

Introduction: Response to Instruction

Response to Instruction (RtI) refers to an instructional framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, gifted, supplemental, and special education services in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. RtI combines core instruction, assessment, and intervention within a multi-tiered system to increase student achievement and reduce behavior problems.

The RtI process requires the involvement of classroom teachers, parents, students (when appropriate), building specialists, (e.g., principals, academic coaches, school psychometrists and school psychologists, special education teachers, ELL teachers, counselors, school nurses, gifted teachers, speech therapists) and community service providers. The ultimate purpose of the RtI process is to enhance the success of students with a variety of academic and/or behavior needs, rather than solely determine whether a student qualifies for special education services. The effectiveness of RtI is maximized through a collaborative problem-solving approach to identify student needs and implement targeted interventions. Data are utilized to measure student progress as a result of the instruction, as well as to monitor intervention integrity.

Leadership at the Local Education Agency (LEA) and school level is critical for effective implementation of RtI. The success of RtI will be determined, to a great extent, by the degree in which district and school leaders transfer the focus of RtI from philosophical understanding to actual practice. Support provided to teachers must extend throughout the implementation of core instruction, interventions, and the collection of appropriate data to assess student progress both academically and behaviorally.

Although supporting initial implementation of RtI should be an important focus for school systems, establishing a long term commitment of resources and time is equally critical. Schools must devote time to implementation and maintenance of the RtI Model: time for data meetings, problem solving team meetings, and for development of action plans that identify continued professional development needs and procedures for continuation or changes in instruction. School staff must possess skills in the necessary instructional strategies and interventions as well as assessment tools focusing on screening, progress monitoring, and outcomes.

**Response to Instruction, done well at the classroom level,
will provide data from which educators can make instructional
decisions for individuals and groups of students.**

**Given high quality decisions, RtI
shows promise in supporting all students, especially those
at risk of failing to achieve state performance standards.**

Alabama's Response to Instruction Protocol

1. Complete a self-assessment to determine your initial readiness towards implementation of a Response to Instruction (RtI) approach. Develop an action plan based on the results of the self-assessment. The following indicators are to be considered:

- Effective student problem-solving team in place
- High quality, standards-based curriculum, and research-based instruction in general education
- Prescriptive/ongoing assessment practices in place
- Levels of intervention identified and resources allocated
- Ongoing, job-embedded professional development provided

2. Identify instructional levels of all students. This determination should be an objective understanding from available data sources including ARMT, DIBELS, quarterly or unit assessments, etc. Utilize this information to determine which students may be at risk for failure or may be underachieving.

3. Place students into instructional groups based on the previously gathered data, and provide each student a core curriculum of research-based instructional practices based on the standards of the Alabama Courses of Study for each specific content area, (e.g. Tier I instruction). Principals are expected to support sound classroom management and instructional strategies through observations and instructional leadership.

4. Monitor student progress, identify specific areas of need, and provide instructional strategies and interventions to enhance the student's opportunity for success, whether it is a student who is at risk or a student who is underachieving. Document the concern, the intervention, and the monitored progress.

5. Prescribe a research-based intervention plan for those students who are not successful in Tier I. This intervention will be in addition to the core curriculum, and will have as its goal moving these students to grade-level mastery. The format for this Tier II level of intervention may be small group, computer-based, or one-on-one instruction. This instruction is primarily delivered by the general classroom teacher.

6. Consult with the problem-solving team regarding those students who are not successful after receiving Tier II interventions. The team may prescribe an additional, more intensive program of intervention that is research-based. The intervention should be aligned with the core curriculum with the goal of accelerating the growth of these students in order to reach grade level mastery. This Tier III intervention should be provided outside of the regular classroom by Title One personnel, reading coaches, or other persons highly skilled in the area of need. The team should monitor student progress regularly to determine if additional intensive intervention is needed or if possible referral for diagnostic testing is necessary.

MCPSS Implementation of Response to Instruction

Core Principles of RtI	Implementation of RtI in MCPSS
<p>Students receive high-quality, research-based instruction by qualified staff in their general education setting.</p>	<p>Teachers implement instruction to fidelity through the following practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle of Instruction Model • RB strategies, modeling, demonstrations, examples, and manipulatives • Well-organized, bite-sized standards-driven whole class instruction • Checking for understanding • Quality questioning techniques throughout direct instruction to promote higher-order-thinking • Intentional grouping to provide opportunities for collaboration, for completion of tasks, and for discussion • Displaying current, authentic student work • Appropriate use of scheduled intervention • Maximization of students' academic engaged time on task
<p>Use of a multi-tiered model of service delivery facilitates differentiated instruction and early intervening services for struggling learners.</p>	<p>A three-tiered model of service delivery is used to facilitate differentiated instruction and early intervening services for struggling learners.</p> <p>Re-teaching and retesting are utilized strategically to prevent students from falling behind.</p>
<p>Movement between tiers should be guided by a data-driven decision-making process.</p>	<p>Student progress is monitored continually and systematically throughout the schools.</p> <p>Instructional decisions are data-driven based on progress-monitoring.</p>
<p>Universal screening and progress monitoring are the basis for instructional decisions.</p>	<p>Problem Solving Teams in every school ensure that all students are provided the opportunities and supports to be successful.</p>