and/or behavior management within the general classroom setting may not be sufficient for these students such that additional strategic/targeted interventions

and/or supplemental instruction may be necessary. The Mississippi Department of Education has identified 12 essential elements for Tier 2, which include: 1) progress monitoring of the target area(s); 2) documentation of progress in target area(s) through a graphical display; 3) appropriate decision-making; 4) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by evidenced based research in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension; 5) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematic fluency, and mathematic reasoning; 6) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by evidenced based research for students who will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II; 7) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in behavioral/emotional area(s); 8) documentation of intervention implementation with integrity; 9) system of instructional support; 10) system of behavioral support (school and district level); 11) instructional leadership; and 12) parental/family and community involvement.

Supplemental Instruction

The selection and adoption of effective, evidence-based supplemental instructional programs in the schools is a critical step in the development of an effective school-wide initiative. Supplemental programs are used to support and extend the critical elements of core instruction.

A supplemental program may be an appropriate way to strengthen the instruction provided in the core for struggling students. Some students may require intensive instruction that involves changing the core instruction significantly or supplanting it with a supplemental instruction program. Through a combination of examining the adopted core instructional program and considering current levels of student performance, schools can target specific supplemental and intervention programs.

Rankin County School District List of Academic Intervention Programs for Tier 2

An **Intervention TST Committee** must be established for each student involved in the intervention process at the Tier 2 level. This committee should consist of, but is not limited to, the classroom teacher, counselor, school intervention specialist, and school principal. Prior to implementing any intervention program, the Intervention Committee must meet to determine the level of support needed. Additionally, the elementary school intervention specialist or secondary intervention contact person can provide training and support to the classroom teacher on any of the intervention

programs selected for Tier 2. Each intervention program must be implemented appropriately, the way in which it was designed.

Reading	Mathematics
Standards Based Intervention Heggerty Phonics First iReady West Virginia Grade Results	Eureka Math iReady Math XL Envision Math Grade Results

**Rankin County School District
List of Behavior Intervention Programs for Tier 2**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support
Check In/Check Out
Individual and/or Group Counseling
Social Skills Training
Lunch Bunch
Check & Connect

Duration/Intensity of Tier 2 Interventions

The implementation of Tier 2 supplemental instruction is defined largely by the particular instructional or behavioral program used. Tier 2 supplemental instruction must be in place for **8-10 weeks and progress monitored bi-weekly**. However, you must follow the progress monitoring guidelines for the intervention you are implementing.

The goal of supplemental instruction, delivered at Tier 2 as designed, is to make a decision on whether the student can now be successful at Tier 1 with general classroom instruction and/or behavior or needs to remain in Tier 2 for continued support or needs more intensive instruction at the Tier 3 level.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring aids in the decision making regarding the effectiveness of instruction or intervention. Progress monitoring only measures growth. It is not the

intervention. Progress monitoring is conducted frequently, at least twice a week, and is designed to:

- Estimate rates of improvement,
- Identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress and therefore require additional or alternative forms of instruction, and/or
- Compare the efficacy of different forms of instruction and, thereby, design more effective, individualized instructional programs for problem learners.

To investigate whether or not an intervention is working, progress monitoring must occur throughout a student's supplemental instruction. Progress monitoring measures need to have the following characteristics:

- Be time efficient
- Have adequate reliability and validity
- Be content valid, and
- Be sensitive to gains in academic performance (Ardoin, 2006).

In progress monitoring, students' academic and behavioral performance is assessed on a regular basis to determine whether the students are progressing under the strategic/supplemental instruction. After the progress monitoring instrument is administered, the data/results are graphed. This graph should display the current performance level, the long-term goal, and the short-term objective, which tells the teacher how quickly the student needs to progress to achieve the goal. By plotting the student's scores, teachers can determine the actual rate at which the student is progressing (slope) with a particular instructional method. These graphs provide teachers with actual data to help them revise and improve a student's instructional or behavioral program. The process of progress monitoring takes place at both the elementary and secondary levels. In elementary and secondary schools, multiple progress monitoring instruments will be utilized by the school interventionist or designee. In some instances, progress monitoring will be conducted internally within each intervention program and may also be conducted using Curriculum-Based Measures (CBM) as developed by the school. For behavioral concerns, teachers can work with counselors to develop an appropriate method of charting student's behavior for improvement or changes.

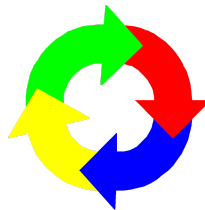
Defining a “Responder” and a “Nonresponder” at Tier 2

Once the intervention process has begun, monitoring of the student's progress and instructional needs must be conducted to make determinations on program effectiveness. Learning rate and level of performance are the primary sources of information used in ongoing decision-making. Learning rate refers to a student's growth in achievement or behavior competencies over time compared to prior levels of performance and peer growth rates. Level of performance refers to a student's relative standing on some dimension of achievement or performance compared to expected performance. Learning rates and levels of performance vary across students.

Educators must determine if a student is responding positively to the intervention or if the student needs additional support, instruction, or modifications to the intervention plan. Decisions about modifying the frequency, duration, and/or nature of the intervention are made using data and professional judgment. It is critical for teachers to share their knowledge regarding student performance, learning styles, and other factors that may affect intervention efficacy.

