Slide 1

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES — SES — ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Response to Intervention & Child Find in Online Schools

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Latsha Davis & McKenna, P.C. The statements and representations contained herein do not constitute legal advice.

Slide 2

WELCOME....

Slide 3

Session Objectives

➢ Identify current trends in RtI & Child Find school practices focused on students with disabilities.

➢ Discuss the diverse and innovative practices of RtI and Child Find delivered with fidelity in online schools.

➢ Discuss how the need for Instructional Leaders implementing RtI at the Leadership Level has become the driving force for whole school reform and improvement.

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Slide 4

Session Objectives

➢ Identify strategies that can enhance the delivery and instruction for special education students through the evolving framework of instructional interventions.

➢ Develop an understanding of the many complexities that online schools continue to confront when attempting to deliver a FAPE through the use of intervention models that employ both academic and behavior supports.

➢ Discuss frameworks that work for online schools that include the effective delivery and instruction of RtI and processes for finding students in need of evaluations.

Agenda

- Response to Intervention Assessment to Meet Curricular Needs

- Response to Intervention Curricula Decision-Making Models

- A study of RtI and Student Monitoring and Enforcement

Child Find

- All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are IDENTIFIED, LOCATED, AND EVALUATED; and

- A practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services.

Section 504 Child Find Mandate

- Section 504 requires districts to annually "undertake to identify and locate every qualified [individual with a disability] residing in [the district's] jurisdiction who is not receiving a public education."

- The obligation extends to students attending private schools, children residing in hospitals and universities, and homeless children. Section 504 also requires districts to evaluate students "who, because of handicap, need or are believed to need special education or related services."

IDEA Child Find Mandate

- Either a parent or a public agency may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if a student is a student with a disability.

- IDEA's mandate requires that districts seek out students who are potentially IDEA-eligible and refer those students for an evaluation.

- Affirmative (not passive), ongoing obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate

IDEA Child Find

- Children who are suspected of being children with disabilities and in need of special education, even if they are advancing from grade to grade; and

- Highly mobile children, including migrant children.

- Applies to gifted students, where there is reason to suspect a disability and need for special education and related services. *Memorandum to State Dirs. of Special Educ.*, (OSEP 2015) (OSEP remarked that it continued to receive letters from those working with children with disabilities, particularly students with emotional disturbances or mental illness, indicating that some LEAs may be resisting conducting an initial evaluation on the basis of the student's high cognitive skills.); and *Letter to Delisle*, (OSEP 2013).

...Remember Notice & Informed Consent

IDEA & RTI

- RTI is tool that enables educators to target instructional interventions to children's areas of specific need as soon as those needs become apparent.

- The IDEA calls upon educators to utilize **RTI** to distinguish children who have a specific learning disability from those whose learning difficulties could be resolved with scientifically based, general education interventions.

Regulatory

- **RTI** process as part of the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) evaluation process. Under the IDEA, criteria adopted by a state in determining whether a child has SLD:
  o Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement.
  o Must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention.
  o May permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures.
- 34 CFR 300.307 (a).

Components of RtI in Online Programs

- High-quality, evidence-based instruction in general education settings;
- Screening of all students for academic and behavioral problems;
- Two or more levels of instruction that are progressively more intense and based on the student's response to instruction; and
- Progress monitoring of student performance.
- Assess whether all four are present. *Letter to Zirkel*, (OSEP 2013).

RTI FRAMEWORK

- **Universal screening:** The performance of all students is evaluated in order to identify students who are making progress and those who are at risk of failure without support.

- **Continuous progress monitoring:** The progress of students is monitored to identify when a student may need an increased level of support.

- **Continuum of evidence-based interventions:** The use of various levels of interventions that increase in intensity at each level.

- **Data-based decision-making and problem-solving:** Instructional decision-making based on student growth and performance.

- **Implementation fidelity:** Detailed documentation of the particular interventions and student progress.

Fox, L., et al. (2009). Response to Intervention and the Pyramid Model. University of South Florida Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children.; and *Letter to Zirkel* (OSEP 2013). *See also* Essential Components of RTI -- A Closer Look at Response to Intervention (2010). National Center on Response to Intervention .

WHY RTI?

Maximize student achievement.

Reduce behavior problems.