Integrity of Tier 2

An intervention, properly designed and implemented, contributes valuable assessment data that may be useful, for example, in determining whether a child's problem is a performance or a skill deficit (Daly, Witt, Martens, & Dool, 1997). Administrators will complete one observation per 9 weeks. When interventions are not implemented with integrity, difficulties develop in the interpretation of intervention effectiveness. If an intervention is not implemented accurately and does not achieve the desired results; it is impossible to determine whether the intervention itself was ineffective or whether the intervention outcome was the result of less than optimum treatment integrity.



Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

A small percentage of students who have received Tier 2 supplemental instruction (three to five percent) continue to have marked difficulty in acquiring necessary skills. These students require an intervention that is more explicit, more intensive, and specifically designed to meet their individual needs. Tier 3 is designed for students with low content area skills or continued behavioral/social/emotional concerns that have not been remediated with Tier 2 interventions within the appropriate time frame. Additionally, the Mississippi Department of Education has defined additional requirements outlined below:

Students Identified Under MDE State Board Policy 4300

In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tiers 1 and 2, students will be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST) for interventions as specified in guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur:

- Grades 1-3: A student has failed one (1) grade;
- Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades; or
- A student failed either of the preceding two (2) grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; or
- A student who scores at the Minimal level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 Mississippi Curriculum Test–3 . Any student that passed to 4th with Good Cause.

Referrals to the school’s TST committee must be made within the first twenty school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria stated above.

The Mississippi Department of Education has identified 14 essential elements for Tier 3, which include: 1) progress monitoring of the target area(s); 2) documentation of progress in target area(s) through a graphical display; 3) appropriate decision-making; 4) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and/or comprehension; 5) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in counting, quantity discrimination, number identification, sequential ordering, mathematical fluency, and mathematical reasoning; 6) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research for students who will be/are taking Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II; 7) strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction supported by scientifically based research in behavioral/emotional area(s); 8) documentation of intervention implementation with integrity; 9) system of instructional support; 10) system of behavioral support (school and district level); 11) instructional leadership; 12) parental/family and community involvement; 13) Teacher Support Team process; and 14) Teacher Support Team outcomes.

As noted above, Tier 3 provides the more intensive interventions needed by some students to make progress academically or to demonstrate social competence in the general education setting. However, as indicated by Essential Elements 13 and 14, Tier 3 also represents the stage in the RTI process where educators begin to make decisions that may lead to further evaluation and identification for specialized services for individual students through Special Education.

Intensive Interventions

Tier 3 Intensive Interventions are the academic and behavioral strategies, methodologies, and practices designed for students who are having significant difficulties with the established grade-level objectives in the general education curriculum or who demonstrate significant difficulties with behavioral and social

competence. Tier 3 interventions are more intensive than those in Tier 2 and are introduced when data suggest that a student has failed to make progress or respond to the interventions in Tier 2 or the rate of progress or growth and level is such that the student is unlikely to close the performance gap.

Teacher Support Teams (TST)

The TST has the responsibility of assisting and/or designing effective interventions to address the academic or behavioral needs of a student. This effort results in increased academic achievement and behavioral success with at-risk students, thereby supporting the efforts of districts and schools. The TST process and team members should be fully supported by administration and remaining educational staff within the school. A referral may be made to the TST Committee when the determination is made that a student was not successful with Tier 1 upgrades to core curriculum and instruction, and Tier 2 supplemental interventions. Parents may also request a TST Committee meeting on behalf of their child. In addition, referrals to the TST Committee may also occur in response to the MDE State Board Policy 4300, as mentioned above.

Rankin County School District List of Academic Intervention Programs for Tier 3

Prior to implementing any Tier 3 intervention program, the TST Committee must convene to develop an intervention plan. The elementary school intervention specialist will conduct all Tier 3 academic intervention programs. At the secondary level, the intervention contact person – as designated by the school principal – will assist teachers with Tier 3 interventions. Each intervention program must be implemented appropriately, the way in which it was designed.

Reading	Mathematics
Stepping Stones iReady/Ready Reading Phonics for Reading Dyslexia Intervention Program Foundations for Language Magnetic Reading K-6 Grade Results	Ready Math Math and Practice Eureka Remediation Components Grade Results Math XL

**Rankin County School District List of
Behavior Intervention Programs and Documentation for Tier 3**
Please contact the RCSD Behavioral Interventionists for further assistance.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support
Functional Behavior Assessment
Individualized Behavior Plan
Increased Frequency/Duration of Tier II Interventions

Duration/Intensity of Tier 3 Interventions

The implementation of Tier 3 intensive intervention is defined largely by the particular instructional program used. Tier 3 intensive interventions must be in place for **at least 16 weeks and progress monitored for a minimum of once a week**. If the progress monitoring for behavior interventions indicates ineffective results the intervention may be changed after consultation with the District **Behavior Specialist**. Thus, the academic teacher has a minimum of 16 data points and the counselor has a minimum of 6 data points to determine if the student is responding to the Tier 3 efforts adequately.

The goal of intensive intervention, delivered at Tier 3 as designed, is to make a decision on whether the student can now be successful at Tier 1 with general classroom instruction, Tier 2 with supplemental instruction, continue intensive intervention if responding, or needs further evaluation for specialized services through Special Education.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring aids in decision-making regarding the effectiveness of academic/behavioral instruction or interventions. In progress monitoring, students' performance is assessed on a regular basis to determine whether the students are progressing under the intensive intervention. Progress monitoring only measures growth. It is not the intervention. Progress monitoring is conducted for a minimum of once a week for students receiving Tier 3 interventions. Schools should utilize the same process for progress monitoring at the Tier 3 level as is used for students at the Tier 2 level. Please note that progress monitoring should take place for both academic and behavioral interventions at both elementary and secondary levels.

Defining a “Responder” and a “Nonresponder” at Tier 3

Once the Tier 3 intervention process has begun, monitoring of the student’s progress and instructional needs must be conducted to make determinations on program effectiveness. Learning rate and level of performance are the primary sources of information used in ongoing decision-making. Learning rate refers to a student’s growth in achievement or behavior competencies over time compared to prior levels of performance and peer growth rates. Level of performance refers to a student’s relative standing on some dimension of achievement or performance compared to expected performance. Learning rates and levels of performance vary across students. Most students with achievement or behavioral deficiencies respond positively to explicit and intense instruction or interventions. Educators must determine if a student is responding positively to the intervention or if the student needs additional support, instruction, or modifications to the intervention plan. Decisions about the use of more or less intense interventions are made using information on learning rate, level of performance, behavioral changes, and professional judgment. It is critical for teachers to share their knowledge regarding student performance, learning styles, and other factors that may affect intervention efficacy.

A widely accepted method for determining whether a student has a potential disability related to academic achievement under RTI is the “dual discrepancy model” (Fuchs, 2003).

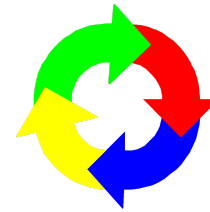
- **Discrepancy 1:** The student is found to be performing at a level significantly below that of his or her typical peers (discrepancy in initial skills or performance); and
- **Discrepancy 2:** Despite the implementation of one or more well-designed, well-implemented interventions tailored specifically for the student, he or she fails to ‘close the gap’ with classmates (discrepancy in rate of learning relative to peers).

The student not only performs below the level demonstrated by classroom peers but also demonstrates a learning rate substantially below that of classmates and national standards. When a low-performing student is not demonstrating growth in a situation where other students are thriving (after interventions have been implemented), consideration of special instruction may be warranted.

When further evaluation is suggested, documentation should include that low achievement or behavioral concerns are clearly evident in one or more of the achievement areas and that the learning or behavior problem (a) has existed over a period of time and (b) is **not** the result of such factors as excessive, persistent absences from school; frequent moves between schools; or instruction that has **not** been appropriately matched to the student’s needs and abilities.

Integrity of Tier 3

An intervention contributes valuable assessment data that may be useful in determining whether a child’s problem is a performance or academic/behavioral skill deficit. When interventions are not implemented with integrity, difficulties develop in the interpretation of intervention effectiveness. If an intervention is not implemented accurately and does not achieve the desired results; it is impossible to determine whether the intervention itself was ineffective or whether the intervention outcome was the result of less than optimum treatment integrity.



Using the Model

TIER 1

Step 1: Recognize the Concern

All students are considered part of the Tier 1 level of instruction in the RtI process. However, not all students will perform successfully at grade level, even with high quality, research-based Tier 1 instruction. At the point where a classroom teacher recognizes that a student may not be performing at grade level or to the normative behavioral expectations, he/she should define the concern in terms of a general goal. Teachers may ask the question, “*What do I want to see happening instead?*” This clarification of the concern provides the teacher with a specific focus and direction to begin addressing the student’s needs.

Classroom teachers may recognize early on that a student is experiencing difficulty academically or behaviorally with being successful in the regular classroom. Some questions that a teacher may ask are:

Academic

- Where did the child fall on the iReady and Star Early Literacy Assessment? Classroom assessments? Other testing data – MAAP, DRA, Benchmark Assessments, etc.?
- How is the child doing on classroom assignments? Compared to curriculum standards?
- How does the child perform during shared reading, structured reading groups, and literature circles? What does the child's writing samples tell you? How does the child perform with mathematical concepts?
- What information does the cumulative folder reveal? Past school experience? Has the child changed schools often? Has the child been retained? Is there any medical information?

Behavior

- Universal Screener for Behavior
- Attendance
- Office Discipline Referrals
- Teacher Recommendation
- What information does the cumulative folder reveal? Past school experience? Has the child changed schools often? Has the child been retained? Is there any medical information?

Some additional questions that may be considered are:

- How are you upgrading instruction for this child? Have you changed instructional strategies? Have you utilized small group instruction, manipulatives and visuals, or modified materials and readability levels for this child?
- Can the parents, principal, former teachers, counselor provide any information on the child that would be helpful?
- Have you shared (and documented) your concerns with parents?
- Is the classroom management effective or does the teacher need additional support?

Step 2: Upgrade Tier 1 Instruction

With effective classroom instruction, including differentiated instruction, 80-90% of students should be successful in the general education setting without Tier 2 or Tier 3

interventions. Teachers must ensure that their instruction, especially for struggling students, includes evidence-based components and strategies.

The National Research Council found that there are five overriding research-supported characteristics of effective instruction for students with academic difficulties and/or behavioral concerns:

1. Teach essential skills and strategies.
◇ Effective teachers teach skills, strategies, and concepts.
2. Provide differentiated instruction based on assessment results and adapt instruction to meet students' needs.
◇ Effective teachers recognize that one size doesn't fit all and are ready to adapt instruction—both content and methods.
3. Provide explicit and systematic instruction with lots of practice—with and without teacher support and feedback, including cumulative practice over time.
◇ Students should not have to infer what they are supposed to learn.
4. Provide opportunities to apply skills and strategies in reading and writing meaningful text with teacher support.
◇ Students need to be taught what to do when they get to a "hard word."
5. Don't just "cover" critical content; be sure students learn it—monitor student progress regularly and reteach as necessary.
◇ Effective teachers adjust their teaching accordingly to try to accelerate student progress."