Use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes.

Monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness.

Identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

Caution

- Once parental consent is obtained, an evaluation must be conducted within the 60-day timeline or the state-established time frame, unless the timeline is extended by mutual written agreement of the parent and the group of qualified professionals responsible for making the eligibility determination.

- If a request for an evaluation of a child is made during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. *Letter to Combs*, (OSEP 2008).

RtI is not a Replacement

- The IDEA requires response to an evaluation request by prior written notice within a reasonable time, and **RTI** shouldn't be used as a delay tactic.

- **RTI** does not replace the need for a comprehensive evaluation, and a child's eligibility for special education services cannot be changed solely on the basis of data from an **RTI** process.

Part I: Needs Assessment

Response to Intervention Assessment to Meet Curricular Needs

Key Topics

- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring
- Diagnostic assessment
- Process of identifying RTI needs
- Curriculum-based measurement
- Functional behavioral assessment
- Performance-based assessment
- Managing RtI assessment needs within the curriculum

Tier 1: The general or core curriculum and whatever interventions any student would receive. Screening at this level helps to identify students who are unsuccessful in response to the core curriculum.

Tier 2: Intensive supplemental services targeting small groups of students with academic deficits who lagged behind their peers at Tier 1.

Tier 3: Even more intensive and frequent individualized intervention specifically targeted to the needs of a student who has not responded to Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions.

Designing School-Wide Systems for Student Success
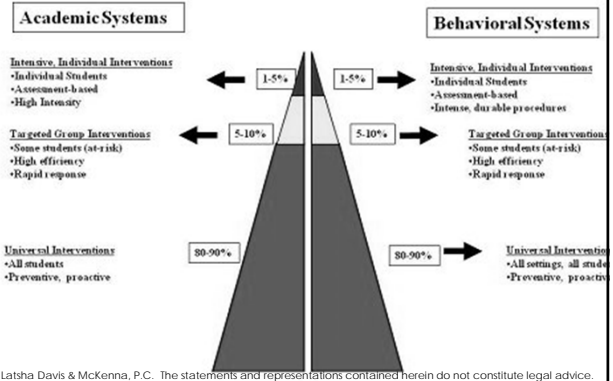
Screening and Monitoring

Universal Screening:

Assessment of all learners to identify those who may be at risk for or finding it difficult to achieve grade-level academic and/or behavioral benchmarks (i.e., struggling learners).

Usually occurs three times per academic year.

Progress Monitoring:

Assessment of selected learners to clarify the effectiveness of instruction by determining levels of proficiency and rate of progress toward grade-level academic and/or behavioral benchmarks.

Involves learners who require more frequent monitoring of progress toward growth (e.g., monthly, biweekly).

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic:
Assessment conducted on an individual basis to further clarify learner's needs for the purpose of providing more individualized instruction and/or determining eligibility for special education due to a disability.

Usually involves students who have greater needs; however, it may also be used in conjunction with progress monitoring to further clarify suspected educational needs.

Universal Screening

The purpose of universal screening is to identify early in the school year those students who are showing signs of struggling or otherwise making inadequate progress toward the grade-level benchmarks

Universal screening must initially show that approximately 80% of all students in the school, grade, or classroom are making adequate progress toward curricular benchmark; if not,

"School must improve the core curriculum and/or the manner in which the curriculum is delivered"

Screening and the Curriculum

If a disconnect exists between what is taught in the curriculum and what is assessed through universal screening, there is a great risk of false positives, leading to increased misinterpretation of universal screening results and the erroneous implementation of Tier 2 supplemental supports.

Progress Monitoring

- Provides the data-driven foundation for determining the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions in Tiers 2 and 3.

- Progress monitoring becomes necessary once universal screening indicates a potential struggling learner in Tier 1 or when supplemental or intensive supports in Tiers 2 and 3 are considered necessary.

Progress Monitoring

1. Gives educators more frequent updates on learner progress.

2. Helps educators determine if the research-based curriculum and evidence-based interventions are helping students to make adequate progress and/or reduce the gap between expected and actual achievement

3. Provides general class educators with additional data to confirm the initial universal screening score.

4. Allows educators to assess more closely and more frequently the connections between what is taught and student learning.