At the Tier 1 level, when a teacher is concerned that a student or group of students is not performing at grade level, the teacher should make accommodations for the student. Typical academic or behavior accommodations may include the following:

- a quiet work area and seating away from windows, doors, or other distractions,
- opportunities for movement and tactile input,
- a safe environment with encouragement and compliments for positive behavior while ignoring minor inappropriate behavior,
- peer assistance with note taking, and
- extended time to complete assignments.

Struggling students may also need modifications made to their classroom instruction and assignments. Typical modifications may include the following:

- reformatting documents to minimize clutter and providing documents in alternative formats,
- providing clear and specific instructions,

- breaking long assignments into smaller parts, and
- providing an alternative form of the assignment that is on a lower reading level, or has vocabulary that is understood by the student.

Teachers should meet with the school intervention specialist and counselors for ideas on how to effectively upgrade instruction.

The district must have a system of classroom observations to determine if the educational staff is implementing Tier 1 strategies with integrity. As teachers begin or continue to implement quality classroom instruction with effective instructional strategies, differentiated instruction, and behavior management, they should have a system to obtain and receive feedback on these areas. The RCSD Tier 1 Classroom Observation will be conducted by the school principal or assistant principal.

For RTI to be successful, teachers should have support and procedures in place to address any areas of concern in implementing quality instruction and behavior management. For this to occur, the instructional leadership must provide feedback to instructional staff in improving their practice. Principals are required to follow RCSD procedures with instructional staff who have not met minimal instructional and behavioral criteria as listed below:

- Conduct a scheduled conference,
- Discuss written information and documentation regarding problematic key features of the RCSD Tier 1 Classroom Observation checklist,
- Develop a Tier 1 Action Plan, and
- Conduct follow-up teacher observations as noted on a documentation form.

Once the teacher has provided a **minimum of 4 weeks of Tier 1 instruction** and is still concerned about the student’s level of performance, grade level teacher teams should review the Tier 1 documentation. If upgrades to instruction at the Tier 1 level are not working or if there are further concerns, the student should be moved to Tier 2.

TIER 2

Step 3: Analyze the Problem

Once the teacher has recognized a concern regarding student performance, possible causes of the concern should be determined. There are several documents that must be completed by the classroom teacher and/or school intervention specialist. These reports will provide a specific direction for intervention development.

The **classroom teacher** should complete:

- Hearing and Vision Screening,
- T2 Intervention Plan,
- Phonological Awareness Assessment, if applicable,
- Discipline Record from Power School or SWIS,
- Behavior log
- Comparison Charts,
- Lesson plans that show how instruction was differentiated,
- Star Early Literacy/iReady Diagnostic/DRA/Benchmarks/Standards Check
- Learning Style Inventory

The T2 Teacher Teams should ask questions and discuss relevant information about the problem the student is exhibiting.

Some questions to ask regarding academic concerns may include:

- What information do you have from benchmark assessments and screeners (iStation, iReady, Benchmarks, MAAP, etc.)?
- What are the students' reading readiness skills?
- What information was depicted from the teacher's diagnostics? (Phonics First, Maze, Dibels, ORF, etc.)
- What is performing on grade level?
- What standards can the student not master?
- How well does the student comprehend what was read (independently vs. prompts/cues)?
- What is the student's knowledge of the number system?
- What are the student's basic computational skills?
- What are the student's oral language skills?
- What are the student's written language skills?

Some questions to ask regarding the instructional/behavioral skill gaps may include:

- Are skill gaps due to social/emotional issues?
- Are skill gaps due to behavioral issues?
- Are skill gaps due to medical (vision/hearing) issues?
- Are skill gaps due to academic issues?

* After this analysis is conducted, an intervention plan will be developed for the student.

Step 4: Develop a Tier 2 Intervention Plan

“One of education’s best kept secrets is that kids learn what we teach them.”

- Larry Lezotte,
Consultant on Effective Schools

The Three Tier Instructional Model is a way of thinking about instruction that emphasizes ongoing data collection and immediate intervention for students who need it. School staff must use specific, evidence-based interventions to address individual student difficulties. Getting to the root of a child’s academic problem and behavior problems goes beyond additional practice. It is critical for teachers to have valid assessment data and quality training to face student challenges. Interventions must be preceded by uniform screening of students and selected from research proven practices – not simply research-based.

First, one must understand what an intervention is. As defined by the Mississippi Dept. of Education, **“an intervention is any action that differs from the current instruction in the student’s regular academic program.”** MDE further states that interventions are not “shortened assignments, peer-tutoring, or doing more of the same general classroom assignments,” along with many other items.

Quality interventions are matched to the student’s individual needs and must be monitored for fidelity to ensure it is occurring reliably.

The following components are essential in the development of an effective intervention plan for the student. These action steps should be completed by a team of individuals including, but not limited to, the classroom teacher, school interventionist, and principal.

1. Establish a goal.

The student’s individual goal is established by examining the baseline data (Universal Screener, classroom assessment data, reading and math level, behavioral logs,

discipline referrals, etc.). Depending upon the student, the teacher and school intervention specialist can set a goal that is either modest, reasonable, or ambitious. This goal must be set at an appropriate level. Otherwise, a student who is making progress will not register as successful if the goal is set too high.

2. Select an appropriate intervention based on student need and data.

Use the RCSD List of Approved RTI Interventions. These interventions are based on scientific research and have been proven effective for both academic and behavioral concerns. Interventions should address each area of weakness. If further testing is needed we will have appropriate documentation that all needed interventions were done. Additionally, school personnel have received quality professional development on these interventions. If there are any questions or concerns regarding proper implementation, please contact the District Interventionist Specialist at 601- 825-5590 or e-mail her through the rcsd.ms server.

3. Clarify teacher's role with Tier 2 interventions.

The teacher's role is critical to the success of any intervention. Each of the academic Tier 2 interventions selected has a teacher component, which is critical to the success of the implementation. The student does not simply sit at a computer without any interaction from their classroom teacher. The teacher's role varies depending upon the specific intervention, which is selected and matched to the student based on specific learning needs the child may have. Students in Tier 2, receive supplemental instruction for the timeframe that is specified by the intervention, for academic or behavioral concerns, **in addition to their** required Tier 1 core curriculum instruction.

4. Ensure intervention is implemented with integrity and fidelity.

Interventions must be done with integrity – in the manner that they are designed; and with fidelity – on a consistent basis. School administrators will perform integrity checks twice a semester.

5. Develop a schedule for what time of day, how often, and where the intervention will take place.

Tier 2 interventions should be implemented in the classroom teacher's room whenever possible. This helps with the full implementation of all program components. Tier 3 interventions should be conducted with the school intervention specialist preferably in a location other than the teacher's classroom to minimize distractions.

6. Develop a schedule for progress monitoring.

The purpose of progress monitoring is to provide the teacher with information that will guide his/her instruction. Progress monitoring is not simply plotting points on a

graph. Rather, the points on the graph represent the student's performance – is it changing, improving, or staying the same? Progress monitoring should be done frequently enough that small increments of growth and/or change can be detected. It is recommended that students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 receive progress monitoring once a week.

7. Interventionist or designee will conduct progress monitoring.

As part of the fidelity checks required in the RTI process, school intervention specialists or their designee will conduct all progress monitoring activities. The progress monitoring activities should be implemented with the same care and diligence that are a part of the intervention activities. To accurately reflect the effect of the intervention, the student's motivation and attention during progress monitoring should be appropriate. Each progress monitoring session should be conducted with the same protocol of procedures – ensuring little variance between students or the person administering the protocol.

8. Develop a schedule for where, when, and what time PM will be conducted.

Progress monitoring should be conducted in a place that is free of distractions, yet not intimidating to the student. The schedule should reflect the frequency of the progress monitoring depending on whether the student is at the Tier 2 or Tier 3 level. It is recommended that the progress monitoring take place during a time of day that is closest to the time that the student actually participates in the intervention. Each of these factors can affect the outcome of the progress monitoring and should be carefully considered.

9. Determine who will conduct data entry.

Data entry is critical to the overall success of the intervention implementation. There will be little validity if mistakes (wrong numbers entered, intervention incorrectly identified, etc.) are made at the data entry level – especially when all other components of the intervention are completed correctly. The school interventionist and principal may determine together who will be responsible for data entry. This person should be trained in the proper implementation of the system to avoid mistakes. It should be explained what an important task this is, and that it is appreciated as each piece of this intervention plan is essential to the ongoing success of the student.

10. Determine who will print and file charts and reports.

Again, the task of data compilation and analysis is an important component of this plan. The school intervention specialist will be responsible for collecting data on each

student involved in interventions. This data will be shared with classroom teachers and the principal every 8 weeks. The team will use this data to determine if the intervention program needs modifications or continuation. Data should be kept on file for all students – even after a student returns to Tier 1. Please contact the District RCSD Interventionist Specialist before deleting or disposing of **any** student data.

Step 5: Evaluate the Tier 2 Intervention Plan

Teachers who feel students are not progressing with T1 interventions must complete a hearing/vision screening, a T2 Teacher Referral Form and create a T2 Intervention Plan. They will implement interventions and meet in 4 week intervals to discuss progress. The student's progress is reviewed and the effectiveness of the intervention is determined. These meetings are conducted throughout the school year, on an ongoing basis, to monitor the student's progress and evaluate their performance. Copies of T2 meeting summaries are turned into the interventionist to keep on file every 4 weeks.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention plan, the teachers and other relevant educators should review the following:

- iStation/iReady/Benchmark data: previous and current, or other progress monitoring data
- Progress made compared to class and national norms
- Intervention data
- Reports and data from interventions (i.e. tier logs, graphs, computer generated reports such as Usage Report, Completed Episode Report, and other reports from intervention programs, etc.)
- Teacher input
- Cumulative Record

After 8-10 weeks of data (number of data points depends on frequency of monitoring), use the following rules:

- If three consecutive data points are below the goal line, make an instructional change (which *may* include adjusting the student's goal).
- If six consecutive data points are above the goal line, raise the goal.
- If the consecutive data points are neither all above nor below the goal line, continue with the student's instructional program and monitoring progress.

The District Interventionist Specialist can make recommendations on further actions.