Steps to Progress Monitor:

1. Identify skill to be monitored (e.g., oral reading fluency, math computation skills).

2. Select/develop valid assessment measures to quickly assess skills (i.e., 1–2 minutes) that directly reflect the instruction of the target skills (oral reading fluency at second-grade level).

3. Determine monitoring schedule (monthly, weekly).

4. Conduct assessment, adhering to the established schedule to gather data.

Steps to Progress Monitor:

5. Graph or chart the results of each assessment.

6. Evaluate level of performance and rate of progress (e.g., progress towards developing math computation skills).

7. Adjust instruction based on progress monitoring data.

8. Continue with ongoing progress monitoring, chart results, and adjust instruction as needed.

Diagnostic Assessment

➢ The most targeted form of assessment in RtI is diagnostic assessment, in which evaluation is more detailed.

➢ Individualized form of assessment designed to identify individual student academic or behavioral needs and/or a disability.

➢ Unlike the prereferral models, determining a discrepancy between potential and achievement is not a primary goal of diagnostic assessment in RtI models.

Learning Needs/Strengths

Diagnostic assessment pinpoints curricular academic and behavioral needs based on:

(1) the gap between expected and actual performance,

(2) the rate of progress, and

(3) the classroom and instructional behaviors exhibited by the learner.

Learning Needs/Strengths

Diagnostic assessment in RtI models achieves three objectives:

(1) it further clarifies universal screening and progress monitoring results to specify learning/behavior needs;

(2) it helps educators to determine eligibility for special education; and

(3) it facilitates the gathering of information to be included in an IEP if special education placement is warranted.

RTI Assessment Practices

- *Task Analysis*
  - Assists in analyzing students' strengths and weaknesses by breaking down tasks into discrete parts and subtasks

- *Curriculum-Based Measurement*
  - Evidence-based strategy for measuring student progress in a standardized way using valid measures

- *Performance-Based Assessment*
  - Assessment practice in which student progress is monitored by evaluation of a constructed response or product

RTI Assessment Practices

- *Running Records*
  - Record of the reading behaviors of beginning readers while reading for a specified amount of time (e.g., 10 minutes)

- *Portfolio Assessment*
  - Assessment process in which students compile a collection of work designed to illustrate their educational knowledge, skills, and growth

- *Functional Behavioral Assessment*
  - A technique based on the idea that behavior serves some meaningful function for the learner

RTI Assessment Practices

- *Analytic Teaching*
  - Analyzes the behaviors of learners engaged in a specific task designed to target identified behaviors

- *Cross-Cultural Interview*
  - The interviewer discusses with the interviewee the cultural and linguistic background of the learner to determine the extent to which the learner's behaviors reflect a diverse background

- *Language Samples*
  - Documented samples of student uses of language obtained to analyze the student's thinking skills, vocabulary, and contextual uses

RTI Assessment Practices

- *Classroom Observations*
  - Provides firsthand knowledge of student academic and socio-emotional behaviors exhibited in the instructional environment

- *Review Existing Records*
  - Frames learner characteristics in a historical context, determines prior interventions used, and ascertains perceptions of previous teachers

- *Work Samples Analysis*
  - Identify patterns, consistencies, and strengths of student work

Uses of Standards and Norms

RESEARCH-BASED NORMS

National norms are convenient to use; however, these norms may vary significantly from the demographic characteristics of struggling learners in a particular online school.

This must be addressed when measuring rate of progress using national norms.

Uses of Standards and Norms

LOCAL NORMS

Norms for specific schools may be more relevant because they directly reflect the school's population of learners.

In addition, basing decisions on local norms often allows educators to identify more precisely the gaps/rates of progress of struggling learners by direct comparison to other grade-level classmates.

Uses of Standards and Norms

CRITERION-REFERENCED BENCHMARKS

Benchmark levels that reflect actual performance standards relative to a predetermined level of mastery necessary to prepare students for future success in school (e.g., minimum reading comprehension proficiency level needed in grade 2 for initial success in reading in grade 3).

Decision Rules

- Problem-solving Cyber Teams (e.g., data analysis teams) must use some process for interpreting and applying universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment results.