Recommendation 1:

If intervention is successful, with positive transfer into class assignments, consider:

- Should the student return to Tier 1?
- Should the student continue with Tier 2 intervention and monitoring?

Recommendation 2:

If intervention is working, but not carrying over into classroom, consider:

- Is more time for interventions over the year to reduce the skill gap needed?
- Is the teacher's instruction matched to the student's learning style?
- Have appropriate classroom accommodations and modifications been used?
- Does the teacher's classroom instruction match the manner of assessment?
- Have alternate forms of classroom assessments been given?
- Have zeros been given? Is homework being graded and negatively impacting the child's grade?
- Is the classroom environment conducive to optimal learning?
- Has everyone been involved that could help this child:
 - School counselor, nurse, principal, previous teacher, attendance officer, etc.
- What are the child's academic history, discipline history, and attendance history?
- Is the child completing class work? Homework?
 - Is the child a "Can't do/Won't do"?
- Is the child paying attention?
- Are there motivational concerns? Is a behavior modification plan needed?
- Are other skill deficits present?

Recommendation 3:

If T2 interventions are not working or if there are further concerns, the teacher should make a TST meeting referral to consider a move to T3 interventions.

Tier 3

Step 6: Develop a Tier 3 Intervention Plan

Tier 3 represents the stage in the RTI process where educators begin to make decisions that may lead to further evaluation and identification for specialized services for individual students through Special Education.

The TST Committee/TST should consist of – but is not limited to – the classroom teacher, school principal, school intervention specialist, counselor, and other educators as needed. The TST Committee/Team will develop the intervention plan for the student.

Implementing the Process Using the MDE Timeline

A referral can be made from a parent, legal guardian, or teacher. Two weeks(10 days) is allowed for the TST Committee/TST to obtain crucial information regarding the concern.

The classroom teacher should complete the Request to School Teacher Support Team Form. The TST Committee needs to ensure that all required documentation is in place. Forms to be used for the TST process are included in the Appendix of the RCSD Three Tier Instructional Manual. The information listed below provides an outline of steps that should occur as part of the TST process.

I. The referring teacher gives Tier 1 and Tier 2 documentation as well as the request for assistance to the TST Chairperson.

The parent/legal guardian is notified. The TST Committee/TST members determine what additional information needs to be collected (e.g., interviews, observations, other assessments, reports). All classroom instructional and intervention documentation is collected and provided to the TST Chairperson. The TST Chairperson will check to make sure that the student passed the hearing/vision screening.

II. The TST Committee should review all documentation and data available on the student pertaining to the academic or behavior concern.

Parental input is critical to the TST process. Behaviors at home or school, academic issues with homework, strategies attempted at home, and collaborative efforts with the classroom teacher are important issues that parents may be able to share with the

school. Data is needed from the student's school records for review. A review of the student's cumulative record is important. Disciplinary factors should also be considered. Any testing data should be reviewed by the TST Team, including standardized tests and universal screening data. All documentation from previously implemented interventions are needed – usage reports, completed standard reports, etc. Teacher observations and input should be reviewed by the TST. The teacher can provide information in the form of behavior and tier logs, anecdotal records, and parental communication logs.

III. The TST should develop a written intervention plan.

The following components are essential in the development of an effective Tier 3 intervention plan for the student. These action steps should be completed by the TST.

1. Establish/Reexamine a goal.

The student's individual goal is established by examining the baseline data (Universal Screener, classroom assessment data, Finding the Reading/Math Level, behavioral logs, discipline referrals, etc.). Depending upon the student, the teacher and school intervention specialist can set a goal of modest, reasonable, or ambitious. This goal must be set at an appropriate level. Otherwise, a student who is making progress will not register as successful if the goal is set too high. Previous results and data from Tier 2 interventions should be used to set an appropriate goal for the student.

2. Select an appropriate intervention based on student need and data.

Use the RCSD List of Approved RTI Interventions. These interventions are based on scientific research and have been proven effective for academic and behavioral concerns. The elementary school intervention specialist will conduct all Tier 3 academic intervention programs. Each intervention program must be implemented appropriately, the way in which it was designed. If there are any questions or concerns regarding proper implementation, please contact the District Interventionist Specialist at 601-825-5590.

The Mississippi Department of Education has identified the following practices that are **not** interventions, and **should not** be part of an RTI intervention plan:

- Special or re-assigned seating in the classroom
- Shortened assignments
- Communications with the parents about the child at regular parent-teacher conferences or other informational communications
- Classroom observations

- Suspension
- Retention
- More of the same general classroom instruction and/or assignments

3. Clarify teachers and school interventionist roles with Tier 3 interventions.

Tier 3 intensive intervention consists of 30-45 minutes of additional instruction daily, **in addition to their** required Tier 1 core curriculum instruction. The elementary school interventionist will plan and conduct all Tier 3 academic intervention programs. The classroom teacher will provide Tier 1 core curriculum instruction and any behavioral interventions. The elementary interventionist and counselor can assist and support the teacher with behavioral interventions. Communication and collaboration is critical between all educators who are involved in working with students at the Tier 3 level.

4. Ensure intervention is implemented with integrity and fidelity.

Interventions must be done with integrity – in the manner that they are designed; and with fidelity – on a consistent basis. School administrators and the District Interventionist Specialist will perform integrity checks twice a year with follow up as warranted.