- To facilitate this process, each Cyber Team needs to establish guidelines to follow, often referred to as *decision rules.*

Decision Rules

Decision Rule 1: Cyber Teams establish the percentile rank below which a learner is believed to be struggling (e.g., the lowest 20% of scores in the class or grade).

Decision Rule 2: Cyber Teams establish the appropriate level of instruction based on the size of the gap (e.g., a gap of 2 is significant need and requires immediate Tier 2 supplemental supports; a gap of less than 2 requires targeted differentiated instruction within the Tier 1 core curriculum with biweekly progress monitoring).

Decision Rules

Decision Rule 3: Cyber Teams establish the standard on which rate of progress is based (e.g., national research norms, local norms, criterion-referenced benchmarks).

Decision Rule 4: Cyber Teams decide on the process necessary to ensure and confirm fidelity of implementation of both the curriculum and assessment practices (e.g., grade-level teams design a process for their grade in the school; a supervisor observes in the classroom and documents observation of evidence of fidelity; the classroom teacher self reports evidence of implementation fidelity).

Decision Rule 5: Cyber Teams decide how best to implement the comprehensive evaluation if a learner is referred for special education.

Curricular Components and Instructional Decision-Making Adjustments

➢ One or more of the five curricular components may require adjustments to meet the needs of students who are not making adequate progress;

➢ Adjusting the correct component(s) is key to providing sufficient opportunities to learn.

Application of Ideas

• Determine the universal screening and progress monitoring procedures followed in your school, including the methods and standards used for determining (1) gap analysis, (2) rate of progress, (3) cut scores, and (4) decision rules.

• Review the multi-tiered curriculum implementation and assessment procedures used in your school to determine the most appropriate tier (1, 2, 3) of instruction.

Application of Ideas

• Discuss how the five curricular components are essential to the determination of RtI curricular progress.

• Select two evidence-based assessments with which you are least familiar and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to use each; apply them in in the classroom to monitor student progress (e.g., CBM).

RtI Curricula Decision Making Models

Key Concepts

- Standard treatment model

- Problem-solving model

- Combined standard treatment–problem solving model

- Cyber Team roles and responsibilities

Response to Intervention Decision Making

There are four primary tasks in the proper implementation of multi-tiered RTI curriculum:

(1) use of research-based curriculum and evidence-based interventions;

(2) implementation with fidelity;

(3) selection and use of general, targeted, supplemental and intensive curricular differentiations; and

(4) universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment to determine progress toward curricular benchmarks by documenting levels of performance and rate of progress.

Decision Making Levels

Level 1: General Classroom Teacher:

Decision making in the implementation of the Tier 1 core curriculum. Decisions at this level are made primarily by the general class teacher, with or without input from other educators.

Decision Making Levels

Level 1: General Class Teacher:

The decisions tend to be those necessary to implement:

1) the Tier 1 curriculum with fidelity;

2) a differentiated synchronous or asynchronous classroom;

3) additional targeted curricular differentiations supporting those already implemented to meet ongoing needs; and

4) procedures to screen/monitor the needs of learners who do not respond

Decision Making Levels

Level 2: RtI Cyber Team:

Decisions made by a team of professionals using universal screening and progress monitoring results to determine the most appropriate tier of instruction to meet the needs of learners requiring Tier 2 supplemental supports (e.g., data analysis team, child study team).

Decision Making Levels

Level 3: Comprehensive Evaluation Team:

Decisions made by a team of professionals and parents/guardians who perform a comprehensive evaluation to determine the student's eligibility for special education due to a learning disability and/or to provide Tier 3 intensive interventions.

Decision Making Levels

Standard Treatment

Use of the same treatment for all learners with similar needs (e.g., phonemic awareness; self-monitoring);

Instructional decisions are based primarily on data resulting from the standard treatment intervention and standard assessment.

Decision Making Levels

Problem-Solving

Process of identifying individual needs followed by development of implementation program.

Instructional decisions are made by Problem Solving Cyber Team using additional ecological information about individual.

Decision Making Levels

Combined Standard Treatment/Problem-Solving

Process in which elements of both models are used to make decisions and provide appropriate level of instruction; Decisions are made by problem-solving team using standard treatment data and other related information to best understand learner needs.

Six-Step Decision Making Model

The following illustrates the process for considering Tier 2 instruction:

1. ***Problem Identification.***
 A struggling learner in the multi-tiered RtII curriculum is first identified by the universal screening data scores.