5. Develop a schedule for what time of day, how often, and where the intervention will take place.

Tier 3 interventions must be conducted daily for 30-45 minutes, in addition to Tier 1 core instruction. These interventions may be conducted in the morning or afternoon, based on the classroom teacher's schedule and student's needs. Tier 3 interventions should be implemented in a place other than the classroom teacher's room to minimize distractions. This helps with the full implementation of all program components.

6. Develop a schedule for progress monitoring.

Progress monitoring should be done frequently enough that small increments of growth and/or change can be detected. It is recommended that students in Tier 3 receive progress monitoring on a weekly basis.

7. Interventionist or designee will conduct progress monitoring.

As part of the fidelity checks required in the RTI process, school intervention specialists or their designee will conduct all progress monitoring activities. The

progress monitoring activities should be implemented with the same care and diligence that are a part of the intervention activities. To accurately reflect the effect of the intervention, the student's motivation and attention during progress monitoring should be appropriate. Each progress monitoring session should be conducted with the same protocol of procedures – ensuring little variance between students or the person administering the protocol.

8. Develop a schedule for where, when, and what time PM will be conducted.

Progress monitoring should be conducted in a place that is free of distractions, yet not intimidating to the student. The schedule should reflect the frequency of the progress monitoring. It is recommended that the progress monitoring take place during a time of day that is closest to the time that the student actually participates in the intervention. Each of these factors can affect the outcome of the progress monitoring and should be carefully considered.

9. Determine who will conduct data entry.

Data entry is critical to the overall success of the intervention implementation. It will be of no value if the interventions are done frequently, with integrity, and the progress monitoring is done as intended if mistakes are made at the data entry level. The school intervention specialist and principal may determine together who will be responsible for data entry. This person should be trained in the proper implementation of the system to avoid mistakes. It should be explained what an important task this is, and that it is appreciated as each piece of this intervention plan is essential to the ongoing success of the student.

10. Determine who will print and file charts and reports.

Again, the task of data compilation and analysis is an important component of this plan. The school intervention specialist will be responsible for collecting data on each student involved in interventions. This data will be shared with classroom teachers and the principal every 8 weeks. The TST Committee will use this data to determine if the intervention program needs modifications or continuation. Data should be kept on file for all students – even after a student returns to Tier 1. Please contact the RCSD Interventionists before deleting or disposing of **any** student data.

After the initial TST meeting to develop the Tier 3 intervention plan, the intervention is implemented. Progress monitoring takes place on a weekly basis.

Step 7: Evaluate the Tier 3 Intervention Plan

In order to maximize the potential of the Three Tier Instructional Model, it is critical that principals are kept abreast of any issues regarding student performance and intervention efficacy. As the instructional leader in the building, the role the principal plays is critical to determining resource allocation and levels of support that can be reassigned to improve student learning. It is important that the principal is present at each meeting listed below.

The principal, school intervention specialist, and classroom teacher should meet every 4 weeks while a student is in Tier 3. During this meeting, they should review the student's performance data while on the Tier 3 intervention. The purpose of this meeting is to be sure that the Tier 3 interventions are being conducted appropriately. If the student is not making *any* progress, the TST Committee should reconvene immediately.

The **TST Committee** should meet at the 8 week mark after the Tier 3 intervention plans have been developed to review the student's progress and to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. The purpose of this meeting is to determine if the intervention goal should be adjusted, or if the intervention should be modified.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Tier 3 intervention plan, the TST should review the following:

- Intervention integrity checklists
- STAR Early Literacy/iReady/Benchmark data: previous and current, or other progress monitoring data
- Progress made compared to class and national norms – academic or behavior
- Weekly intervention logs & graphs – academic or behavior
- Reports and data from interventions (i.e.: computer generated reports such as Usage Report, Completed Episode Report, and other reports from intervention programs, etc.)
- Teacher input
- Cumulative Record

Once the TST convenes, the following questions should be considered:

1. Is the intervention selected appropriately matched to the child's deficit?
(accuracy, fluency, comprehension, behavior, etc.)
2. Has the intervention been delivered on a consistent basis?
 - Time of day (if that is a factor)?

- Frequency?
3. Has the intervention been implemented and used correctly:
- Is the child reading the passage or working on the problems when prompted?
 - What is the total time for one lesson?
 - How is the child's manner during intervention? When testing?
 - Posture?
 - Attitude?
 - Is the child paying attention? Rushing through?
4. School Attendance:
- Does the child attend school regularly?
 - Is the child on time or tardy?
 - If the child is tardy, how much and what instruction is he/she missing?
5. Motivation:
- Is the child motivated to complete the intervention correctly?
 - Is the child motivated to complete the progress monitoring correctly?
 - Does it appear that the child finds the intervention enjoyable?
 - How is the child's confidence level?
 - Does time of day affect the child's motivation?
 - Are incentives used? Needed?

Using the data and information gathered from the sources above, the TST should make a determination on further actions. After 8 weeks of data (number of data points depends on frequency of monitoring), use the following rules:

- If three consecutive data points are below the goal line, make an instructional/behavioral change (which *may* include adjusting the student's goal).
- If five consecutive data points are above the goal line, raise the goal.
- If the consecutive data points are neither above nor below the goal line, continue with the student's instructional/behavioral program and monitoring progress.

Team must reconvene every 8 weeks to reassess student progress throughout the entire Tier process.

Making a Final Determination

The TST must conduct a meeting every 8 weeks after the Tier III intervention plan was developed. A final determination must be made as to the level of support

recommended for the student to be successful. The following actions must be taken by the TST Team:

- Evaluate the data from progress monitoring
- Evaluate the integrity of the intervention
- Review the decision rules
- Make a decision about the student's progress

The TST can make one of the following decisions:

Decision Rule #1: There is change in rate of learning (slope) and performance level and the student has met the grade level standards;

1a: Intensive intervention provided in Tier 3 is terminated if the student is moved to Tier 1 or Tier 2 **and** appropriate performance is maintained and monitored for 4 weeks. If the student does not maintain the standard at any time within the 4 weeks, (e.g. slope and level have changed in an undesirable direction) then the Tier 3 intervention will be implemented again for an additional 8 weeks.

1b: Intensive intervention in Tier 3 will continue and progress monitoring weekly for an additional 8 weeks.

Decision Rule #2: There is change in rate of learning (slope) and performance level (level) and the student has met the grade level standard; but parent's initiated request;

2a: Intensive intervention in Tier 3 is continued and the student is referred to the District MET at the parent's request.

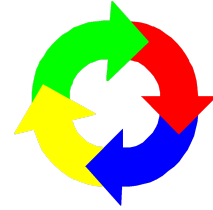
Decision Rule #3: There has been no change in the rate of learning (slope) and performance level (level); thus, the student is referred to District MET and Tier 3 intensive intervention continues.

Decision Rule #4: There is a change in the rate of learning (slope) and performance level (level); but has not met the grade level standard:

4a: Continue with the same Tier 3 intensive intervention and continue monitoring for as long as needed with follow-up on a regular basis.

4b: Alter intensive intervention and assess response.

Effective Implementation



School Principal's Role

“The most effective schools are those that have principals who provide leadership in learning.”

- Mary Stein, Ph.D.

Strong instructional leaders maintain their focus on improving instruction and student achievement through active and informed involvement. This type of involvement includes routine classroom observations, collaborative interactions with teachers and specialists, and a sustained focus on instructional leadership. Research suggests that schools with strong instructional leaders tend to achieve significantly higher gains in student achievement over time.

An effective school principal:

- Is knowledgeable of federal, state, and district regulations, policies, and procedures regarding RTI and the Three Tier Instructional Model.
- Schedules beginning-of-the-year faculty meetings for RTI/Three Tier Instructional Model presentation
- Oversees the RTI/Three Tier Instructional Model program at respective school
- Assigns personnel to support implementation of RTI in classrooms to the greatest extent possible
- Meets with teachers and school interventionist & instructional coach(if Title) on a routine basis to gauge the effectiveness of classroom instruction at Tier 1 level and interventions at Tier 2 and Tier 3
- Reviews student progress every 4 weeks for Tier 2 and every 8 weeks with Tier 3 students and suggest adjustments as needed.
- Chairs ALL TST meetings and parent conferences
- Ensures a high degree of professionalism is in place to protect the confidentiality of each student

Classroom Teacher's Role

The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for guiding student learning. Effective teachers demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in adjusting classroom instruction to meet student needs. Classroom teachers should have knowledge and understanding about which interventions are available and how they should be implemented. Teachers, the school intervention specialist, counselor, and the principal – along with other educators as needed – should meet regularly to develop and monitor the plan for improving student learning. Schools that have a culture of collaboration are showing the strongest gains in student achievement. The classroom teacher plays a pivotal role in the RtI/Three Tier Instructional Model.

An effective classroom teacher:

- Provides high quality, scientifically-based instruction to meet Mississippi Department of Education standards and RCSD curriculum guidelines.
- Recognizes and alerts other school personnel of struggling student's instructional needs
- Uses student performance data as a guide for instructional decision-making
- Utilizes various differentiated instructional strategies to upgrade Tier I instruction
- Conducts Tier 2 interventions with integrity and fidelity
- Communicates with parents on student progress
- Maintains records regarding student performance and progress
- Maintains a high degree of professionalism to ensure and protect the confidentiality of each student

School Interventionist's Role

As part of the RTI/Three-Tier Instructional Model many schools have chosen to employ this new position - school intervention specialist. An interventionist is an onsite educator who collaborates with teachers to identify and assist with proven teaching and intervention methods. The interventionist has a key role in the RTI process. However, this position is simply one link in the chain of improving student learning. Research has proven that developing the leadership and learning capacity of principals, school interventionists, and teachers is the best strategy for sustained instructional improvement.

An effective school intervention specialist:

- Coordinate universal screening three times per year
- Provide guided support to teachers in the Tier 1 and Tier 2 process
- Administer & plan Tier 3 interventions with identified students
- Oversee progress monitoring of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students

- Examine progress monitoring and intervention data to help evaluate student progress
- Assists in data collection/analysis and record keeping for intervention students
- Communicates with teachers regularly to discuss student performance
- Maintains a high degree of professionalism to ensure and protect the confidentiality of each student

Meeting Best Practices

Effective teams use best meeting practices to maximize time spent discussing student needs, data, and interventions. Best meeting practices have some essential features including:

- Begin on time and work within the suggested time frame
- Establish the roles of the chairperson, record-keeper, and timekeeper
- Maintain a positive focus on the purpose and objectives of the meeting
- Maintain a collegial atmosphere
- Ensure that all team members are aware of their responsibilities for the intervention plan
- Designate a person responsible for collecting and graphing the data via the online graphing system or other means
- Set a date and time for the follow-up meeting
- Be sure everyone receives a copy of the meeting notes