2. ***Problem Definition.***
Based on information and data obtained through screening and any related assessments (e.g., FBA, interviews), the specific area of need is clarified (e.g., reading fluency, mathematics computations, self-management).

Six-Step Decision Making Model

3. ***Design Intervention Plan.*** Once the need for Tier 2 instruction is determined, a plan for implementing the curricular supports is developed.

The intervention plan includes:

(1) the time frame to implement intervention(s) (e.g., 20 minutes per day, 3 days per week for 12 weeks)

(2) selected evidence-based intervention(s)

(3) procedures for monitoring progress, including the devices and practices to be used (e.g., CBM, classroom observation, performance-based assessment)

(4) a timeline for monitoring the learner's progress (e.g., biweekly monitoring).

Six-Step Decision Making Model

4. ***Implement Intervention Plan.*** The Tier 2 intervention plan is carried out, emphasizing its implementation with fidelity and proper use of the selected evidence-based intervention(s).

5. ***Evaluate Progress.*** Using the progress monitoring data, corroborated evidence indicating that the plan was implemented with fidelity, and other related assessments, the RTI team meets to discuss the student's progress.

Six-Step Decision Making Model

6. ***Revise Plan/Adjust Instruction.*** Based on the decisions made in the previous step, the intervention plan may be:

   - discontinued due to sufficient progress;

   - continued for a second round of supports with few adjustments;

   - Substantially revised and continued for a second round of Tier 2 based on progress data;

   - Revised to provide Tier 3 intensive interventions.

Decision-Making Team Members and Roles

- *General Class Teachers*—Included in all major curricular decisions for learners in their classrooms

- *Special Educators*—Included when a struggling learner is identified based on Tier 1 core curriculum screening or progress monitoring results

- *School Psychologist/Assessment Specialist*—Involved in decisions based on assessment results and when a comprehensive diagnostic assessment is warranted.

- *Content Area Specialist (e.g., in Reading)*—Included in decisions that pertain to a struggling learner in a given content area

- *Bilingual/ESL Teacher*—Included whenever the needs of a culturally/linguistically diverse learner are considered

Decision-Making Team Members and Roles

- *Speech/Language Specialist*—Included whenever a speech/language disorder is suspected

- *Behavioral Specialist*—Included when the suspected area of need reflects social-emotional and/or behavioral development needs

- *Social Worker*—Included when home visits are necessary and when social issues are central to the learner's needs

- *Paraprofessional*—Included when the student's needs are considered relative to supports provided by a paraprofessional educator

- *Parents/Guardians*—Included in all major RTI decisions made for their child

Application of Ideas

- Identify the components of the team problem-solving model followed in your school.

- Document Cyber team members' contributions to your school's RtI decision-making team process.

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of each member of the decision-making Cyber team.

Student Responsibilities

- Practice Skills for improvement
- Practice Self Advocacy Strategies
- Attend Sessions
- Work Independently
- Communicate Needs with teachers and staff
- Develop Time Management Skills
- Develop positive peer relationships

Teacher & Professional Learning Community Responsibilities

- Collaborate
- Coordinate
- Data Driven Informed Decisions
- Standards-Driven Instruction
- Develop Basic Skill Sets
- Differentiate Instruction
- Participate in Ongoing PD
- Encourage Innovation and Excellence

RtI Via Online Education Can and Should:

- Facilitate Programming and Tools for students so that they can access the online curriculum.

- Students should not proceed to the next lesson until after they have obtained at least significant percentage of mastery.

- Use a variety of Tier II and III curricula interventions.

- Group Struggling learners together for small group instruction and remediation.

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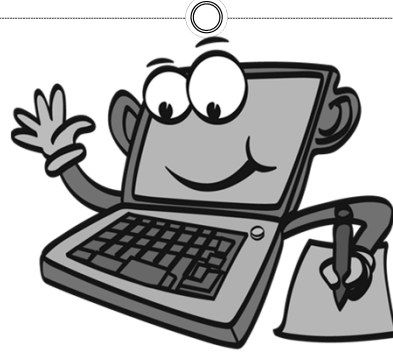
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Questions & Answers

Thank You!

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